

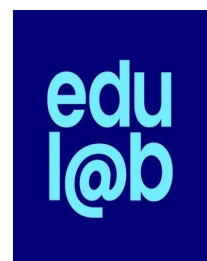


# CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR PUBLIC SERVANTS THROUGH ONLINE EDUCATION:

THE CASE OF THE MPM PROGRAM OF THE UPOU

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## ***Abstract***

Is Online Education an effective tool for capacity development of public servants? This is the focus of the research, and it concludes that given an enabling environment and effective implementing organization, it can be one of the innovations and strategies in capacity development that can be adopted and institutionalized in the post pandemic era.

However, despite its recognition, there has been little study on its effectiveness and whether public servants achieve the learning outcomes and competencies expected from the program. Thus, the research aims to contribute to Online Education as a capacity development tool specifically for public servants and to the field of public administration and governance education.

The study utilized the case study approach and focused on the context of the Philippines, specifically the University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU) as an online institution. The emphasis of the research is the Master of Public Management (MPM) Program as a capacity development program for public servants.

Focused Group Discussions and Online Surveys were utilized to gather data and information from the research participants which consist of informants from UPOU and the MPM Program. The profile and perceptions of the students and alumni were gathered through semi-structured online surveys.

The research findings show that the MPM alumni gained the relevant competencies expected from the Program. Moreover, learning outcomes are also achieved by the Program making online education an effective tool for capacity development.

However, the study also established that this can be achieved if there is an enabling environment such as presence of policies, ICT infrastructure and openness to Online Education. Moreover, the capacity of online institutions is also important to enable them to deliver quality online programs effectively and efficiently. This means having quality learning resources and continuously training teachers and staff on online learning. In the context of the Philippines, it has the relevant policies and continuously upgrade its ICT infrastructure which is mostly in urban areas. The UPOU is also recognized as an institution that delivers online education since it has the mandate given by the government.

The study also provides recommendations on how Online Education can be improved in the Philippines, including the UPOU which offers all its programs and courses online. Finally, it also gives specific suggestions to the MPM Program on how it can be improved.

## **Resumen**

¿Es la Educación en Línea una herramienta efectiva para el desarrollo de capacidades de los servidores públicos? Este es el enfoque de la investigación, y concluye que, dado un entorno propicio y una organización de implementación eficaz, puede ser una de las innovaciones y estrategias en el desarrollo de capacidades que se pueden adoptar e institucionalizar en la era posterior a la pandemia.

Sin embargo, a pesar de su reconocimiento, ha habido poco estudio sobre su efectividad y si los servidores públicos logran los resultados de aprendizaje y las competencias que se esperan del programa. Por lo tanto, la investigación tiene como objetivo contribuir a la Educación en Línea como una herramienta de desarrollo de capacidades específicamente para servidores públicos y para el campo de la educación en administración pública y gobernabilidad.

El estudio utilizó el enfoque de estudio de caso y se centró en el contexto de Filipinas, específicamente la Universidad Abierta de la Universidad de Filipinas (UPOU) como una institución en línea. El énfasis de la investigación es el Programa de Maestría en Gestión Pública (MPM) como un programa de desarrollo de capacidades para servidores públicos.

Se utilizaron discusiones de grupos enfocados y encuestas en línea para recopilar datos e información de los participantes de la investigación, que consisten en informantes de la UPOU y el Programa MPM. El perfil y las percepciones de los alumnos y ex alumnos se recogieron a través de encuestas online semiestructuradas.

Los resultados de la investigación muestran que los egresados del MPM adquirieron las competencias relevantes que se esperaban del Programa. Además, el programa también logra resultados de aprendizaje, lo que convierte a la educación en línea en una herramienta eficaz para el desarrollo de capacidades.

Sin embargo, el estudio también estableció que esto se puede lograr si existe un entorno propicio, como la presencia de políticas, infraestructura de TIC y apertura a la educación en línea. Además, la capacidad de las instituciones en línea también es importante para permitirles ofrecer programas en línea de calidad de manera efectiva y eficiente. Esto significa tener recursos de aprendizaje de calidad y capacitar continuamente a los maestros y al personal sobre el aprendizaje en línea. En el contexto de Filipinas, tiene las políticas pertinentes y actualiza continuamente su infraestructura de TIC, que se encuentra principalmente en áreas urbanas. La UPOU también es reconocida como una institución que brinda educación en línea ya que tiene el mandato otorgado por el gobierno.

El estudio también brinda recomendaciones sobre cómo se puede mejorar la educación en línea en Filipinas, incluida la UPOU, que ofrece todos sus programas y cursos en línea. Finalmente, también da sugerencias específicas al Programa MPM sobre cómo se puede mejorar.

## **Resum**

L'educació en línia és una eina eficaç per al desenvolupament de capacitats dels funcionaris públics? Aquest és el focus de la investigació i conclou que donat un entorn propici i una organització d'execució eficaç, pot ser una de les innovacions i estratègies en el desenvolupament de capacitats que es poden adoptar i institucionalitzar en l'era postpandèmia.

Tanmateix, malgrat el seu reconeixement, hi ha poc estudi sobre la seva eficàcia i si els funcionaris públics aconsegueixen els resultats d'aprenentatge i les competències esperades del programa. Així, la investigació pretén contribuir a l'educació en línia com a eina de desenvolupament de capacitats específica per als funcionaris públics i a l'àmbit de l'administració pública i l'educació en govern.

L'estudi va utilitzar l'enfocament de l'estudi de cas i es va centrar en el context de les Filipines, concretament la Universitat Oberta de la Universitat de Filipines (UPOU) com a institució en línia. L'èmfasi de la investigació és el Programa de Màster en Gestió Pública (MPM) com a programa de desenvolupament de capacitats per als funcionaris públics.

Es van utilitzar debats de grup focalitzats i enquestes en línia per recollir dades i informació dels participants de la investigació, que consisteixen en informants de la UPOU i del programa MPM. El perfil i les percepcions dels estudiants i antics alumnes es van recopilar mitjançant enquestes en línia semiestructurades.

Els resultats de la investigació mostren que els antics alumnes de MPM van obtenir les competències rellevants esperades del programa. A més, el programa també aconsegueix els resultats d'aprenentatge fent que l'educació en línia sigui una eina eficaç per al desenvolupament de capacitats.

