Innovations

Block System of UCCP La Trinidad Integrated School Incorporated

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Abstract: *This study aimed to assess the teachers' evaluation of the implementation of Block System with two subjects per Quarter in United Church of Christ in the Philippines La Trinidad Integrated School Incorporated (UCCP LTISI). The qualitative research design was used in conducting the research. The data gathering tool used is through observation and interview. Participants for this study are the five (5) teachers of UCCP LTISI. The salient findings of this study were the following: The findings applied in the learning process of the Block System in UCCP LTISI that were observed by the teachers were mastery and continuity of the lesson. The highlighted challenges encountered in the implementation of Block System in UCCP LTISI are the learning pace and time management. The conclusions were the following: The learning process applied in the Block System in UCCP LTISI are mastery and continuity of the lesson wherein the students can focus on grasping the lesson contents. There is a synchronous order of the topics that the students can easily follow and understand. The challenges encountered in the implementation of the Block System in UCCP LTISI help the students and teachers be flexible.*

Keywords: *Teachers, mastery, learning pace, time-management, continuity, challenges, learning process*

I. The Problem

Background of the Study

Education plays a crucial role in shaping social development. One innovative approach to scheduling is the Block System, which allocates extended time blocks (often 60–90 minutes or more) to focus on fewer subjects per day, allowing deeper engagement with content. This system supports flexible, student-centered learning through activities like research, project-based learning, and discussions.

Majid (2011) defines the Block System as intensive, week-long sessions on a single subject, replacing traditional weekly meetings. UNESCO (2013) notes it enhances time flexibility, while Arnold (2002) and Burhan & Arifin (2020) highlight its potential to boost performance and adapt to various learning styles.

Benefits include more time for lesson planning, diverse teaching methods, and meaningful teacher-student interactions.

The Block System helps manage time effectively, integrates interdisciplinary content, and supports deep learning (Small, 2000). It has been considered in the context of the Philippines' curriculum reform to give students more time to understand concepts.

Despite its advantages improved content retention, flexible instruction, and enriched learning environments the system also presents challenges. Drawbacks include potential student boredom, inconsistent retention due to short-term subject exposure, and difficulty catching up after absences (Majid, 2011; Alni, 2019).

Factors affecting its success include teacher preparation, instructional quality, student motivation, and administrative support (Hansen et al., 2000). Overall, the Block System is generally well-received and has implications for curriculum designers, especially in adapting to pandemic-related changes by minimizing student movement (Nerantzi & Chatzidamianos, 2020).

At UCCP LTISI**,** the Block System was implemented from 2021 to 2024, with two subjects per quarter. This study aims to assess teachers' understanding, application, and challenges with the system.

Implications:

- For administrators: Helps identify institutional needs and teacher support systems.
- For teachers: Offers insight into areas for professional growth.
- For parents: Enhances understanding of teacher responsibilities.
- For students: Provides a structured approach to improving academic performance.
- For researchers: Serves as a basis for further study and potential implementation of the Block System in other settings.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

This study is grounded in Constructivist Theory, which posits that learners actively build knowledge through personal experience and reflection (Al Huneidi & Schreurs, 2012). In a constructivist classroom, learning is dynamic and student-centered, emphasizing critical thinking, problem-solving, and the development of Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS). Block scheduling, by extending class periods, aligns with constructivist principles by offering students more time to process information, engage in active learning, and participate in hands-on tasks such as laboratory experiments and group discussions (Roberts, 2016).

Additionally, Conversation Theory supports the Block System by emphasizing the importance of continuous dialogue between teachers and students. Developed by Gordon Pask, this theory views learning as a collaborative, communicative process in which knowledge is co-constructed through meaningful interaction

(Pappas, 2016). It complements constructivism by reinforcing the student's role as an active participant in learning.

From an organizational perspective, Bureaucratic Theory and Human Resource Development Theory (Owens & Valesky, 2011) also inform this study. Bureaucratic theory stresses the importance of structured procedures, such as scheduling, while human resource theory highlights the importance of meeting the needs of students and staff. These perspectives support the use of data-driven decisions in school reform, including the implementation of new timetables like block scheduling.

