

# Effects and Perceptions of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Graduate School Students

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## Abstract

The overall goal of this study was to shed light on the COVID-19 pandemic, including its effects and how students at MSU-Sulu Graduate Studies saw remote learning and modular learning as educational success. This study primarily explored the effects of modular and distant learning as well as how people view distance learning. Additionally, the impact of COVID-19 and perceptions of modular and distance learning on academic achievement among graduate students at MSU-Sulu for the academic years 2019–2021 will be compared to see if there is a perceptible difference. This study was conducted at Mindanao State University-Sulu using a descriptive-exploratory style. This institution includes the secondary level, senior high school, college level, and graduate school. It can be found in the municipality of Jolo in the Philippine province of Sulu; a modest number of second and first-year students. The MSU-Sulu Graduate School students appear to concur on the advantages of modular and remote learning, as seen by the average score of 3.62 across the 10 statements. The views of graduate students at MSU-Sulu regarding online courses and modules. The respondents mostly agreed with the poll questions on their opinions of modular learning, as seen in the accompanying table. The respondents agreed with 3.74 averages while the fair agreement with some. The goal of the study is to assess the assertion that COVID-19 has an impact on graduate students at MSU-Sulu over the academic years 2019–2021, as well as how they see modular and remote learning. The impact of COVID-19 and how distant and modular learning are perceived by students have quite different consequences for academic attainment.

**Keywords:** Effects of COVID-19, Perceptions of COVID-19, Graduate School Students

## 1. Introduction

The coronavirus disease, also known as COVID-19, is an infectious disease that arose in Wuhan, China, last 2019 where many died and drastically ill because of the infection. Health Care Workers believed that effective waste disposal practice is another way to help clean the environment, prevent future disaster risk, and prevent transferring of infectious diseases caused by solid waste (Aming-Hayudini, 2022) and was reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) by Chinese officials on December 31, 2019. Numerous cases of an unidentified pneumonia-like illness with flu-like symptoms have been reported; this novel coronavirus, known as SARS-CoV-2 or severe acute respiratory syndrome-related coronavirus 2, was found and later given the desi-

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-gnation COVID-19 by World Health Organization to declare an emergence of COVID-19 a public health pandemic (Jebril, 2020). A national health emergency and a global pandemic were both declared. The WHO reported 5,488 million COVID-19 cases in more than 180 countries as of May 27, 2020. On January 22, 2020, the first suspected case arrived from Wuhan, China, via Hong Kong, and 633 suspected cases were probed in the Philippines. Governor Sakur Tan established a team in the province of Sulu to oversee operations, carry out health regulations and programs, and keep track of instances. The Sulu Task Force-COVID-19 group was given such a designation. To guarantee stability and controlled spread of the contagious, deadly disease, it coordinates with other health agencies, safety and security agencies, and other relevant stakeholders (Hayudini, 2018). Mandatory rules were put into place, including a no-movement policy, a no-mass-gathering rule, the temporary closure of schools and institutions, and others. Consequently, classes had to end. To ensure educational continuity, the Department of Education also used modular distance learning. The only method that works to prevent knowledge stagnation is this one. Since the COVID-19 pandemic emerged in the province of Sulu, several institutions have adopted modular and distance learning methodologies. Students at Mindanao State University-Sulu Graduate School were given modules to review during online classes or were required to submit a video presentation. Most of the time, it is a self-understanding of the material covered and an explanation needed during take-home exams. During a pandemic, students have more academic and technological needs. Due to internet and module fees, it is also more important to maintain financial stability. Even though this approach keeps the educational process moving along and keeps it going, there are still obstacles to students' academic achievement brought on by a lack of free technology access, a lack of internet connectivity on or off campus, and a lack of desire while they study and learn alone at home. Although the majority of students and teachers are currently completely immunized, there are still just a few traditional face-to-face programs available, most of which are modular and online. Following the Sulu Interagency Task Force health regulations, this is still being done to minimize physical contact, delay virus spread, and prevent COVID-19 contamination. Professional healthcare providers are in strong collaboration to implement healthcare prevention in the province. (Hayudini et al., 2022) The goal of the study was to gather information on how the COVID-19 pandemic and graduate students at MSU-Sulu during the academic years 2019–2021 perceived modular and distant learning. The objective was to recognize, ascertain, and assess how the pandemic affected students' perceptions of modular and distant learning.

Moore (Moore, 1973) raised concerns about the lack of focus on what he called the "macro factors" impeding the advancement of distance education as early as 1972. According to Moore, there is a need to categorize and define the field of distance education as well as determine the crucial components of the various learning and teaching methods. This new approach to distance education based on virtual classrooms, (Keegan, 1995) reaffirmed the continued need for a theory of distance education by stating that a firmly based theory of distance education can provide the touchstone against which, financial, educational, and social can be made with confidence. The theory would thus cease to be an ad hoc response to a set of conditions arising in crises of problem-solving, characteristic of the field of education.

