TPM Vol. 32, No. S6, 2025
ISSN: 1972-6325
https://www.tpmap.org/

A RE-EVALUATION OF THE UNDERSTANDING BY DESIGN (UBD) FRAMEWORK IN WRITING LEARNING MODULES

LEAH MARIE TUMLOS-CASTILLO

DE LA SALLE SANTIAGO ZOBEL

Abstract:
The heart of curriculum design is to give opportunities and provide support to students so they can achieve understanding and transfer of learning. This is made possible when teachers produce well-written learning modules. Back in 2015, an initial evaluation of the Understanding by Design (UbD) framework in writing learning modules was conducted. Results show that high school teachers of De La Salle Santiago Zobel (DLSZ) appreciate the concise and practical guidance of backward design in curriculum planning. In this reevaluation study, the question I desire to find answers to is: How is the UbD framework extensively used by Junior High School (JHS) teachers in writing learning modules? Primary research data were obtained by conducting an online survey using Google Forms among all JHS teachers and administrators (N=92) across 12 subject areas. There were 12 items in the survey questionnaire. Eleven (11) items pertained to the three (3) stages of the UbD framework, while one (1) item was concerned with how helpful the design framework is in systematically preparing the learning modules. Furthermore, an open-ended question was asked on the suggestions of teachers in making the learning modules more relevant and useful to them as users, and more effective in obtaining our instructional goals. Three (3) focus group discussions using Google Jamboard were held with nine (9) JHS educators to validate their perceptions in the use of the said framework. In addition, document analysis of 12 learning modules (6 core learning areas and 6 special subjects) was conducted to determine how evident the UbD framework is used by teachers based on its three (3) stages. This study employed a mixed-method approach where quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while descriptive data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Results of this study indicate that DLSZ JHS teachers and administrators perceive the UbD framework to be both relevant and useful in writing learning modules based on its principles that they find highly evident. The results also affirm that the said design framework helped enhance the delivery of instruction through purposeful curricular planning. While teaching for the purpose of understanding entails an intricate process, the UbD framework has successfully guided the teachers to undergo thoughtful planning, thereby helping them attain the desired learning goals of each lesson.

Additional Keywords and Phrases: Understanding by Design, backward design, curriculum design, learning module

INTRODUCTION

Curriculum design is at the center of developing students' capacity to demonstrate understanding and connecting what they learn in real life with the aid of well-designed learning modules. Hence, a re-evaluation of the Understanding by Design (UbD) framework used in De La Salle Santiago Zobel (DLSZ) is essential to determine how purposeful our curricular planning has been in guiding teachers in the area of module writing. Five years since the initial evaluation of the said design framework, I deemed it necessary to re-examine the backward design model to check the quality and effectiveness of our planning processes. In particular, this study attempts to find out if the UbD framework has contributed to a deeper knowledge and more skillful practice to the Junior High School (JHS) teachers in writing learning modules.

1.1 Developing the Curriculum Using a Backward Design Model

UbD is a curriculum design framework that guides teachers to purposefully plan their lessons, which places emphasis on student understanding and transfer of learning (Wiggins & McTighe, 2011). It takes into account the integration of content and meaningful assessment with effective pedagogy to achieve the desired learning outcomes (Roth, 2007). Studies show that as a backward design model, learning becomes more relevant because students are engaged in meaningful activities that enable them to demonstrate understanding of the key ideas they learn in class (McTighe & Thomas, 2003). Wiggins and McTighe (2005) affirm this by claiming that assessment evidence (e.g., performance tasks) reflects the desired goals of schools because students demonstrate their understanding and apply their learning in new and real-life situations. As such, it is paramount to highlight the teacher's roles as designer and assessor in backward design. Childre, Sands and Hope (2009) underscore the

importance of teachers providing the opportunities to their students to make lesson content meaningful by connecting it to real life. They assert that this is made possible when there is thoughtful planning. Thoughtful planning entails knowing the learners' needs, identifying the school's curricular priorities, outlining an assessment framework, and designing a playlist of engaging activities. The key in all these is the presence of alignment in all three (3) stages of the UbD framework, which provide concise and practical guidance for teachers to obtain the learning outcomes. Relatedly, alignment of topics and activities is discussed during professional learning community (PLC) sessions with consideration on horizontal and vertical curricula. These collaborations aim to improve teaching skills as well as student performance (Graff, 2011). McTighe and Seif (2003) cite instructional practices that confirm the UbD framework's effectiveness, which include the use of advance organizers, higher-level questioning, and provision of constructive and helpful feedback to ensure student achievement, among others. Many educators maintain that UbD's primary goal is indeed teaching for the purpose of understanding.