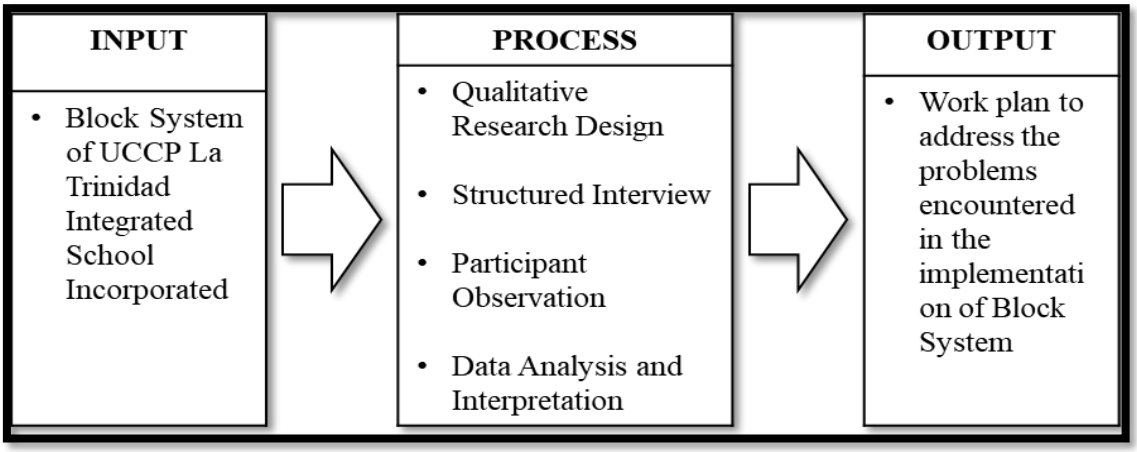
Empirical studies further support the effectiveness of block scheduling. Dirocco (1997) found improved academic performance, attendance, and behavior among students on an alternating block schedule. Researchers like Kramer (1996) and Kadel (1994) argue that longer class periods encourage teachers to adopt more effective instructional strategies, fostering deeper learning and higher achievement. Marshak (1997) also notes that students perceive block scheduling positively, associating it with improved teaching methods.

Overall, these theories and findings provide the foundation for evaluating the implementation and impact of block scheduling. They guide the analysis of how extended learning periods can support student engagement, teacher effectiveness, and institutional development.

Paradigm of the Study

The study was guided by the Input-Process-Output (IPO) Framework. The input referred to the implementation of the Block System at UCCP LTISI. The process involved the use of qualitative research methods, including structured interviews, participant observation, and data analysis and interpretation. The output consisted of proposed measures and recommendations to address the challenges encountered during the implementation of the Block System.

Figure 1 Paradigm of the Study



Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to assess the teachers' evaluation of the implementation of the Block System with two subjects per Quarter in UCCP LTISI.

The following questions that guide this study:

1. How do you find the Block System applied in the learning process?
2. What are the challenges you encountered in the implementation of Block System?

II. Research Design and Methodology

This chapter addresses the research design, locale and population, data gathering instrument, data gathering procedures, statistical treatment of data, and ethical considerations.

Research Design

According to Salam (2022), the qualitative research design was collected through observation and interviews. Harappa Blogs (2022) cited that a qualitative research approach that helped in describing the lived experiences of an individual is known as phenomenological research. The phenomenological method focused on studying the phenomena that have impacted an individual. This approach highlights the specifics and identifies a phenomenon as perceived by an individual in a situation.

In this study, the researcher interviewed collecting data by asking, requesting, and listening to the answers from the participants. A formal interview was conducted to obtain information about the management of the Block System learning model from the initial planning, implementation process, evaluation, and analysis of supporting and challenging factors to the impact caused by the learning model. The documentation to be carried out to collect documents related to the research, including documents of the organization of UCCP LTISI, photographs of activities, administration of academic learning such as academic calendar, syllabus, semester lesson plan, modules, and teaching materials.