The majority of students indicated in the study's interpretation (Unger et al., 2020) that online learning would not be the same as in-class learning, demonstrating a notable difference in responses. There was a considerable disparity between students' perceptions of being properly informed by traditional news media (such as TV and newspapers) and social media, and many students reported having seen some inaccurate information about COVID-19 in the media. Many students admitted to feeling some amount of trepidation about quickly transitioning to ending a semester online, the active discussion of disease transmission, and the fact that only a small number felt adequately prepared for emergency scenarios.

The COVID-19 pandemic crisis has led to modifications in teaching methods by modifying the government policy of no face-to-face contact to stop the virus from spreading through human contact. This study will attempt to determine how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the students of MSU-Sulu graduating this year feel about using the modular and distance learning methods of instruction to further their degree. 2019-2021. The diagram depicts the environment affected by the COVID-19 epidemic, which affects how students perceive their educational attainment while using a modular and distant learning approach. We will assess the effect of distance learning and modular instruction on how MSU-Sulu students perceive their educational accomplishments. This seeks to demonstrate how the COVID-19 epidemic, as experienced by students, interacts with the effects of distant learning and modular learning on educational attainment among MSU-Sulu graduates from the A.Y. 2019-2021. This has to do with how much they learned when they adapted distance learning and modular learning to meet their educational attainment needs.

## 2. Methodology

The researcher used a descriptive-exploratory research design for this study. The study focuses on examining the effects and perceptions of modular and distance education on the educational attainment of the students enrolled in graduate programs at MSU-Sulu during the academic years 2019–2021.

The Mindanao State University in Sulu was the site of this investigation. The secondary level, senior high school, college level, and graduate school are all included in this institution. It may be found in the Philippine province of Sulu, Municipality of Jolo. It covered a small number of first- and second-year students who enrolled between 2019 and 2021. The respondents are students of graduate studies at Mindanao State University-Sulu. There were 50 students representing evenly distributed first-year and second-year levels enrolled at Mindanao State University-Sulu. Students undergo ethical considerations which in the study of Aming-Hayudini states the sanctity of humans life view the sacredness of human life with regards to nursing ethics (Aming-Hayudini and Kasim 2022).

Data on the COVID-19 epidemic and perceptions of modular and remote education on educational attainment among graduate students at MSU-Sulu for the academic years 2019–2021 were gathered via questionnaires. There are three sections to it. The questionnaire is divided into three parts: part I discusses the respondent's profile in terms of age, gender, course, and civil status; Part discusses the effects of modular and remote learning; and Part III discusses how MSU-Sulu students perceive distance learning for the academic years 2019–2021.

The three research area experts tasked with validating the content on the grounds of charity, relevance, and appropriateness looked over our self-made questionnaire items, which had been slightly adjusted. The responses were analyzed on five (5) a point Likert scale which is shown below:

	Score	Limit	Descriptive Rating	Implication
<b>Table 1</b> The Rating Scale	5	5.00-4.50	Strongly Agree	I firmly concur, I did it
	4	4.49-3.50	Agree	I concur, I did it
	3	3.49-2.50	Fairly Agree	I fairly did it
	2	2.49-1.50	Disagree	I disagree, I did it
	1	1.49-1.00	Strongly Disagree	I strongly disagree, I did it

Using a purposive sampling design like in the study of Hayudini et al. (2022), a purposive sampling technique was used. To ensure equitable representation, the

researcher set the sample size at 80, distributed equally among the graduate programs examined. As shown in **Table 1** above, simple random sampling was used to determine the proportion of responders among graduate students at MSU-Sulu. The designs took into account the amount of time, money, research personnel, and effort needed to complete the investigation.

To conduct this study, the researcher first obtained a letter from the graduate school dean at Mindanao State University-Sulu, and then, self-created a survey, started the survey, took the survey back, the data were tabulated, the data were handled statistically, and analyzed, interpreted the results, and made suggestions and recommendations based on them. The researcher utilized descriptive statistics, such as frequency counts, to characterize the respondent's profile in terms of age, gender, course, and civil status and to describe the effects of modular and distant learning on MSU-Sulu graduate students. We will take the students' responses regarding their perceptions of distant learning and modular learning to calculate the mean and standard deviation of MSU-Sulu students who graduate in the years 2019 and 2021. The correlation between the effects of COVID-19 and how MSU-Sulu graduates from the academic years 2019–2021 perceive modular and remote education is considerable. Pearson, a graduate of MSU-Sulu, treated them. The researcher used a descriptive-exploratory research design for this study. The study focuses on examining the effects and perceptions of modular and distance education on the educational attainment of the students enrolled in graduate programs at MSU-Sulu during the academic years 2019–2021.