Tanmateix, l'estudi també va establir que això es pot aconseguir si hi ha un entorn propici com la presència de polítiques, la infraestructura TIC i l'obertura a l'educació en línia. A més, la capacitat de les institucions en línia també és important per permetre'ls oferir programes en línia de qualitat de manera eficaç i eficient. Això significa tenir recursos d'aprenentatge de qualitat i formar contínuament professors i personal sobre aprenentatge en línia. En el context de les Filipines, té les polítiques pertinents i millora contínuament la seva infraestructura TIC, que es troba principalment a les zones urbanes. La UPOU també és reconeguda com una institució que ofereix educació en línia ja que té el mandat que li ha donat el govern.

L'estudi també ofereix recomanacions sobre com es pot millorar l'educació en línia a les Filipines, inclosa la UPOU, que ofereix tots els seus programes i cursos en línia. Finalment, també ofereix suggeriments específics al Programa MPM sobre com es pot millorar.



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# Chapter I: Introduction

## A. Background of the study

The Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) pandemic has been a real game changer. It not only affected the lives of people but all sectors of the society including the education sector bringing it into a “crisis” situation. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2020), noted that it affected nearly 1.6 billion learners in more than 190 countries; closing schools and other learning spaces affecting 94 per cent of the world’s student population in up to 99 percent in low and lower-middle income countries.

In the higher education sector, while most of the institutions shifted to the use of online tools, some universities have postponed learning and teaching until further notice, due to the lack of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) infrastructure for both students and teachers (UNESCO, 2020). There were even calls for an “academic freeze” which refers to the cancellation of formal classes amidst the pandemic.

The situation provided an impetus for Governments to utilize ICT not only in government processes and procedures but also in education. Even before the pandemic era, ICT was already recognized as an important tool for education; allowing more accessibility and inclusivity as learners are provided more flexible and affordable means of learning. It is also a means to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations wherein one of them is SDG 4 which is the provision of quality education and promotion of lifelong learning (Gervacio in Brown, 2020).

However, the sudden shift to online learning has also brought in realizations about the issues and challenges that existed which are most prominent in developing countries. They include difficulty in the access of technology and internet connectivity brought about by the high cost of data connection and poor ICT infrastructure. Moreover, this is aggravated by the lack of information on the capacity and level of digital skills of educators, academic staff and even learners.

Although institutions and organizations offering capacity development programs have slowly been expanding the use of online learning in programs and courses through the years, the pandemic highlighted its relevance during this period which led to the realization that if conducted properly, it could be effective. Thus, it is now being considered as part of the innovations that will be adopted in the post pandemic era.

Amidst all the challenges and uncertainties that ICT has brought to education, it has also provided an opportunity to determine if the use of online learning is an effective tool in developing the capacities of organizations and people. There are still few studies on the contributions of Online Education to capacity development, especially when it comes to public servants.

The term Online Education has several related terminologies. Thus, it is important to understand the various definitions. Online education refers to courses that are delivered via the internet.

Skrypnik, Joksimović, Kovanović, Dawson, Gašević and Siemens (2012) said that any instructor who employs technology in his/her teaching practice, whether in f2f or through web-based distance education practices online education. This is also closely related to e-learning where “e” refers to electronics which are used as a tool in education and training. It refers to the use of electronic media for a variety of learning purposes that range from add-on functions in conventional classrooms to full substitution for face-to-face meetings (Guri-Rosenblit, 2005).

Similar to education, capacity development refers to helping individuals and institutions to be able to perform their tasks effectively and efficiently. According to Lavergne and Saxby (2001), “capacity development is a process by which individuals, groups, organizations and societies enhance their abilities to identify and meet development challenges in a sustainable manner” (p. 4). Bolger (2000) describes capacity development as an “approach or process to eliminate or at least reduce social problems such as poverty” (p. 1). He further defined capacity as “abilities, skills, understanding, attitudes, values, relationships, behaviours, motivations, resources and conditions that enable individuals, organizations, networks/sectors and broader social systems to carry out functions and achieve their development objectives over time” (p.2).

One important sector that needs capacity is the public servants. The term “Public Servants” is a broad description of people working to achieve the greater good. Whether they are employed in the private or public sector, so long as their work serves the general public, they are called “public servants”. An inclusive definition of the term is “someone working in public services (even outside the public sector)” (Needham & Mangan, 2014).

The scope of public servants is broad since it does not only involve the government which represents the national, local and intergovernmental organizations but also includes non-government non-profit sectors, civil society and individual citizens who are not only involved in the decision making process of the government but also in the implementation and monitoring of development programs.

In the Philippines, ICT has been utilized to deliver public services to the citizens in a more efficient and effective manner. Like other countries, this has been intensified during the pandemic which led the country to a faster transition to digitize various government processes and transactions.

Moreover, online learning was made possible not only to cater the needs of students, but to continue education that has been halted. Learners have been introduced and engaged in a variety of learning strategies which combine synchronous and asynchronous classes. Two years into the pandemic, these practices continue to thrive in most higher education institutions (HEIs) in the country while at the same time slowly transitioning back to face-to-face classes.

However, for the University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU), online learning is not new. This is because it is the only institution recognized by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) that offers online learning.

The UPOU was created in 1995 and is the fifth autonomous campus of the University of the Philippines System and advocates the use of distance education wherein teachers and learners are not physically together in one classroom. It is envisioned as a leader in teaching and learning in the digital age to help equip Filipinos with the knowledge and skills they need for life and work in the 21st century (UPOU Visitor's Kit, n.d).

As early as 2001, the UPOU went online through the use of Integrated Virtual Learning Environment (IVLE) to facilitate online connectivity of learners and teachers. However, it was in 2007 when it started utilizing an interactive Learning Management System (LMS) making it the most comprehensive institution offering online education.

As early as 2014, Republic Act. No. 10650, also known as the Open Distance Learning Act, the UPOU was given the mandate to assist relevant national agencies, higher education institutions, and technical and vocational institutions in developing their distance education programs through training, technical assistance, research and other academic programs. This legislation is very important for a developing country since it is a challenge to deliver quality education to millions of Filipino learners.

The UPOU's transformation can also be attributed to the rapid technological changes. It now uses Open Educational Resources (OERs) in course development and has established its own repository of OERs. It has also offered Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) as part of its mandate.

It has also developed networks and partnerships with different organizations at the local as well as international levels. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the UPOU has conducted several online programs primarily aimed at teachers on how to deliver online education.

At present, it is adopting the concept of the “University of the Future” focusing on the future-proofing of degrees, developing microlearning courses and exploring the use of immersive technologies.