1.2 Studies on the Effectiveness of the UbD Framework

A number of studies reveal the efficacy of UbD as an instructional design model. Richards (2013) affirms how a backward design model such as UbD enables teachers to make the planning process in Language teaching successful by beginning with a clear understanding of the learning outcomes measured by performance-based assessments. Whitehouse (2016) concurs to this claim by confirming that UbD focuses on the learning outcomes as well as the questions and tasks that provide evidence of learning. She places assessment at the heart of the planning process in Science education. With the purposeful application of the UbD framework by teachers, students foster inquiry and understanding of key concepts. They also develop decision making skills that they can apply in real-life contexts because they are able construct meanings as observed in teaching probability in Mathematics classes (Acar, Ercan & Altun, 2019). Relatedly, Rubrica (2018) highlights how UbD is effective in teaching elementary Science. He asserts that project-based learning (PBL) using this design framework is an effective teaching method because it provides students more opportunities to apply their learning in meaningful and authentic contexts (Rubrica, 2018). It is essential to touch on a recent study that involves the integration of social media tools and resources and underscores the usefulness of UbD. In their study, Schwieger and Ladwig (2021) modified the UbD framework to include the integration of social media tools and resources in the Management Information Systems (MIS) curriculum. Results of their study confirm that social media tools and resources offer a supportive role to learning because digital natives readily engage with and are familiar with such tools and resources (Schwieger & Ladwig, 2021). They assert that learning is enhanced because the students' communication and technology skills are developed and given importance. Educators find UbD as a backward design model to be valuable because it puts a premium on student understanding and transfer of learning as educational aims of 21st century education.

1.3 Initial Evaluation of the UbD Framework in DLSZ

More than 10 years ago, DLSZ started using the UbD framework in writing learning modules. Prior to this curricular development, the school has adopted the Learner-Centered Learning Environment (LCLE) approach in instruction where student participation in the learning process is given utmost emphasis. The JHS Department has prioritized a
more learner-centered learning environment through an intensified interdisciplinary integration since 2016. We have done so through the following initiatives: purposeful integration of the school theme in the different performance tasks, conduct of regular PLC sessions to discuss curricular plans and decisions as well as integration of performance tasks, and construction of assessments that promote 21st century skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity, among others.

In a learner-centered classroom, students are trained to be engaged in their own learning in order to become active learners who create meaningful content through the guidance of their teachers (Acar, Ercan & Altun, 2019). Fortunately, we have been able to implement the LCLE approach by carrying out differentiated activities as reflected in our learning modules. Tomlinson and McTighe (2006) validate that there is a logic in combining the UbD framework with the LCLE approach through differentiated instruction. Both models are mutually supportive of one another to create effective classrooms (Tomlinson & McTighe, 2006).

Results of the initial study I conducted five years ago show that with the use of the UbD framework, learning modules in DLSZ were planned in such a way that assessments and activities were aligned with the learning goals (Tumlos-
Castillo, 2015). This supports the assertion of Wiggins and McTighe (2015) that alignment of UbD's three (3) stages is key to achieve student understanding and transfer of learning. Moreover, results reveal that assessment strategies that cater to differences among the students were identified before the delivery of instruction (Tumlos-Castillo, 2015). DLSZ teachers have been purposeful when it comes to providing evidence of learning that are well-scaffolded as reflected in the performance tasks they prepare. Lastly, results of the initial study affirm that instructional activities and teaching aids that appeal to students' interests, readiness, and learning styles were developed and implemented (TumlosCastillo, 2015). Over the years, our teachers have been trained to plan learning experiences that motivate students to explore new knowledge, construct meanings to arrive at their own understanding of phenomena, and apply their learning in real-life situations. In essence, classroom experiences of

DLSZ students have become more relevant and meaningful because curriculum design was aimed at achieving the learning outcomes.

METHODOLOGY

1.4 Research Design

The research design used in this study is the descriptive mixed-method approach where quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while descriptive data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Data from 92 JHS teachers and administrators (78 faculty and 14 administrators) were gathered.