Locale and Population of the Study

The participants for this study were the five (5) teachers of UCCP LTISI.

Data Gathering Instrument

The researcher conducted a formal interview with the teachers to identify the implementation of the Block System with two subjects per Quarter in UCCP LTISI.

Data Gathering Procedures

After the Dean of the Graduate School of Baguio Central University granted permission to conduct the interview, the researcher sought approval from the Executive Minister and School Head of UCCP LTISI before the start of the study.

The researcher conducted a formal interview to identify the implementation of the Block System with two subjects per Quarter in UCCP LTISI. The interview was recorded using a sound recorder. It was transcribed by the researcher and given

to the participants to validate the accuracy of the transcription. The participants' responses were sorted out according to the subject of the study.

Treatment of Data

The data gathered from the interview was subjected to treatment to facilitate interpretation and analysis. The views and needs of the teacher in the implementation of the Block System relied on the interview notes obtained during the interview. The sound recording was transcribed by the researcher and checked by the interviewees to verify their answers. The observation and documentation data were analyzed. The researcher organized and grouped according to the data and aspects observed.

Ethical Considerations

Before conducting the proposed study, the researcher undertook the following procedures to ensure ethical considerations in the conduct of research.

The researcher secured first the written permission to float the researcher instruments from the school authorities of the intended informants of the study. A letter accompanying the research instrument to be given to the target participants indicating among others; to wit: the participants identity not be divulged in the current study in compliance with the provisions of the Data Privacy Law; all information and data from the participants of the current study shall be held in strict confidentiality; when the participants answered the instrument, that means they agree to participate in the study as participants; the responses in the instrument be presented in aggregate form and not as individual perceptions and the research to be conducted is primarily for academic requirement only. The researcher declares that all findings borrowed from other sources and included in his thesis were properly cited and acknowledged.

III. Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the findings and conducts an analysis of the data that were collected from the participants' questionnaire responses.

Block System Applied in the Learning Process

Table 1 presents the findings applied in the learning process of the Block System.

Table 1: Block System Applied in the Learning Process

N=5

Participant	Response	Theme
1	"During this pandemic, it (Block System) is very much okay. There is that fact where they (students) were locked inside their homes, and it is only this school year where full face-to-face classes was allowed. Because of this, if we were to cram all the subjects then it will be dreadful on the students' part. It's like the two subjects per quarter set-up maintains focus to attain mastery of the listed MELC released by DepEd. The result the students are able to really focus on their lessons."	Mastery of the Lesson
2	"Block System is okay in the primary levels (Grades 1 to 3). Block System is beneficial one reason is less stress for the students and the other is the continuity of lessons. What I observed during our English and Filipino subjects was that the continuity of lessons helped the students to read and write. The English and Filipino lessons were uninterrupted by other subjects, though there is still the integration of other subjects what is more important is for them to know how to sound letters, syllables, and words, and write the correct spelling of words."	Continuity of the Lesson
3	"For me, I find Block System helpful in enhancing mastery of the lessons, yes the mastery. Because of the set-up where they (student) will only take two subjects per quarter, their focus revolves only on the two subjects and nothing more. I find this effective compared with the regular set-up where the students must take all the subjects in a quarter because based on my current class's performance they are able to follow the lessons and get high marks on the formative and summative assessments I give them as compared to that during the pre-pandemic set-up. Having to focus only on two subjects really did have a beneficial outcome."	Mastery of the Lesson
4	"Since this is my first encounter with the implementation of the Block System, at first I find it difficult, difficult in a way where I need to teach all the competencies for one subject within the allotted two months schedule. Even now, I'm having problems with its implementation, but I observed that most of the pupils in my classes can cope with lessons. It made me realize that this Block System	Mastery of the Lesson