One of the pioneer programs of the UPOU is the Master of Public Management (MPM) which was first offered in 1997 or just two years after its creation. This makes it the first HEI to offer Online Education as a capacity development strategy for public servants. The Program offers three fields of specialization, namely: Public Policy and Program Administration, Local Government and Regional Administration and Voluntary Sector Management. The average number of students enrolled every semester has increased through the years from 150 students in 2000, it has now grown to 330 students in 2022.

Through the years, the MPM has also initiated some policies and innovations. In 2013, the recognition of prior learning was adopted in its admission process. Moreover, the Program also utilized OERs in its course development. It has also created its own MPM Playlist composed of edited video lectures. It has also started offering MOOCs for public servants in 2015. It is currently a member of the Association of Schools of Public Administration in the Philippines (ASPAP) and the Eastern Regional Organization in Public Administration (EROPA).

It is against this backdrop that this thesis is undertaken. This study provides a comprehensive evaluation of the contributions of Online Education as a capacity development tool for public servants. A study initially conducted by the Researcher in 2012 of students who were enrolled at the Master of Public Management Program of the University of the Philippines Open University noted that the majority of student respondents would recommend e-learning as a means of capacity building for the public sector.

Online education can positively influence capacity development programs. This research aims to provide a more in-depth study about the contributions of Online Education in capacity development, particularly of public servants in the Philippines. Moreover, this study also identifies facilitating factors as well as organizational capacities in implementing Online Education; including an evaluation of learning outcomes as well as competencies of public servants.

Several frameworks have been proposed in trying to determine the learning outcomes of capacity development. However, they depend on the type of capacity development that was undertaken. Based on the development results framework for capacity development, there are several learning outcomes which include the following:

- Raised awareness
- Enhanced/New Skills related to the job

- Improved Teamwork in the office
- Fostered Coalition and Networks
- Formulated a Policy/Strategy
- Implemented a Policy/Strategy (Otoo, Agapitova & Behrens, 2009).

With regard to learning competencies, the National Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA), a global community of over 300 schools of public policy, public affairs, and public administration located in the U.S., U.K., Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and South America has come up with a set competency standard for the Master's Program for public administration, management and related fields.. The universal required competencies for graduates of Master's Degree Program include five domains, namely:

- to lead and manage in the public interest;
- to participate in, and contribute to, the policy process;
- to analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems and make evidence-informed decisions in a complex and dynamic environment;
- to articulate, apply, and advance a public service perspective;
- to communicate and interact productively and in culturally responsive ways with a diverse and changing workforce and society at large (Haupt, Kapucu and Hu, 2017).

## **B. Research Questions**

The study aims to answer the two-fold research question: How does online education work as a mechanism for capacity development of public servants in the Philippines? What is the role of the UPOU as a major provider of online education in the Philippines? Specifically, it aims to answer the following research questions:

- a. How does online education contribute to capacity development programs?
- b. What are the socio-economic, political and cultural factors influencing the implementation of online education in the context of the Philippines?
- c. How is online education utilized by UPOU to develop capacities of public servants through its Master of Public Management Program (MPM)?
- d. How do MPM students and graduates perceive online education as a means for capacity development of public servants in the Philippines?
- e. What do MPM administrators and other stakeholders perceive as benefits and challenges of learning through online education?

## C. Research Objectives

The primary goal of this research is to determine and explain the contribution of online education in capacity development of public servants in the Philippines. The research focuses on the case of the University of the Philippines Open University, particularly the Master of Public Management Program.

Specifically, the research also aims to:

- a. Describe the expected competence outcomes of capacity development and the contributions of online education that current international and national literature identifies as a means for achieving them.
- b. Identify the factors (socio-economic, political, cultural, technological, and others) that could affect the implementation of online education programs for capacity development, worldwide and, particularly, in the Philippines.
- c. Analyze the organization of the UPOU (mission, vision, leadership, governance, infrastructure, etc.) and how it has transformed its approaches and strategies of implementing online education.
- d. Explore the perceptions of the MPM students and graduates about their experiences in online education, and the knowledge and competencies that they think they have acquired from the program.
- e. Analyze the perception of stakeholders about the effectiveness of the MPM program on the capacity development of Filipino public servants and their perceived strengths and weaknesses.
- f. Establish guidelines, strategies and actions to be recommended to improve the effectiveness of online capacity development programs, in the Philippine context and worldwide.

## D. Definition of Terms

The thesis uses utilizes a lot of terminologies which are somehow related and maybe confusing, thus it is necessary that the various terms are defined properly. The following are the terms that are used in this study.

**Online Education.** This refers to “a form of distance education where technology mediates the learning process, teaching is delivered completely using the Internet, and students and instructors are not required to be available at the same time and place” (Kovanović, et.al., 2015).

**E-learning.** “E-learning is an approach to teaching and learning, representing all or part of the educational model applied, that is based on the use of electronic media and devices as tools for improving access to training, communication and interaction and that facilitates the adoption of new ways of understanding and developing learning” (Sangra et. al., 2012, p. 152).

**Open and Distance E-learning (ODeL).** This refers to UPOU’s brand of Online Education wherein as early as 2001, it went online through the use of the Integrated Virtual Learning Environment (IVLE) to facilitate online connectivity of learners and teachers. ODeL refers to “forms of education provision that use contemporary technologies to enable varied combinations of synchronous and asynchronous communication among learners and educators who are physically separated from one another for part or all of the education experience” (Alfonso, 2012; as cited by Arinto, 2016)

**Capacity Development.** Bolger (2000) describes capacity development as an “approach or process to eliminate or at least reduce social problems such as poverty” (p. 1). He further defined capacity as “abilities, skills, understanding, attitudes, values, relationships, behaviours, motivations, resources and conditions that enable individuals, organizations, networks/sectors and broader social systems to carry out functions and achieve their development objectives over time” (p.2).

**Public Servants.** The term “Public Servants” is a broad description of people working to achieve the greater good. Whether they are employed in the private or public sector, so long as their work serves the general public, they are called “Public Servants”. An inclusive definition of the term is “someone working in public services (even outside the public sector)” (Needham & Mangan, 2014).

**Enabling Environment.** The enabling environment that affects Online Education includes, political, socio-economic and cultural environments. Governments are expected to address basic issues like internet access with adequate infrastructure, language, computer literacy, etc. (Liyanagunawardena, Y., Williams, S. and Adams, 2013)

**Organizational Capacity.** This refers to organizational aspects which include clarity of mission; achievement of outcomes; financial viability; support of stakeholders; and adaptability in anticipating change (Otoo, et. al., 2009).