1.5 Data Collection Procedures

To gather pertinent data on the effectiveness of UbD as a design framework in the JHS Department in the last four (4) years from 2016 to 2019, an evaluation questionnaire using Google Forms was constructed. Data were gathered by obtaining the ratings of the respondents as well as their responses to one (1) open-ended question. The items in the questionnaire were almost the same with the one that was utilized in my initial study. However, due to a number of academic initiatives such as the incorporation of the Next Generation Blended Learning (NxGBL) Program[1] and the inclusion of the learning targets in writing learning modules, two items were tweaked to align with the aforesaid initiatives. Further, to ensure that the faculty and administrators who participated in the study were well-oriented regarding the key tenets of the UbD framework, an infographic glossary was created and embedded in the instrument, which served as their guide in answering the questionnaire. Also, a JHS plenary session was held prior to answering the questionnaire to make certain the common understanding of UbD's purpose and principles.

Apart from these, three (3) focus group discussions using Google Jamboard were held with nine (9) JHS educators. The objectives of the FGD were to let the participants share their experiences in writing learning modules with the use of the UbD framework and to use the information collected from the FGD to clarify and validate their perceptions in the use of the said framework. Purposive sampling was utilized in the selection of the participants. The clustering of groups included three (3) regular teachers, three (3) probationary teachers, and three (3) subject area coordinators. In addition, to triangulate the research findings, a document analysis was conducted to determine how evident the use is of the UbD framework based on its three (3) stages. Twelve (12) learning modules across all subject areas taught in JHS were systematically analyzed. These subject areas include six (6) core learning areas and six (6) special subjects. The core learning areas are Christian Living, English, Filipino, Math, Science, and Social Studies, while the six (6) special subjects are Art, Computer Technology, Music, Physical Education, Robotics, and Technology and Livelihood Education. Lastly, field notes and observations were also examined, which validated the ratings and responses of the participants as well as the findings made from the document analysis.

1.6 Instrument

An evaluation questionnaire was constructed for this study using Google Forms. In the questionnaire, 10 items were prepared that pertain to the three (3) stages of the UbD framework: Stage 1 or Identifying Desired Results, Stage 2 or Determining Assessment Evidence, and Stage 3 or Planning Learning Experiences and Instruction. The other two (2) items were concerned with how helpful the design framework is in systematically preparing the learning modules. An open-ended question was asked so teachers and administrators can suggest how to make the learning modules more relevant and useful to them as users and more effective in obtaining instructional goals. Data were collected through a scale of not evident or highly evident. This was aimed to determine if the implementation of the learning modules ensures sufficient and consistent execution of the different aspects of the LCLE paradigm, and if the UbD framework complements the LCLE approach. Twelve (12) items included a four-point rating scale with options ranging from "(1) Not Evident to (4) Highly Evident". The remaining item required constructed responses. It sought to gather suggestions from the respondents on how to make the learning modules more relevant and useful and more effective in reaching the school's instructional goals.

1.7 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (i.e., mean) using the SPSS Version 20 program. Relatedly, qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Through both methods, it was determined whether the UbD framework has helped the teachers in the effective planning and delivery of instruction.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows that majority of the JHS teachers and administrators rated all 12 items in the evaluation questionnaire as highly evident with percentages that range from 63.0% to 82.6%. It also indicates mean results

[1] DLSZ's Next Generation Blended Learning (NxGBL) program pertains to the blend of face-to-face instruction and technology-infused learning with an aim to develop lifelong learners who are reflective, creative, critical thinkers, and problem-solvers in a transformative and innovative learning environment. The NxGBL program adopts the use of the Technology Integration Matrix (TIM) developed by the Florida Center for Instructional Technology in 2005, to guide our teachers, administrators, and students on how technology can be meaningfully integrated into the teaching and learning process.

ranging from 3.61 to 3.83. Furthermore, the results suggest that the respondents perceive that the UbD framework has been effective in helping them write learning modules.