	narrows the concentration range of the pupils with the narrowed concentration of the pupils resulted in them having mastery of the lessons."	
5	"The Block System is effective kasi there is the continuity of lessons. Ngayonkasi, tinetakenaminang MAPEH. Tuloy-tuloyang lessons. For example, Music ngayon, bukasi-expect ng mgabatana Music pa rin. Unlike yungnoongna Monday ay Music, Tuesday ay Arts, then the next days i bananaman. Nakakalimutan na nila yung tinuro sa kanila, kaya itong Block System effective siyalalonglalosa MAPEH. Because of this, yunngatuloy-tuloy o may continuity sa lessons sabuong quarter." ("The Block System is effective because there is a continuity of lessons. Currently, we are taking the MAPEH subject. There is continuity in the lessons. For example, we will be learning Music today, and tomorrow the students will still expect that they will learn Music. Unlike before when Mondays are for Music, Tuesdays are for Arts, then the next days will be the other subjects. The students will tend to forget what was taught to them, which is why this Block System is effective, especially in MAPEH subjects. Because of this, there is a continuity of lessons throughout the quarter.")	Continuity of the Lesson

Table 1 shows that three (3) teachers emphasized the mastery of the lesson and the other two (2) teachers on the continuity of the lesson.

Mastery of the lesson

Three (3) teachers observed that in the Block System, students have mastered and focused on the lessons during the pandemic. Given that the students have two months to complete the competencies of two subjects at the same time.

The study of Rukun and Ilmi (2020) has the same findings that students can grasp the topics speedily in a block system. According to Wiyananti et al. (2016), the system block approach is a learning strategy that emphasizes mastering one field of knowledge before moving on to a related one. For instance, mathematics has several topics that were connected. Before students can create a system, they must become experts in the topic. Before moving on to a subject and other topic, the school will concentrate on teaching students to learn the subject for a month, until they have mastered it. Due to the daily concentration on learning, this approach gives the impression that material mastery happens quickly and precisely.

Continuity of the Lesson

On the other hand, two (2) teachers observed the continuity of the lesson. There is a progression in the content and learning of the students. The most significant feature of any system is its internal arrangement, which is accomplished in this study with the help of Block System, which appropriately categorizes the material under investigation. Under the block, the continuity of the studied content is grasped. It is necessary to generalize and display these dependencies most perceptibly and memorably. According to Williams (1999), the main reason for the schedule adjustment was to allow higher blocks of time to ensure that every needed topic was taught. Teachers concentrate more on fundamental knowledge and leave out less of what is necessary from the curriculum but ensure the continuity of the content. The decision to modify was also motivated by the need to actively involve students in the learning process.

The Mastery of Learning Theory of Benjamin Bloom is related to the result of this study. Bloom (1968) proposed a powerful new approach to student learning that can give nearly all students with successful and rewarding learning experiences. It asserts that almost all pupils can learn what they are taught. The mastery learning theory is a method of instruction or training that focus on ensuring overall competency. The most important thing is proficiency. As a result, the paradigm includes some mechanisms intended to ensure that each student may reach the necessary level of competence. Mastery typically consists of a few essential elements. In addition to having specific objectives, mastery levels guarantee competency. The strategy includes well-defined assessment methods for instructors and established procedures for demonstrating competency.

The result of this is related to the study of Dayagbil et al (2021) wherein higher education institutions have to shift to flexible teaching and learning modes, recalibrate the curriculum, capacitate the faculty, improve the infrastructure, adopt a strategic plan, and analyze all components of the strategy to assure teaching and learning continuity. To address class disturbance and enhance learning continuity, teachers instantly turn to blended learning as the most practical method of delivering classes. Students are forced to stay home and shift their classrooms to the same area under this new learning arrangement. In most cases, some students come from various homes and living circumstances that are forgotten.

Huang et al. (2020) stated that the curriculum's flexibility necessitates the provision of options based on the present reality of the educational environment, as well as the customization of a particular course to match the demands of the students. As a result, it is critical to consider the students are given the option of creating their own learning choices. These learning options can include class times, course content, and instructional materials.

Challenges Encountered in the Implementation of Block System

Table 2 presents the challenges encountered in the implementation of Block System.