**Learning Outcomes.** The expected learning outcomes based on the development results framework. This is based on the type of intervention or capacity development that has been undertaken.



**Competencies of Public Servants.** The study utilized the universal required competencies for graduates of Master's Degree Program of the National Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration, a global community of over 300 schools of public policy, public affairs, and public administration located in the U.S., U.K., Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and South America. It includes five domains, namely:

## **E. Structure of the Thesis**

The current thesis is organized around eight chapters which are briefly summarized below.

The first chapter is on the Introduction of the study. This is followed by the Theoretical Framework. Then the Methodology is discussed focusing on the design and different strategies of data gathering including the challenges.

The results and discussion of the research is composed of four chapters. The first one provides an overview on the political, socio-economic, and cultural factors affecting online education in the Philippines. It also discusses UPOU as an Online educational institution and the Master of Public Management (MPM) as Capacity Development Program for public servants.

The second part highlights the results of the interview regarding the factors affecting Online Education in the Philippines and the effectiveness of UPOU as an Online Education Institution.

The third discussion focuses on the effectiveness of the MPM Program as a Capacity Development Tool for public servants which is based on the results of the survey of students and alumni. It discusses the perceptions of the students regarding learning outcomes and the competencies gained from the Program by the alumni.

The fourth part provides recommendations on how Online Education can be improved in the Philippines including suggestions to UPOU and the MPM Program.

The last part concludes the thesis with a summary of the research context and findings, its implications to Online Education and capacity development.

# Chapter II: Theoretical Framework

## A. Introduction

For a clearer understanding on how Online Education (OE) serves as a tool for capacity development of public servants, it is important to conduct a literature review of the various concepts of capacity development (CD), online education and public servants. The review aims to provide insights to the state-of-the-art of the research topic.

The discussion is composed of five sections. The first part provides an overview of what CD is all about, clarifying the various terminologies and how it evolved in terms of perspective and approaches. It also discusses the various levels of capacity development and identifies the capacity actors.

The second part investigates Online Education as an approach to CD. Similar to CD, it is also important to define the various terminologies and characteristics associated with OE. Moreover, it presents previous studies on how OE is utilized by public servants.

Corollary to this, is defining who the public servants are, their roles in development and their need for capacity development. This is discussed in the third section.

The fourth section highlights the contribution of Online Education in Capacity Development. Included are the studies related to the measures of capacity development; tools in evaluating capacity development activities and measures of competencies gained.

The last section proposes the framework of the study and adopting it to fit the objectives of the research.

## B. Capacity Development: Evolution, Concepts and Approaches

Organizations rely on the talent, knowledge, and skills of people to be able to achieve their goals. Hence, it is important to continuously develop their competence to

improve performance as well as support changes that further promote innovation and creativity.

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) defines capacity as “the ability of individuals, institutions and societies to perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve objectives in a sustainable manner” (Management Development & Division, 1997). A similar definition was provided by Malik (2002) defining capacity as the ability of actors (individuals, groups, organizations, institutions, countries) to perform specific functions or specified objectives effectively and efficiently (Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research, 2015).

Morgan (1996) also defined “capacity as the ability of individuals, groups, institutions and organizations to identify and solve development problems over time.” A similar definition was given by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) when it defined capacity as “individually or collectively perform functions, solve problems, and set and achieve objectives” (JICA, 2004, p16). The context is focused on the core capabilities to be developed, strengthened and be utilized to achieve the objectives (Vallejo & Wehn, 2016).

According to Müller, Appleton, Ricci, Valverde & Reynolds (2015), capacity includes not just the knowledge and skills of individuals but also the capacities of organizations and institutions to perform. It is also about the individuals’ motivation and leadership in line with the organization and its environment.

The need for capacity seems to be more important in less developed countries and post-conflict states. This is because they are confronted by and vulnerable to several issues such as natural disasters, political issues and even security problems. Moreover, there is also an issue regarding the ‘brain drain’ of qualified leaders, managers, researchers, scientists and workers in nearly all economic sectors. Capacity deficit not only affects the governance system but also threatens sustainability of technical cooperation and in achieving national and international development (UNESCO, 2011).

Moreover, Kuhl (2009) also noted that the function of CD is to meet the legitimacy requirements of organizations offering development assistance, thus an increase in “capacities” in developing countries contributes to the success of development projects.

## **1. Capacity Development**

Although in many literatures, the terms capacity development and capacity building have been used interchangeably, the concepts are different simply because the words “development” and “building” provide different meanings. Hence, it is important to make a clear distinction between these two approaches.

According to Lavergne (2003), one major change in the approach is the importance of local ownership and participation. Early models of development cooperation were focused on the “transfer” of capacity which ignored local ownership. Hence, the term capacity building connotes “creating something that does not exist” and could underestimate the potential of the country itself. On the other hand, “capacity development” recognizes the importance of the local context and considers the possibilities that exist in a country (JICA 2003 as cited in Matachi, 2006).

An example of local ownership is the development of Singapore’s education system wherein they made efforts to develop the capacities of teachers and leaders which increased their competencies over time. Once there was an increase in trust, it enabled a shift from a centralized approach of accountability towards school-led accountability and innovations (Lee, S. S., Ho, J., & Yong, T. L., 2020)

Hope (2009) also noted that capacity development has several definitions or conceptualizations. In these definitions, Capacity Development (CD) could be regarded, for example, as an instrument, a process, an objective, a general approach to development, as well as a change and transformation framework. Bolger also provided examples by saying that the definition of CD as an approach could be “towards the reduction of poverty” while CD as an objective could refer to “targeting the development of an individual or organizational capacity“ (Bolger, 2000).

Pradhan (2010, as cited in Hope, 2011) noticed how various development agencies define CD differently. For UNDP, ‘it is the “how” of making development work better (in UNDP 2008, p. 2); while, for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), it is the ‘process whereby people, organizations, and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt, and maintain capacity over time’ (OECD 2006, p. 12). The World Bank, on the other hand, regards capacity development as fundamentally a country-led and country-owned process of change. Hence, it is apparent that there is no such thing as “one size fits all” definition or approach to CD.

According to Lavergne and Saxby (2001), “capacity development is a process by which individuals, groups, organizations and societies enhance their abilities to identify and meet development challenges in a sustainable manner.” It means that the abilities, attributes and capacities of groups, individuals and organizations are used as a tool to develop themselves. There might be an external aid provided to facilitate the process but the outcome might be different (Lavergne & Saxby, 2001).