Table 1. Respondents' Mean Perceptions (in %) Regarding the Effectiveness of the UbD Framework in Writing Learning Modules
(N=92)

Statements	Percentage of Respondents				
	Mean	Not Evident 1	Somehow Evident 2	Evident 3	Highly Evident 4
1. The goals and competencies developed following the UbD framework are based on national standards, enhanced with 21st century learning skills and aligned with the Vision Mission of the school.	3.83	0	0	17.4	82.6
2. Teachers plan learning modules in such a way that assessments and activities are aligned with the learning goals as evident in the curriculum maps.	3.76	0	0	23.9	76.1
3. The learning goals (Acquisition, Meaning Making and Transfer) consistently reflect the need for students to construct meaning from the facts they acquire and use these in new situations that are real-world and complex.	3.72	0	0	28.3	71.7
4. Teachers find it useful to know what they should assess through the articulation of the learning targets, which fundamentally help students understand the purpose of the lesson.	3.78	0	0	19.6	79.3
5. Self-assessments help in realizing the learning goals.	3.62	0	4.3	29.3	66.3
6. Students demonstrate understanding of the desired goals through the performance tasks/products.	3.74	0	0	22.8	76.1
7. Teachers design authentic assessments that require students to be self-reflective, to develop their own perspective and to understand others' points of view.	3.72	0	2.2	25.0	72.8
8. Teachers find it easier to develop activities with the learning goals and assessments given ahead.	3.78	0	1.1	21.7	77.2
9. Teachers prepare different blended learning activities to suit learning styles that are evident among students, which create a meaningful learning environment that is active, collaborative, constructive, authentic and goal-directed.	3.67	0	2.2	29.3	68.5
10. The theories of multiple intelligence (MI) and cooperative learning jive well with the use of the UbD framework in module writing.	3.61	0	3.3	33.7	63.0
11. Teachers implement a systematic flow (3 Is: Introduction, Interaction and Integration) of preparing the lessons with the help of the UbD	3.82	0	2.2	15.2	82.6

framework.					
12. Through the UbD framework, teachers find it easier to organize their thoughts, put these into writing and implement these in instruction.	3.76	0	1.1	22.8	76.1

UbD's Stage 1: Identifying Desired Results

Items 1, 2, and 3 pertain to UbD's Stage 1 or Identifying Desired Results. Results show that more than 82% of the respondents find this item highly evident. The participants confirmed that the goals and competencies developed following the UbD framework are based on national standards (i.e., content and performance standards) as prescribed in the curriculum guides, enhanced with 21st century skills, and aligned with the Vision Mission of the school. In preparing instructional documents such learning modules, DLSZ teachers go through an intricate yet rewarding process of streamlining the competencies with the aim of prioritizing enduring skills to attain the standards. Both teachers and administrators who participated in the FGD affirmed that alignment of the learning goals and competencies to the school's educational goals and national standards is vital in curriculum planning. Focusing on the standards enables them to carry out thoughtful planning (Childe, Sands & Pope, 2009). Based on the document analysis I conducted, all 12 learning modules show articulation of the learning goals and competencies based on the prescribed national standards, 21st century skills, and the Vision Mission of DLSZ. All 12 modules present unpacking of the standards to formulate the lesson's Enduring Understanding, Essential Question, and the Transfer Goal. Further, 21st century skills that students must learn are spread out in the learning module. Common to all subject areas are the skills of critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity, and technology skills and digital literacy. Moreover, the Lasallian Guiding Principles (LGPs) are integrated in the lessons and are also indicated in Stage 1. The LGPs reflect school's
Vision and Mission.

For Item 2, 76.1% find it highly evident. Teachers are expected to ensure that there is alignment among the desired goals, assessment evidence, and learning assessments and activities. In the FGD, the participants confirmed that when alignment to the learning goals of Acquisition, Meaning Making, and Transfer is present, they are well-guided in designing and implementing assessments and activities more efficiently. According to the findings of the document analysis, 10 out of the 12 LMs (all except CL and Robotics) show alignment of assessments with the learning goals, while 11 out of the 12 LMs (all except Music) show alignment of the activities with the learning goals. Both the Unit Assessment Map and the Blended Activities/Tools Matrix in Stage 2 exhibit alignment with the learning goals. The Unit Assessment Map indicates the levels of assessments vis-a-vis the learning goals, while the activities listed down in the Blended Activities/Tools Matrix refer to the learning goals as well as the environment attributes. CL, Music, and Robotics were the only subjects with missing parts in the learning modules. Wiggins and McTighe (2011) assert that alignment is fundamental, that all the stages of UbD must align with the standards and with one another. Content and understanding clearly stated in Stage 1 must be assessed in Stage 2, and thereby taught in Stage 3.