Table 2: Challenges Encountered in the Implementation of Block System
N=5

Participant	Response	Theme
1	"There are students who are behind when it comes to submitting and completing their requirements. They are focused on their unfinished works distracting and making them lag behind from learning the current competencies that they must learn."	Learning Pace
2	"The 1 hour and 30 minutes for one subject for me is not enough. For example in Filipino subject, where there are a lot really a lot of listed competencies, 2 to 3 or even up to 4 combined competencies actually cannot be fully attained by the students within the 1 hour and 30 minutes. Language subjects require more time. There is the need to review the previous lesson, unlocking difficulties, discussion, and others that need to be tackled. In Block System where the pacing is fast, an additional 30 minutes to make the allotted time 2 hours, I think will then be enough."	Time Management
3	"Students have their own varied pace in learning, some are fast others are average, and there are let say not fast enough. It is not unusual for some students to be left behind by the rest of the class. The problem is if these students who are being left behind will remain being left behind, there loads will pile up making it more difficult for them to catch up with the rest of the class."	Learning Pace
4	"The division of competencies does not match with the time allotment. Some subjects (Math and Filipino) have too many competencies. Too many competencies that some of these competencies which I think is not really important are no longer being taken."	Time Management
5	"Yung problem napinakana-observe ko ay yung time ng subject. Sa pag-answer nila ng written	Time Management

	activities, kulang, dahilsiguronoong Modular set-up nanasanaysilanasilaang may hawaksa time nila to complete their tasks. Kaya ngayong Face-to-Face set-up nagstru-struggle sila when it comes to some areas. Kung learning ok sila, but during assessment jaannanakikitayungpagkakaiba ng mgabata.'' (''The noticeable problem is the time is the time allotted for the subject. If it is about their written activities, the time is not enough. Maybe the reason is they are still accustomed to the Modular	

Table 2 shows that two (2) teachers encountered learning pace as a challenge in the implementation of the Block System and three (3) teachers encountered time management as a challenge. During the interview, the teachers highlighted challenges encountered in the implementation of the Block System regarding learning pace and time management.

Learning Pace

Pacing offers students, the impression of speed. Pacing is the ability to create the impression that a class is progressing at "just the right speed" for the pupils. In general, this means that the lesson appears to unfold faster. Students perceive any change as an indicator or marker that allows them to measure the rate at which the content is evolving. A good pace gives students the impression that they were progressing.

Participants 1 and 3's responses imply that the pacing of the Block System does not address the issue regarding students getting left behind in class. Factors such as lagging due to absences, missed activities, and varied learning paces affect the students' academic performance. Interventions such as but not limited to having recall tests, conducting remedial or tutorial classes, and providing learning packets contribute to easing the mentioned observed challenge in Block System.

According to Carroll (1994), change is never easy. Block scheduling raises concerns among educators about student absence, student transfers, and a faster pace for both students and teachers. By varying the pace of learning, teachers can keep students' interest and provide them with a level of challenge that is suitable for their developmental stage. It may occasionally include accelerating for some high-ability pupils to cover harder content. Other times, they'll want to slow down and delve more deeply into the intricacies of the subject matter. Differentiating the speed by adapting to the student's desire to move at a quicker or slower rate requires flexibility.

The engagement situations did not involve full group activities that required all students to have mastered a skill before continuing.

Instead, they offered students the chance to work at their own pace. Whether seen as too quick or too sluggish, the classroom setting, the teaching style, and the learning opportunities all had a substantial impact on the engagement levels of the students. The difference between what a student can do with assistance and what the student can do on his or her own was frequently associated with pace, as was meeting students at the right degree of challenge, what some may term teaching inside their zones of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978).

The pacing might be challenging to maintain while going from one task to another often during a lesson. Preventing disruptions in the session due to missing materials or instructional resources is one relatively straightforward technique to maintain a productive pace. The mastering pace and interactive lecture strategies necessitate more instructional planning and competence on the part of the teacher. Because your lessons will contain a variety of activities that teachers were accustomed to, earlier planning and preparation of the classroom setting and resources is essential. Making course material accessible to teachers and students reduces interruptions and increases productivity. Moving from activity to activity without planning feels chaotic and upsetting to the students.