Hope (2009) further emphasized that CD is not a stand-alone training intervention but rather a strategically coordinated set of activities aimed at individuals, institutions, and sectors. The process must be owned and managed by the developing countries rather than their external partners.

With these various definitions, it is also important to determine the objectives of CD. Bolger (2000) noted three objectives, as follows: a) to enhance, or more effectively utilize, skills, abilities and resources; b) to strengthen understandings and relationships; and c) to address issues of values, attitudes, motivations and conditions in order to support sustainable development.

## **2. The Evolution of Approaches to Capacity Development**

Aside from discussing the various definitions of capacity development, it is also important to explain how the approaches of capacity development evolved over time in relation to the various development theories. Discussing the evolution of CD would also help explain the changes in the definitions and approaches of CD.

Table 1 presents a summary of how CD has evolved in terms of the concepts of development. The term CD has emerged in the 1980's and draws from several important concepts of development; namely: institution building, institutional development, human resource development, development management/administration and institutional strengthening (Lusthaus, Adrien & Persitnger, 1999).

Further, the table shows that after World War II, capacity building approach was based on institution building wherein institutions were organized and development models were transplanted from the North; and training was mostly done in the Universities in the North. The 1960's and 1970's saw a shift of approach to institutional strengthening and development. This stems from the assumption that institutions have been built and they just needed to be strengthened.

The 1970's approach to CD was focused on target groups that were previously neglected while the 1980's ushered in the term "human resource development" wherein development is about people. The capacity building approach is said to be more relevant in the 1980's to 1990's as there was a focus on the issue of sustainability.

The term capacity development finally emerged in the late 1980s to 1990's as there was an emphasis on the concept of local ownership. Participatory approach was seen as a key approach to development.

The early 21<sup>st</sup> century is focused on capacity development and knowledge networks. There is also a prevalence of ICT-based knowledge networks and more collaboration among donors is encouraged.

Since the original table is only until the early 2000's, it is important to note that the rapid advances in technology in recent years including global events such as financial crisis, COVID-19 pandemic, among others, increased the sense of vulnerability and uncertainty. Thus, the researcher proposes to augment the table to consider CD in the context of a Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous (VUCA) environment.

According to Bawany (2016), VUCA is a term used in the military in 1990s and described as follows:

- Volatile – things change unpredictably
- Uncertain – information not known or definite, doubtful, unclear about the present situation and future outcomes
- Complex – many key decision factors, interaction between diverse agents
- Ambiguous - the meaning of an event can be understood in different ways.

Spicer (2020) also mentioned that the COVID-19 crisis can create space for new opportunities and a sense of urgency needed to drive change which makes resiliency very important.

Thus, to address VUCA, the approaches and skills include digital skills for better communication, working together for teamwork, agility, resiliency, among others. Futures thinking and foresight is also included.

Further, the Asian Development Bank (2020) defines futures thinking as the theory and methods; while foresight is the practical application. It is a set of approaches and tools designed to identify emerging issues, negotiate uncertainties, articulate scenarios, develop a common vision and introduce innovation towards better policies and strategies.

*Table 1. Predecessors of Capacity Development/Knowledge Networks*

<b>Term</b>	<b>Decade</b>	<b>Capacity-building approaches</b>
Institution building	1950s and 1960s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide public sector institutions</li> <li>● Focus on and design individual functioning organizations</li> <li>● Models transplanted from the North</li> <li>● Training in Northern universities</li> </ul>
Institutional strengthening and development	1960s and 1970s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Shift to strengthening rather than establishing</li> <li>● Provide tools to improve performance</li> <li>● Focus still on individual organizations and training in the North</li> </ul>
Development management and administration	1970s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reach target groups previously neglected</li> <li>● Focus on improving delivery systems and public programs to reach target groups</li> </ul>
Human resource development	1970s and 1980s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Development is about people; emergence of people-centered development</li> <li>● Key sectors to target are: education, health and population</li> </ul>
New institutionalism	1980s and 1990s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Capacity building broadened to sector level (government, NGO and private)</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Focus on networks and external environment Attention to shaping national economic behavior</li> <li>● Emergence of issues of sustainability and move away from focus on projects</li> </ul>
Capacity development	Late 1980s and 1990s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reassessment of the notion of technical cooperation (TC)</li> <li>● Stressed importance of local ownership and process</li> <li>● Participatory approaches seen as the key and 'the way to do development'</li> </ul>
Capacity development/ knowledge networks	2000s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased participation in capacity building Emphasis on continuous learning and adaptation</li> <li>● Balancing results-based management and long-term</li> <li>● sustainability Systems approach and emerging talk of complex systems Emphasis on needs assessment/analysis</li> <li>● Spread of ICT-based knowledge networks</li> <li>● Increased the coordination among donor agencies</li> </ul>
*Capacity Building in the VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous) World	2015s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Focused Adaptability, Agility and Resilience</li> <li>● Digital skills (communication)</li> <li>● Partnerships/Teamwork</li> <li>● Innovative approach (online education, simulation, role playing, games, etc.)</li> <li>● Futures Thinking and Foresight</li> </ul>

*Sources: Adapted from Lusthaus et al (1995) and Whyte (2004) in (Blagescu & Young, 2006). \*The researcher's input is based on the notion that capacity development is shaped and influenced by the VUCA World.*

Aside from the evolution of the conceptual approaches of CD, the UNDP has come up with a summary on the evolution of CD including the assumptions as well as results of its various approaches. (See Table 2.).

In the initial years of development, there was the assumption that developing countries needed money, hence development aid through money was given to these countries, resulting in debt and increase in foreign debt. After this period, the assumption was for "developing countries to just model themselves against developed ones." This was the era of technical assistance wherein foreign experts came in to do their own projects. Consequently, the result was not very promising since there was no consideration of the local context (UNDP, 2009).

The next phase was the era of technical cooperation wherein there was an emphasis on training and knowledge transfer. This resulted in the enhancement of local expertise but still driven by outside sources.

Further, the UNDP practices capacity development which is based on the assumption that “developing countries should own, design, direct, implement and sustain the process themselves” hence the practice is on empowering and strengthening local capacities and making most of local resources (e.g., people, skills, technologies, etc.). This approach emphasizes sustainable change as well as context (UNDP, 2009)

In recent years, the UNDP also shifted its CD strategy into a transition level. In a presentation on Capacity Development & Transition (2019), it highlighted the need to sustainably transfer its programs to the national or local entities as well as a shift from external donors to domestic sources.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, the UNDP embarked on a comprehensive capacity-development strategy focused on training and technical assistance and creating greater resilience and long-term sustainability. For example, in the area of health, it offers three integrated programs which are “Prepare,” “Respond” and “Recover.” It supports countries to strengthen their health systems and respond in an inclusive and integrated manner of crisis management. It also supports countries in assessing the social and economic impacts of COVID-19 to minimize long-term impact, particularly for vulnerable and marginalized groups that help societies to recover (UNDP and COVID-19, n.d.)