Similarly, 71.7% rated Item 3 as highly evident. In DLSZ, standards and competencies are unpacked in terms of the three (3) learning goals. According to FGD participants, learning goals are like trackers. These give an opportunity for students to connect and apply their learning. Hence, they recommend that the learning goals should be simple, easy to understand, and contextualized. Nine (9) out of the 12 learning modules exhibit that the learning goals enable students to foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning. Through the Unit Assessment Map in Stage 2, assessments are aligned with the appropriate level of assessment under knowledge and process (Acquisition), understanding (Meaning Making), and performance (Transfer). Also, activities aligned with the learning competencies (Acquisition), related facets of understanding are aligned with understanding goals (Meaning Making), and performance tasks are aligned with the Transfer Goal. The big ideas and essential questions that teachers present to students foster inquiry, understanding, and transfer of learning (Whitehouse, 2016).

Lastly, Item 4 affirms that 79.3% find it useful to know what they should assess through the help of the learning targets and rated this item highly evident. Learning targets frame the lesson from the students' perspective with the use of "I can" statements, which help them understand the purpose of the lesson. Learning targets convey to students the destination for the lesson – what to learn, how deeply to learn it, and exactly how to demonstrate their new learning (Moss, Brookhart & Long, 2011). All FGD participants affirmed that the first phase of self-regulated learning is the articulation of the learning targets. They confirmed that the learning targets are the first manifestation of having a learner-centered environment. For them, articulating the learning targets on instructional documents like learning modules and implementing these effectively in class apparently create a positive impact in the learning process. Based on the analyzed learning modules, 9 out of the 12 subject areas explicitly stated the learning targets in the learning modules with the use of "I Can" statements. The other three subject areas - Music, Physical Education, and Robotics - only stated the lesson objectives.

UbD's Stage 2: Determining Assessment Evidence

Items 5, 6, and 7 pertain to UbD's Stage 2 or Determining Assessment Evidence. In Item 5, 66.3% validate that selfassessments help in realizing the learning goals and rated the item as highly evident. Self-assessment is one

type of assessment usually provided by the teachers to aid students in understanding the purpose or goal of the lesson as well as proves the individual level of introspection of students about the learning process. The FGD participants validated that self-assessments help students to track their own learning and progress, which motivate them to improve and become independent. In light of this, the power of students to ask helps teachers gauge what useful interventions to use. Of the 12 subject areas, 10 specifically constructed self-assessments in the learning modules. These assessments are indicated in Stage 2 and implemented in Stage 3. Only Christian Living and English had no self-assessments identified.

Relatedly, results reveal that more than 76% perceive that students demonstrate understanding of the desired goals through the performance tasks as reflected in the highly evident rating in Item 6. The creation of authentic performance assessments is crucial in UbD. Culminating evidence such as performance tasks enable students to provide progress toward and/or achievement of the learning goals and proficiency according to the performance standards. According to the FGD participants, when students apply what they learn and solve real-life problems, it is a manifestation of a higher-level evidence of how they understood the lesson. Relatedly, all 12 learning modules specified the performance task with GRASPS narratives, but not all indicated the scaffold activities (English, Music, and Robotics), complete instructions (English and Robotics) and the rubrics (English and Music).

Finally, in Item 7, 72.8% believe that they design authentic assessments that require students to be self-reflective, to develop their own perspective, and to understand others' points of view. They rated this item highly evident. The FGD participants affirmed that when the performance tasks are set in an authentic context that reflects real world application of knowledge and skills, students are more likely to see the purpose and relevance of what they learn. Moreover, this kind of assessment leaves a permanent mark in students' minds and serves as an enduring guiding principle. After a thorough analysis, it was discovered that all 12 learning modules contained at least one (1) authentic assessment. Through authentic assessments, students are more engaged to demonstrate understanding and apply their skills in accomplishing authentic tasks (Castillo, Prudente & Aguja, 2021).

UbD's Stage 3: Planning Learning Experiences and Instruction

Items 8, 9, 10, and 11 pertain to UbD's Stage 3 or Planning Learning Experiences and Instruction. Results indicate that more than 77% of the respondents find Item 8 highly evident. The UbD framework allows teachers to design activities much easier since the learning goals in Stage 1 and assessments in Stage 2 are clearly stated and thereby guide the learning process. The FGD participants attested that it is much easier to develop learning activities when both the learning goals and assessments are given ahead. Both serve as a guide and make the teaching-learning process efficient and effective. Teachers also get to focus on the important skills and knowledge that the students need to learn. For this item, document analysis cannot determine if the UbD framework allows teachers to design learning activities much easier.

