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**Research Article**

# Exploring Students' Preferences For Instruction In Music: Foundation For Developing Pedagogical Frameworks For Online Music Courses

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**ABSTRACT**

The Department of Education transforms the curriculum to meet learners' needs by employing multiple learning delivery modalities (LDMs) through blended learning, distance learning, and homeschooling. This study was conceptualized to answer the fundamental issues of blended learning and how the students will accept and perform well in the class. With the participation of the one hundred fifty-seven students in a national high school in Zamboanga City as participants, the study pushes through as it employs a descriptive-quantitative survey design. The study provided empirical data about the viability of blended learning in teaching music. It was found out that most of the students are using modules and smartphones, wherein they can easily access the internet via the pre-paid and post-paid connections. As the results reveal, blended learning is a promising learning modality that schools can use since learning can be accessible and provide students with independence.

**Keywords:** Students' Preferences, Instruction, Music, Pedagogical Frameworks, Online Music Courses

## Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic drastically changed the landscape of the educational system in our country. It forces the educational department to shift from residential or classroom facilitation to blended learning. The Department of Education (DepEd) was challenged to continue education in the new normal as prescribed following DepEd order no. 012, s. 2020, assuming the basic education learning continuity plan (BE-LCP) for the school year 2020-2021. DepEd employs multiple learning delivery modalities (LDMs) through blended learning, distance learning, and homeschooling. This ensures ongoing learning opportunities for the learners and personnel to protect their health and safety. In the study of Muarip (2022) on the coping mechanisms of the students during the pandemic, students were engaged in different activities, which included listening to music. Don Pablo Lorenzo Memorial High School, Zamboanga City, used the Basic K–12 Curriculum, which includes learning competencies, to guide learners and teachers. A modification of the old curriculum ide, such as learning competencies and jectives, was shifted to the Most Essential Learning Competencies, or MELCs. The DepEd Zamboanga City Division gathered seasoned and competent local writers to develop appropriate modules in the different learning areas. This was an opportunity for the researcher, as he was chosen as one of the writers in the content area of music. The potential module writers of the said division underwent a series of seminars and workshops and invited experts to train the writers on how to develop a module. The module is simple and called Capslet (Capsulized Learning Tool Kit). The asynchronous class allows the students to learn independently within the time frame. It is self-paced, using the Self Learning Module (SLM), and the materials are provided online through audio, video, and discussion forums. A synchronous class is used in real-time, requiring students and teachers to meet virtually simultaneously. The most common tools used for synchronous learning are Zoom, Google Meet, Teams, Facebook Messenger, and What's App.

Among the hardest subjects to teach through the online mode is music. However, being part of the secondary curriculum, teachers should be resourceful in teaching music to the students. Based on their experience, the research asks if they have learned concepts in music. Is the online class enough to equip them with knowledge and assess the effectiveness of the learning through modular and online modalities? Indeed, the

feedback of the students in dealing with online classes serves as an evaluation of the lesson preparation, whether they are learning or not. It will help the teachers improve their ways of going along with online classes. Hence, the researcher is motivated to look into the students' preferences for instruction in music where the result could serve as basis for developing pedagogical frameworks for online music courses.

## Related Literature and Studies

### Instruction of Music with the Aid of Technology

It is evident that music education serves as a crucial instrument for imparting knowledge of musical heritage while also fostering opportunities for innovative exploration in the realm of music. Despite calls for reform in music education by scholars and researchers (Allsup & Benedict, 2008), the process of educational evolution necessitates the involvement of educators, students, policymakers, and a reorientation of pedagogical approaches (Williams, 2011; Himonides, 2012; Savage, 2012). Traditionally, music education programs have encompassed cultural and collaborative dimensions (Campbell & Hebert, 2010; Green, 2014), structured around general music courses with limited integration of technology.

Students majoring in music are the intended audience for music programs, which could benefit from the inclusion of online learning opportunities. This might entail providing advanced applied performance courses, exploring specialized subject areas, and introducing classes taught by well-known international artists. Research has confirmed the effectiveness of online music education (Draper, 2008; Eakes, 2009). This approach not only helps communities' musicians' needs (Green, 2014), but it also promotes deeper learning and cognitive development (Dye, 2007). However, there are still too few well-established approaches to creating courses with an artistic focus (Adileh, 2012), which means that using technology in realistic contexts is more important than it has ever been (Groulx & Hernly, 2010; Ruthmann & Hebert, 2012).