*Table 2. The Evolution of UNDP’s Capacity Development Approach*

F	The Assumption...	The Practice...	The Result...
I R S T	‘Developing countries need money’	<b>Development Aid</b> developed countries lend or grant money to developing countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater focus on investment and reporting than on results</li> <li>• Mounting debt</li> <li>• Dependence on foreign aid</li> <li>• Projects end when money runs out</li> </ul>
T H E N	‘Developing countries should just model themselves after the developed ones’	<b>Technical Assistance</b> foreign experts come in to operate their own projects, which they expect to yield similar results to those seen in developed countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects launched, but disconnected from local goals or priorities</li> <li>• Assumes few or no resources available locally</li> <li>• Dependence on foreign experts</li> <li>• Expertise not always transferred from foreigners to locals</li> <li>• The externally driven model may ignore local realities</li> <li>• Idea of ‘assistance’ highlights unequal relationship between developed and developing countries</li> </ul>



<b>F O L L O W E D B Y</b>	‘Developing countries should partner with developed ones’	<b>Technical Cooperation</b> greater emphasis on training, transferring knowledge, based on national policies and priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local expertise enhanced</li> <li>• Projects somewhat more in line with local priorities and goals</li> <li>• Driven by outside forces, opportunities missed to develop local institutions and strengthen local capacities</li> <li>• Expensive</li> </ul>
<b>A N D C U R R E N T L Y</b>	‘Developing countries should own, design, direct, implement and sustain the process themselves’	<b>Capacity Development</b> A focus on empowering and strengthening endogenous capabilities  *Comprehensive capacity-development strategy focused on training and technical assistance Capacity Development and Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Makes the most of local resources – people, skills, technologies, institutions – and builds on these</li> <li>• Favours sustainable change</li> <li>• Takes an inclusive approach in addressing issues of power inequality in relations between rich and poor, mainstream and marginalized (countries, groups and individuals)</li> <li>• Emphasizes deep, lasting transformations through policy and institutional reforms</li> <li>• Values ‘best fit’ for the context over ‘best practice’; as one size does not fit all</li> <li>• Sustainable handover or ‘transition’ of programs to national entities as the result of capacity development processes</li> <li>• Shift financial burden from external donors to sustainable domestic sources</li> </ul>

*Source: UNDP (2009, p. 8) Capacity Development: A UNDP Primer, and \*UNDP (2019) Capacity Development & Transition Generic Presentation Long Version*

### 3. Taxonomy of Different Approaches to Capacity Development

There are four different levels of approaches to capacity development, namely: a) organizational approach, b) institutional approach, c) system approach; and d) participatory approach (Lusthaus, 1999, cited in Vallejo & Wehn, 2016). Table 3 provides the summary and description of each approach including its strengths and difficulties.

1. **Organizational Approach.** The organizational approach sees the organization as the key to development. This means that the CD programs and activities are aimed at improvement at the organizational level. The advantage of the organizational approach is that it is anchored on organizational theory and

development. However, the weakness of this approach is that organizational change is not sufficient for development to take place (Lusthaus, Adrien & Perstinger, 1999).

2. **Institutional Approach.** The focus of the institutional approach is on the socio-economic and political organization's processes and rules that are implemented. Vallejo and Wehn (2016) noted the strength of this approach at this level since it deals with norms, cultural values, incentives, etc.
3. **Systems Approach.** The systems approach emphasizes the dependence of among the social actors, such as the members of the community in capacity building. The systems approach suggests that CD builds on what already exists (Blagescu & Young, 2006). Capacity development is an all-inclusive strategy involving national, regional and municipal levels, local organizations and institutions, as well as people organized by the state, by private or public organizations, and in their civil roles (Morgan, 1996; UNDP, 1999, as cited in Lusthaus, Adrien, & Perstinger, 1999).
4. **Participatory Process Approach.** The "participatory-process" approach emphasizes the importance of the means used to achieve them. Those who view development as people-centered and non-hierarchical believe that unless capacity development is a participatory, empowering partnership for which those involved feel a high degree of ownership, intended results cannot be achieved (Fowler, 1997, as cited in Lusthaus et al., 1999).

*Table 3. Four Approaches to Capacity Development*

Approach	Focus	Strengths	Difficulties
<b>Organizational</b>	Focuses on identifying the components of capacity within an organization (Morgan, 1989). It sees the system through the eyes of an organization	It has much in common with the field of organizational theory and change. The unit of change is clear	It is not clear how to change organizations in the developing world. Organizational change is necessary but not sufficient (on its own)
<b>Institutional</b>	It builds the capacity to create, change, enforce, and learn from the processes and rules that govern society (Cohen, 1994). Strengthens and restructures existing local institutions. The emphasis is on individual institutions	At the macro level, allows dealing with norms, cultural values, incentive systems, and beliefs, which underlie development problems	The boundary between institutional change and CD is unclear

<b>Systems</b>	It is a dynamic, multidimensional, holistic, and interrelated approach that covers the institutional and organizational perspectives. It suggests that CD should build on existing capacities, rather than build new systems (OECD, 1996; UNDP, 1997).	It is comprehensive, flexible, and emphasizes linkages between elements	The biggest difficulty is to identify what is and what is not a CD activity. It is unclear where a system change effort starts
<b>Participatory process</b>	A process approach that emphasizes the relevance of the means used to achieve CD. It is people-centered [in the sense of organization] and non-hierarchical. It empowers partnership and ownership as key elements for CD (Fowler, 1997). This approach overlaps with aspects from the other three approaches presented here (Morgan, 1998)	It has a clearly defined scope and shares concepts of development, emphasizing participation, ownership, and power sharing	Interventions with a narrow development outcome are easily confused as CD. However, interventions that do not contribute to building capacity should not be considered CD (UNDP, 2009)

Source: Vallejo & Wehn (2016), adapted from Lusthaus et al. (1999) and Kuhl (2009).