Similarly, 68.5% rated Item 9 as highly evident, concurring that the blended learning activities they prepare create meaningful learning environments. Trainings and bootcamps on blended learning are continuously offered to all DLSZ teachers and administrators to enhance their knowledge and skills in the meaningful integration of technology in the teaching and learning process. The FGD participants confirmed that meaningful learning environments make learning fun. Since they are dealing with a diverse set of students, each with different learning styles and learning habits, learning environments make the learning process sensible with the well-balanced use of technology. These findings are supported by the document analysis conducted. All 12 learning modules contain blended learning activities. Identified in the modules were the specific environment attributes (Active, Collaborative, Constructive, Authentic, Goal-Directed) in Stage 2.

Item 10 refers to the use of multiple intelligences and cooperative learning in instruction and if these two jive well with the UbD framework. 63% rated this item as highly evident. Identifying learner needs is usually the key first step in knowing what effective activities to include in learning modules. All FGD participants agreed that the UbD framework gives the teacher plenty of room to incorporate multiple intelligences (MI) when designing lessons. This is so because

MI assist teachers in creating lessons that address students' different learning styles. Moreover, they highlighted that providing collaborative activities is important to make differentiated instruction successful. All 12 LMs had activities that applied multiple intelligences and cooperative learning. Based on the analyzed learning modules, 11 out of the 12 subject areas included learning activities that cater to the visual-spatial intelligence of learners. Relatedly, cooperative learning strategies were used by 8 out of 12 subject areas. Examples of cooperative learning strategies used by the teachers include think pair share, group problem solving, and case study, among others.

Lastly, for Item 11, results validate that more than 82% implement a systematic flow of preparing the lessons with the help of the UbD framework. The respondents find this item highly evident. JHS teachers plan and exercise conscious control of time spent on learning activities in order to be efficient, effective, and productive. They make this possible by aligning these activities to the learning goals and choosing the right blended tools, materials, and resources to supplement the implementation of such activities. The FGD participants confirmed that through the UbD framework, it is easier to focus on what is important. To them, the framework clearly offers a systematic flow which guides them in designing authentic and aligned lessons. Further, according to the document analysis I conducted, 11 out of the 12 modules showed a systematic flow of the lesson through the 3 I's framework (Introduction, Interaction, Integration). This framework enables teachers to craft lesson designs that grow in complexity yet offers opportunities for independent learning.

General Representation of UbD

The final item in the questionnaire, Item 12, refers to a general representation of the UbD as a design framework. 76.1% perceive it as highly evident. Majority of the faculty and administrators acknowledge the usefulness of UbD in careful lesson planning (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005) and how it helps them design a curriculum that puts development of enduring understanding at its core (Whitehouse, 2016). The FGD participants affirmed that the delivery of instruction becomes more goal-directed and seamless with the help of the UbD framework. With the learning goals identified at the beginning, everything else follows through cohesively. Just like Item 8, for this item, document analysis cannot determine if the UbD framework enables teachers to organize their thoughts much easier, put these into writing, and implement these in instruction.

Suggestions to Module Writing

Table 2 shows the required constructed responses for the open-ended item, namely the suggestions the respondents provided to make module writing more relevant and useful to them. The top three (3) responses include provide regular trainings for teachers on UbD, curriculum mapping, and module writing, keep the current learning module as is, and simplify the learning module components upon reviewing it. More than 14% of the respondents assert that regular training regarding on the UbD framework, curriculum mapping, and module writing will aid them to develop and implement instructional activities and assessment strategies. Such a suggestion will be raised to the administration for full consideration and implementation. Almost 12% of the respondents, meanwhile, find the current learning module template to be adequate, contending to keep it as it is. Relatedly, more than 9% of the respondents recommend simplifying the learning module upon further review. This suggestion requires an institutional re-examination of DLSZ's learning modules. However, a consideration to the school's new learning mode (i.e., online distance learning) will also be taken into context.