After investigating the connections between music education and the fields of neuroscience, constructivism, and social constructivism, scholars have observed that many interdisciplinary approaches are used in music education (Mishra, Koehler, & Henricksen, 2011). We can investigate how the accessibility of online learning platforms can be utilized to enable notable advancements in music education by bridging the gaps between online education and music instruction. Although concerns remain about the efficacy of online course designs for post-secondary education (Hebert, 2007), Ruthmann and Hebert (2012) proposed that three key components of successful online music instruction are a combination of strong synchronous interaction and taking advantage of special opportunities.

### Pedagogical Frameworks for Online Music Courses

According to Johnson et al. (2013), an instructional framework for online music education can effectively address current and future educational trends in higher education by incorporating artistic exploration and creativity into pedagogy (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). The identification of these essential elements for online music education meets the needs of both teachers and students. It provides a grounded understanding of the conditions that make learning environments favorable for students as well as useful information about what teachers need to know to implement these elements

Asynchronous learning is a key component of effective remote music instruction (Digelidis et al., 2014; Fabriz, Mendzheritskaya, & Stehle, 2021). Digelidis et al. (2014) share this viewpoint and support asynchronous learning as a pedagogical strategy that releases students from the confines of synchronous, real-time instruction. Rather, students interact with the readings, assignments, and class discussions at their own speed, resulting in a customized and flexible learning environment. In the field of music, asynchronous learning gives students the opportunity to study theoretical concepts in depth, hone their skills, and explore musical repertory with a greater sense of independence (Yende, 2023). This release from temporal restrictions allows for a variety of schedules and fosters a sense of personal control over the learning process.

### Statement of the Problem

The challenges and barriers during the pandemic to learning music using blended learning modalities interest the researcher to study students' perception and understanding, including their suggestions, thoughts, and feelings. Knowing the students' perceptions of learning music in a blended learning modality will lead the researcher to address the problems that he was able to identify. Additionally, this study will explore the importance of the students' perceptions of music as a blended learning modality. In the examination of these problems, several questions need to be sought for answers:

1. What is the students' teaching preference when learning music?
2. What are the instructional methods used in teaching music using the blended learning modality?

## Methodology

This study utilized the descriptive-quantitative survey design as an appropriate method of research with the aid of a questionnaire checklist as the main instrument to gather data that describes personal variables or essential features of the subject matter of the research, specifically in describing or analyzing exploratory data, which include a wide range of possible statistical situations and operations, from crude to precise methods of summarizing the entire data, such as percentage and frequency distributions, ratios and ranking, measures of variability, and tables and graphs (Best, 1963). A descriptive-quantitative design is deemed appropriate in this study as it sought to identify the perceptions of the Grade 10 students from homogenous and heterogenous classes in learning music using a blended learning modality. It will describe and interpret conditions and relationships that existed and were practiced that prevailed, beliefs, processes, effects that were felt, or trends that were developed. It involves an element of interpretation of the meaning or significance of what is described (Navarro, 2011).

## Research Instrument

This study used the normative survey approach with the aid of questionnaire checklists through Google Forms to gather data. The questionnaire checklist contains descriptive statements. It is a quantitative study using the questionnaire checklist to gather the respondents' needed data. Quantitative methods involve the use of objective measurements and statistical, mathematical, or numerical analysis to interpret data acquired through polls, questionnaires, surveys, or by manipulating existing statistical data with computational techniques.

This study used the assumption since descriptive research only aims to describe the respondents' perceptions accurately and systematically. There were no variables to compare. However, it primarily describes the variables used in this study as perceived by the respondents.

### Validity of the Instrument

The researcher used the questionnaire checklist as a research instrument for gathering data from the respondents. The draft questionnaire checklist was presented to his adviser for correction. After the revision, the research instrument was introduced to a three-member panel of specialists to validate its reliability. All their suggestions and recommendations were incorporated into the final draft of the questionnaire checklist.

## Results and Discussion

### On the Students' Teaching Preference in Learning Music

Table 1. shows the preferred blended learning modalities of the students and participants. It can be deduced from the table that 71, or approximately 45.22%, of the students or respondents like face-to-face learning with online learning, followed by online learning with modular learning; 49, or approximately 31.21%, choose online learning with modular learning. In comparison, 23 students, or approximately 14.65% of the participants, prefer the combination of modular learning with face-to-face, online, radio broadcasting, and TV broadcasting learning. The rest of the students/participants choose modular learning with TV broadcasting learning, modular learning with radio broadcasting learning, and modular learning with TV and radio broadcasting learning, with 7 or 4.46%, 4 or 2.55%, and 3 or 1.91%, respectively.