According to Canady and Rettig (1995), alternative scheduling can be used to solve the difficulties of providing quality time, fostering a pleasant school environment, and offering variable learning time. According to Bishop and Pflaum's (2005) study, "challenging curriculum creates new interests; it opens doors to new knowledge and opportunities; it stretches students." Few would argue that students become more invested in their learning when it is grounded in meaningful wondering and is relevant to their lives. The desire of students to work at their own pace and an appropriate level of difficulty resonates strongly with the current, expanding emphasis on differentiated instruction. Students' differences are studied in differentiated classrooms to establish the basis for lesson planning. Students' readiness and interest shape education, and set their learning objectives.

Time Management

Positive time management skills were determined to have an impact on students' learning and outcomes, and Krause and Coates (2008) stated that students' capacity to effectively manage their time is the baseline for creating improved study habits as success methods.

Individuals can structure and control their activities through time management (Claessens et al., 2004). Moreover, according to reports, the cornerstone for students' development of effective study habits and time management skills is their ability to effectively manage their time.

From the responses of Participants 2, 4, and 5, the implication is that the time allotted for teaching the competencies was unreasonable. Hence, instilling time management skills in both the students and teachers is of utmost importance.

Time management can be highly beneficial in a student's and teacher's demanding schedule. It guarantees that students and teachers be adequately

prepared, organized, and focused in life and complete academic projects on time. It can lead to increased success; however, this is a talent that students must master and practice. Students and teachers must adjust their routines to improve their time management abilities. This can only happen if students and teachers take the first steps toward identifying their concerns. Good time management abilities originate to prioritizing one's time properly. Setting new goals and attempting to achieve them with a fresh and improved attitude in mind can help. Procrastination is another terrible behavior that students must break. Students should learn how to work smart rather than working too hard and failing to retain anything.

Students may need to study for a short period of hours and then take a break to clean their heads. When feelings of frustration arise, it is a good idea to take a break. Too much information causes information overload, which the brain cannot handle. Students and teachers' time management skills will improve with practice if they were motivated and diligent.

Bharathi & Hariprasad (2004) stated that the only thing that cannot be changed by man is time. Whatever position a person holds, he cannot stop time, slow it down, or hurry it up. One cannot reclaim wasted time. Nothing can ever replace time. Teachers face several obligations that must be met in a short time. Time management refers to the capacity to schedule a time to finish a task. Analyzing how someone spends their time allows them to identify time wasters. Someone who implements time-saving strategies will gain valuable time.

This study is related to the existentialist philosophy, which is learner-centered and provides students with guidance in their studies. This study is based on the Pickle Jar Theory, which is a recent and useful theory of time management (Sharma & Would, 2004). According to this notion, humans should create a balance of activities and items while efficiently integrating time management approaches. Students' performance in distance learning institutions and regular systems is determined by their effective use of time at each stage.

With the aforementioned corroborations of the variables involved, it can be noted that the Mastery of Learning Theory of Benjamin Bloom, Existentialist Philosophy, and Pickle Jar Theory were highlighted as foundations supported in this study.

In summary, the salient findings of this study were the following: the findings applied in the learning process of the Block System in UCCP LTISI that was observed by the teachers was mastery and continuity of the lesson; the highlighted challenges encountered in the implementation of the Block System in UCCP LTISI were the learning pace and time management.

IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

The conclusions are presented in this chapter based on the key findings. This chapter also includes recommendations.

Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn from the salient findings:

1. The learning process applied in the Block System in UCCP LTISI are mastery and continuity of the lesson wherein the students can focus on grasping the lesson contents. There is a synchronous order of the topics that the students can easily follow and understand.
2. The challenges encountered in the implementation of the Block System in UCCP LTISI help the students and teachers be flexible.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions the following recommendations are suggested:

1. The teachers are encouraged to maintain the mastery learning among the students and provide extra support to students in need.
2. The teachers are encouraged to have a periodic plan for the changes in the activities and continue to engage the students learning.

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