### 3. Results

The Mindanao State University in Sulu was the site of this investigation. The secondary level, senior high school, college level, and graduate school are all included in this institution. It may be found in the Philippine province of Sulu, Municipality of Jolo. It covered a small number of first- and second-year students who enrolled between 2019 and 2021. The respondents involved, (Aming-Hayudini and Kasim, 2022) according to their profile and are students of graduate studies at Mindanao State University-Sulu, as seen in the distribution of respondents that there were 50 students by gender evenly distributed.

Data on the COVID-19 epidemic and perceptions of modular and remote education on educational attainment among graduate students at MSU-Sulu for the academic years 2019–2021 were gathered via questionnaires. There are three sections to it. The questionnaire is divided into three parts: part I discusses the respondent's profile in terms of age, gender, course, and civil status; Part II discusses the effects of modular and remote learning; and Part III discusses how MSU-Sulu students perceive distance learning for the academic years 2019–2021. The three research area experts tasked with validating the content on the grounds of clarity, relevance, and appropriateness looked over our self-made questionnaire items, which had been slightly adjusted. The responses were analyzed on five (5) a point Likert scale which is shown below:

**Table 2** The Rating Scale

Score	Limit	Descriptive Rating	Implication
5	5.00-4.50	Strongly Agree	I strongly agree I did it
4	4.49-3.50	Agree	I agree I did it
3	3.49-2.50	Fairly Agree	Fairly did it
2	2.49-1.50	Disagree	I disagree I did it
1	1.49-1.00	Strongly Disagree	I strongly disagree I did it

In this study, a purposive sampling technique was used. To ensure equitable representation, the researcher set the sample size at 80, distributed equally

among the graduate programs examined. As shown in Table 1 above, simple random sampling was used to determine the proportion of responders among graduate students at MSU-Sulu. The designs took into account the amount of time, money, research personnel, and effort needed to complete the investigation. To conduct this study, the researcher first obtained a letter from the graduate school dean at Mindanao State University-Sulu, and then: self-created the survey, started the survey, took the survey back, the data were tabulated and the data were handled statistically. The researcher utilized descriptive statistics, such as frequency counts, to characterize the respondent's profile in terms of age, gender, course, and civil status and to describe the effects of modular and distant learning on MSU-Sulu graduate students. The researcher took the students' responses regarding their perceptions of distant learning and modular learning to calculate the

mean and standard deviation of MSU-Sulu students who graduate in the years 2019 and 2021. The correlation between the effects of COVID-19 and how MSU-Sulu graduates from the academic years 2019–2021 perceive modular and remote education is considerable. Pearson R formula was used to treat the analysis of the data.

#### **4. Discussion**

The following were found in the study:

The students' perspectives supported the use of a modular remote learning strategy and some of its advantages. The student acknowledged that employing a modular approach to remote learning presented some challenges. When the data were categorized by gender and age, it was found that there were differences in the student's perceived modular distance learning strategy, supporting the premise that it had a favorable impact on student's academic achievement.

The impact and perception of modular and remote learning on educational attainment among graduate students at MSU-Sulu are the subjects of this study for the academic year 2019–2020. The study demonstrated the usefulness of the modular method for distant learning despite difficulties caused by the COVID-19 epidemic. The difference in how students perceived the modular distance learning technique, where they were divided into age and gender groups, was accepted as a hypothesis. Therefore, these did not affect how the students felt about their academic success while utilizing a modular strategy. Additionally, the study found no connection between participants' perceptions of the modular remote learning technique and academic performance.

The researchers conclude that the student's assessment of the modular distance learning technique had no bearing on their academic performance. This indicates that their perspective had no bearing on the performance quality that resulted in a high average or low grade.

The study's findings and this discovery led to a recommendation for more research. Even after the COVID-19 pandemic has passed, face-to-face instruction must continue using the modular remote learning approach. The use of modules during instruction for students to read in advance about a specific topic is strongly advised because it has been demonstrated that this will boost understanding and aid the students in achieving excellent performance. The instructor will keep track of each student's development, provide feedback, and direct those who want further help. They are required, too.

The school administration is recommended to conduct seminars and workshops to help teachers become more proficient in using the modular method. The head of the school should develop policies for each student's module. The teachers ought to implement measures to raise students' performance. Amid the pandemic, school administrators should support the instructors and keep an eye on the children's progress before holding a conference with the teachers to discuss it. The challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic and the opportunity for students are presented by modular distance learning. Academic performance comparison between the traditional face-to-face strategy and the modular remote learning approach Academic performance is being impacted by the COVID-19 epidemic. The effects of a shutdown on public and private higher education institutions Students are so worn out from trying to learn.

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#### **Declaration of Conflict**

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper

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