The results give the interpretation as the respondents' highest preferred modality, which means that they prefer merging face-to-face and online learning in learning music on blended learning modality. According to Magoulas (2018), combining or integrating the ideas and strategies of face-to-face learning and computer-related learning styles is necessary because it helps them assess their learners's strengths and weaknesses. In applying this kind of idea, we will know what things we need to emphasize to each learner because some are not good at technology and some learners prefer the style they used to have in face-to-face learning. While acknowledging the irreplaceable role of teachers due to their inherent friendliness, it's widely recognized that technology in the classroom serves as a valuable asset for enhancing learning outcomes and equipping students for a digitally driven future and the evolution of educational technologies. There's a crucial need to more effectively integrate contemporary connectivity solutions into educational environments (View Sonic Library, 2022). Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Education (DepEd) formulated the Basic Education-Learning Continuity Plan (LCP) to ensure the continuous learning of the learners. Thus, part of this learning continuity plan is to come up with different blended learning modalities. Learning Continuity Plan (LCP) to ensure the continuous learning of the learners. Thus, part of this learning continuity plan is to come up with different blended learning modalities.

**Table1. Students' Preference on Learning Music**

| Learning Modality | Students' Preference | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Blended Learning Modalities | 71 | 45.22% |
| Face to face learning with Online Learning | 49 | 31.21% |
| Modular Learning with face-to-face online, Radio Broadcasting and TV Broadcasting | 23 | 14.65% |
| Modular Learning with TV Broadcasting learning | 7 | 4.46% |
| Modular Learning with Radio Broadcasting | 4 | 2.55% |
| | 157 | 100.00% |

### On the Instructional Used in Teaching Music during the Blended Learning

Table 2 shows the materials or technology used in blended learning modalities. 149, or approximately 94.90%, of the students and participants use modules and smartphones as materials for learning music in blended learning modes. In comparison, seven, or about 4.46%, of the students or participants used a module and laptop, and only eight, or approximately 64%, of the students or participants used a module with tablets or iPads. This shows that many of them have smartphones that can be used in their online classes. This implies that the students can learn anytime and anywhere if they have their modules and smartphones. Education is evolving from a conventional to another learning modality, the online one. According to Chien and Chie (2018), learning music over the Internet uses different gadgets like cellphones, laptops, and many digital technologies. Smartphones are frequently disregarded as educational technology due to their potential for causing distractions. However, they represent a valuable learning resource, serving as a student's gateway to their peer community for support and to the internet for research at its most fundamental level (View Sonic Library, 2022). With the handiness of smartphones available elsewhere, learning can be attained, and smartphones can be overemphasized. In the general curriculum that includes all subject understandings, we always look for various domains like strategies, techniques, and new ideas to develop our education curriculum: learning music online and with handy, accessible, and available technology will achieve learning. Nevertheless, shifting from face-to-face learning to other learning modalities during the pandemic is quite difficult to continue education because schools and teachers need to consider the different materials to be used by the students.

**Table 2 Materials used in blended learning modality**

| Materials used in learning music on blended learning modality | Total | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| a. Module and smart phone | 149 | 94.90% |
| b. Module and laptop | 7 | 4.46% |
| c. Module and tablets/iPad | 1 | 0.64% |
| d. Module and radio | 0 | 0.00% |
| e. Module and television | 0 | 0.00% |
| f. Module and dumbphone (keypad phones) | 0 | 0.00% |

## Conclusion and Recommendation

The majority of the students and respondents prefer face-to-face learning with online learning, followed by online learning with modular learning. In addition, the selected materials or technology used by the students were through the use of modules and smart phones for learning music in a blended learning modality. In comparison, the accessibility of the internet connections showed that students and participants could access several platforms. Most of the respondents have either pre-paid data connections or post-paid WIFI internet connections, meaning the students could attend their class on whatever platforms or modality the teacher may use. Having either a pre-paid data connection or a post-paid WIFI internet connection means they could attend their class on whatever platform or modality the teacher prefers. Likewise, the accessibility of the blended learning modality shows that the students could receive the module on time as scheduled. All agree that they followed the instructions for distributing modules, retrieving the answer sheets, and submitting their output through Facebook, emails, Messenger, and SMS. Therefore, they could understand the tasks written in the module, which they can easily access and use online resources such as Google Meet, Zoom, and Facebook Messenger. This shows that blended learning's material, resources, and time certainly help them.

With these findings, the researcher strongly recommends exploring blended learning modalities with several multimedia components to enhance teaching and learning processes across diverse learners. Consideration of the change management process for overcoming the barriers to technology and multimedia adoption

would be of interest. Finally, this study could serve as a basis for crafting the pedagogical framework for teaching music subjects online.

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