#### 4. The Three Levels of Capacity

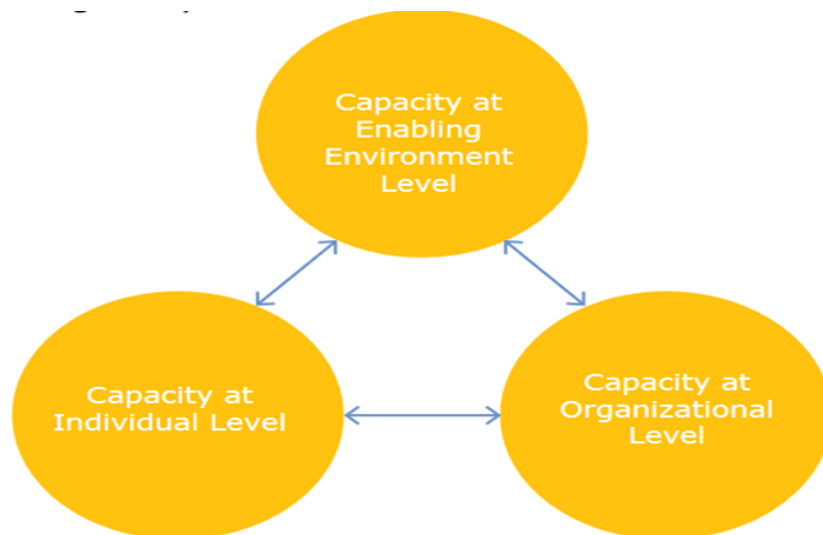
Capacity development can be measured at three levels which influence each other. The UNDP (2009) identifies them as the: 1) enabling environment, 2) the organizations; and 3) the individuals which affect each other. They are further explained below.

1. Enabling environment. This refers to the s the broad social system within which people and organizations operate and includes all the economic, political, environmental, among others.
2. Organization level. This refers to the internal structure, policies and procedures that determine an organization’s effectiveness as influenced by the enabling environment. It is expected that organizations with better resources and aligned to a vision are more likely to have the potential in growing its capacity.

3. Individual level. This refers to improving individual skills, knowledge and performance. The UNDG (n.d.) noted that some are acquired formally through education and training, while others are done informally, through doing and observing. Individual capacity is influenced by the organization and the enabling environment.

Further, Mike Appleton of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (2017) defines capacity development as helping individuals grow and enabling them to be confident with their work. There are many ways of doing it, including online training. Figure 1 below shows that these levels are interconnected.

*Figure 1: Three Interconnected Levels of Capacity*



*Source: UNDG, (n.d.), p.4*

## **C. Online Education: Terminologies, Definitions and Descriptions**

Aside from Capacity Development, it is also important to define Online Education (OE). The concept of open learning, distance education and online learning or online education and other related concepts are linked to different education philosophies and methods of education. The rapid advancement of technology has led to different terminologies and methodologies in education. The various terminologies such as online education, virtual learning, web-based training (WBT), learning management

system (LMS) are just some of the terms that were ushered in by digital technology. However, Clark (1983, as cited in Kovanović, et.al, 2012) was skeptical about it. He argued that technologies are mere vehicles that deliver the instructions to students and do not influence the achievement. He believed that the content is a better determinant of achievement in education.

It is, however, recognized that technology has transformed all sectors of the society including education and educational approaches. This has been more evident during the initial year of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 when educational institutions resorted to the use of technology to provide continuous education to all levels of education. They referred to it as emergency remote teaching and learning.

Despite the differences in terms and meaning of the various terminologies related to Online Education, they all promote alternative quality education and methods of education for those who cannot access (by choice and by chance) conventional and traditional education.

Some of the relevant terminologies are defined and explained below.

## **1. Distance Education (DE) or Distance Learning (DL)**

Distance education is planned learning in which teaching normally occurs in a different place from learning, requiring communication through technologies. (Moore and Kearsley, as cited in Kovanović, et.al, 2012). In addition, Kovanović et al. (2015) said that distance education represents a model that gives the students an opportunity to take programs and courses through an external institution. They stressed that this model of education does not require the students to come on campus for course instruction, content, or study.

Distance Education is also a method of delivery of education. It has been considered as an “industrialized” type of education, and as the product of an industrial society (Peters, 1967; as cited by Peters, 1997). Distance education is less a philosophy and more a method of education. Students can study in their own time, at the place of their choice (home, work or learning center), and without face-to-face contact with a teacher. Technology is a critical element of distance education. (Bates, 2008)

According to Holmberg (1989; as cited by Guri-Rosenblit, 2005), the term ‘distance education’ covers “the various forms of study at all levels which are not under the continuous, immediate supervision of tutors present with their students at lecture rooms or on the same premises. Agreeing to this, Daniel (1990; as cited by Guri-Rosenblit, 2005) said that the interpretation of the term ‘distance education’ embraces all forms of instruction in which classroom sessions are not the primary

means of education. Both academicians agreed that distance education is mostly done at home and has occasional classroom meetings.

UNESCO (n.d.) also defines DE as one particular form of open learning in which tutors and learners are separated by geographical distance. However, unlike open learning, distance education may not be open (access) to all. The methodology of DE or Distance Learning has given rise to the principle that education should and can be open to all (Belawati, 2008).

According to Association for Educational Communication and Technology (n.d), distance education is defined as institution-based, formal education where the learning group is separated and interactive communications systems are used to connect learners, learning resources, and instructors.

The article enumerated the four components of the definition: a) distance education is institutionally based; b) the separation of teachers to students; c) interactive telecommunication; and d) connecting learners, resources and instructors.

The first component differentiates distance education from self-study. Distance education is a form of formal education which is different from self-study.

The second component focuses on the separation of teachers/instructors to the students/learners. Synchronized and asynchronized classes are conducted based on the schedule of both teachers and students. However, the class is physically separated.

The third component of the definition highlights the importance of effective communication in distance education. Communication is crucial to make it efficient and effective. In addition, the interactivity of the “class” is significant and should be given the same treatment similarly to what the traditional and conventional education offer. Students and teachers can communicate within a common, available and relevant mode of communication.

Lastly, the fourth component of the definition pertains to the learners, instructors and resources to allow efficient and effective learning. Not only is communication important, learning resources should also be designed appropriately.

For Perraton (1988; as cited by AECT, n.d), “distance education is a process in education that gives prominence to the ability of the students to learn without the time and space as hindrance” (pg.3). On the other hand, the U.S Department of Education’s Office of Educational Research and Improvement (as cited by AECT, n.d) defined the concept as “the application of telecommunications and electronic devices which enable students and learners to receive instruction that originates from some distant location” (pg.3). Meanwhile, Rumble (1989; as cited by AECT, n.d) expounded the concept into four-part definition which are the teachers; students; a course curriculum that should be

explored by both students and teachers; and an institution that will support and attend to the needs of the concept (pg.4).