Table 2. Respondents' Top Three Answers on the Item that Required Constructed Responses (N=77)

Open-Ended Item	Top Three Answers
Suggestions to make the learning modules more relevant and useful	1. Provide regular trainings for teachers on the UbD framework, curriculum mapping, and module writing (14.13%)
	2. None, keep the current learning module as it is (11.96%)
	3. Simplify the learning module components upon further review (9.78%)

These results affirm that both teachers and administrators appreciate the UbD framework's purpose of directing curriculum and teaching to develop and deepen student understanding and transfer of learning. Similarly, these results confirm that many of the suggestions proposed by them pertain to ways of improving the planning processes and instructional practices following the key tenets of the school's current design framework.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the study show that DLSZ JHS teachers and administrators perceive the UbD framework to be relevant and useful in writing learning modules based on its principles that they find highly evident. The results also affirm that the said design framework helped enhance the delivery of instruction through purposeful curricular planning focusing on the development and deepening of student understanding and transfer of learning. Teaching for the purpose of understanding involves an intricate process; nevertheless, the three (3) stages of the UbD framework offer structure and process that enable teachers to go through thoughtful planning, thereby attaining the desired learning goals of each lesson. Hopefully, through the school's efforts in continuously developing its curriculum and approach to teaching, its educational goals will be sustained especially now that learning modalities have to be modified in the current setup we are in.

The results of this study can serve as data in fortifying DLSZ's curriculum planning processes. It is recommended that regular trainings be provided for the faculty on module writing and that learning module format and its components be reviewed extensively in order to determine if there is a way of simplifying these further. In addition, it will be helpful if a checklist is created, which will serve as a mechanism to determine the effectiveness of each UbD stage in module writing. Aside from this, it is recommended that future studies focus on student learning, particularly on how UbD methodically guides students in attaining the desired learning outcomes. Statements in the evaluation questionnaire should be revised to make it concise and the four-point rating scale should be reviewed as well as clearly defined.

REFERENCES

[1] Açar, A., Ercan, B., & Altun, S. 2019. Teaching Probability through Understanding by Design: An Examination on Students' Achievement, Attitude and Views.
[2] Castillo, L., Prudente, M., & Aguja, S. 2021. Designing Authentic Online Distance Learning Assessments in Teaching Asian History. In 2021 12th
International Conference on E-Education, E-Business, E-Management, and E-Learning (IC4E 2021), January 10–13, 2021, Tokyo, Japan. ACM, New York, NY, USA, 5 pages. https://doi.org/10.1145/3450148.3450165
[3] Childre A., Sands J.R., & Pope, S.T. 2009. Backward Design: Targeting Depth of Understanding for All Learners. TEACHING Exceptional Children. 41 (5), 6-14. doi:10.1177/004005990904100501
[4] Graff, N. 2011. "An Effective and Agonizing Way to Learn": Backwards Design and New Teachers' Preparation for Planning Curriculum. Teacher Education Quarterly, 38, 151-168.
[5] McTighe, J., & Thomas, R. 2003. Backward Design for Forward Action. Educational Leadership: Using Data to Improve Student Achievement, 6 (5), 52-55.
[6] McTighe, J., & Seif, E. 2021. A Summary of Underlying Theory and Research Base for Understanding by Design (pp. 10-13).
[7] Moss, C., Brookhart, S., & Long, B. 2011. Knowing your learning target. Educational Leadership 68 (6), 66-69.
Richards, J. 2013. Curriculum Approaches in Language Teaching: Forward, Central, and Backward Design. RELC Journal. 44, 5-33.
10.1177/0033688212473293.
[8] Roth, D. 2017. Understanding by Design: A Framework for Effecting Curricular Development and Assessment. CBE Life Sciences Education, 6 (2),
95-97. doi: 10.1187/cbe.07-03-0012
[9] Rubrica, R. D. 2019. An Action Research on Project-Based Learning and Understanding by Design and Their Effects on the Science Achievement and Attitude of Science Students. Journal of Education and Practice, 10 (5). DOI: 10.7176/jep/10-5-02
[10] Schwieger, D., & Ladwig, C. 2021. Using a Modified Understanding by Design® Framework to Incorporate Social Media Tools in the Management Information Systems Curriculum for Generation Y and Z Students. Journal of Information Systems Education, 32 (3), 166-175.
[11] Tomlinson, C., & McTighe, J. 2006. Integrating differentiated instruction and Understanding by Design: Connecting Content and Kids. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
[12] Tumlos-Castillo, L. 2015. Initial evaluation of the understanding by design (UbD) framework in writing learning modules. De La Salle University.
Retrieved from: http://www.dlsu.edu.ph/conferences/dlsu_research_congress/2015/lli/LLI-I-004.pdf
[13] Whitehouse, M. 2014. Using a backward design approach to embed assessment in teaching. School Science Review. 95 (352), 99-104.
[14] Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. 2005. Understanding by Design (expanded 2nd edition). Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
[15] Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. 2011. The Understanding by Design guide to creating high-quality units. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.