In Terry Anderson's Three Generations of Distance Education Pedagogy (2011), he identifies three pedagogies, namely: Cognitive Behaviorism, Social Constructivism and Connectivism.

1. The Cognitive Behaviorism Pedagogy. It assumes that learnings are generally defined as new behaviours or changes in behaviours that are acquired as the result of an individual's response to stimuli (Anderson, 2011). The focus is on the individual and is very teacher-centered. This approach measures actual behaviors, not attitudes or capacities. Due to technological limitations, only a one-to-one or a one-to-many communication can be facilitated. In relation to distance education, the mode of learning is teleconferencing the use of postal service. It is described to be slow, expensive and has a limited scope for interactivity.
2. The Social Constructivist Approach. It acknowledges the social nature of knowledge and of its creation in the minds of individual learners (Anderson, 2011). Learning is located in contexts and relationships rather than merely in the minds of individuals (Greenhow, Robelia, & Hughes, 2009; as cited by Anderson, 2011). During this period, technological advancements can now facilitate a many-to-many communication. The mode of learning is done through the use of email; bulletin boards; world wide web and mobile technologies.
3. The Connectivist Approach. It posits that learning is the process of building networks of information, contacts, and resources that are applied to real problems. Connectivism was developed in the information age of a networked era (Castells (1996) as mentioned in Anderson (2011) and assumes ubiquitous access to networked technologies.

It is noteworthy that connectivist models explicitly rely on the ubiquity of networked connections between people, digital artifacts, and content, which would have been inconceivable as forms of distance learning were the World Wide Web not available to mediate the process (Anderson, 2011). Some of the technologies used in this pedagogy include web browsers, email, wikis, online discussion forums, social networks, YouTube, and other tools that allow users to learn and share information with other people.

## **2. Open Education/Open Learning**

Open Education or open learning is a vision of an educational system accessible to every individual with minimal restrictions (Belawati, 2008). Open learning has a

primary goal of reducing (if not eliminating) the barriers of education from the learners. It promotes and strengthens the capacity of the learner for education. This philosophy stresses the flexibility of the system to eliminate problems caused by barriers of, for example, age, geographical location, time constraints, and economic situation (Bates, 1995).

Open learning is an umbrella term for any scheme of education or training that seeks systematically to remove barriers to learning, whether they are concerned with age, time, place or space. With open learning, individuals take responsibility for what they learn, how they learn, where they learn, how quickly they learn, who helps them and when they have their learning assessed. (UNESCO, n.d.)

Open learning is primarily a goal, or an educational policy. An essential characteristic of open learning is the removal of barriers to learning. This means no prior qualifications to study, and for students with disabilities, a determined effort to provide education in a suitable form that overcomes the disability. Ideally, no-one should be denied access to an open learning program (Bates, 2008).

### **3. Online Education/E-learning/Online Learning**

It is apparent that more institutions are adopting the use of ICT in education or online learning. Srećko Joksimović, et. al. (2015), however, noted that there seems “not to have an authoritative definition of what constitutes online learning.” They tried to look at the various terms related to online education such as online learning, e-learning, distance education, computer mediated learning; and came up with a definition of online learning as “a form of distance education where technology mediates the learning process, teaching is delivered completely using the Internet, and students and instructors are not required to be available at the same time and place.”

E-learning is commonly referred to the intentional use of networked information and communications technology in teaching and learning (Naidu, 2006). It means the use of electronic media for learning purposes (Guri-Rosenblit, 2005). It also refers to courses that are specifically delivered via the internet to somewhere other than the classroom where the professor is teaching (eLearningNC, 2016).

Along with the development of technology, the blurring of meanings between 'distance education' and 'e-learning' led to expectations and predictions that through the new interactive media, many students would be able to join higher and continue education programs at lower costs as compared to classroom teaching in campus universities (Guri-Rosenblit, 2005).



As the letter “e” in e-learning stands for the word “electronic”, e-learning would incorporate all educational activities that are carried out by individuals or groups working online or offline, and synchronously or asynchronously via networked or standalone computers and other electronic devices (Naidu, 2006). Tamm (2019) also defines it as the acquisition of knowledge which takes place through electronic technologies and media. In simple language, e-learning is defined as learning that is enabled electronically.

Sangrà, et al. (2012) defined e-learning by coming up with four general categories of the definition. Based on their study, they came up with the definition that:

“E-learning is an approach to teaching and learning, representing all or part of the educational model applied, that is based on the use of electronic media and devices as tools for improving access to training, communication and interaction and that facilitates the adoption of new ways of understanding and developing learning” (Sangra et. al., 2012, p.152).

The Economic Times provided two descriptions of e-Learning: one is a learning system based on formalized teaching with the help of electronics and the other is referred to as a network enabled transfer of skills and knowledge, and the delivery of education is made to a large number of recipients at the same or different times.

E-Learning is likewise recognized as the transfer of digital skills. It is believed that eLearning is one of the tools to beat the challenge of digital skills shortages, owing to its scalability and the flexibility it allows for learners (Gutierrez, 2016).”

Similar definitions were also given regarding Online Education. Skrypnyk, Joksimović, Kovanović, Dawson, Gašević & Siemens (2012) said that any instructor who employs technology in his/her teaching practice, whether in f2f or through web-based distance education practices is online education. Online education can come in different terminologies such as: virtual education, Internet-based education, web-based education, among others.

The Web-edu project uses a definition of online education that is based on Keegan's (1988, as cited by Paulsen, 2002) definition of distance education which they define through its characteristics of separation of teachers and learners which distinguishes it from face-to-face education; the influence of an educational organization which distinguishes it from self-study and private tutoring; the use of a computer network to present or distribute some educational content; and the provision of two-way communication via a computer network so that students may benefit from communication with each other, teachers, and staff.

The World Economic Forum (WEF, 2016) further provided a distinction in their definition by noting that online education takes two major forms. The first: for-credit courses where students enrolled in tertiary education take online classes; while the second form of online education consists of professional training and certification preparation which usually targets professionals or students seeking training or preparing for certification exams.

In addition, Bebawi (n.d) focused on the platform used in online education. She defined it as the use of the personal computer, the globalization of ideas and other human acts, and the use of technology in exchanging ideas and providing access to more people.

According to Flinders University (FU) (n.d), there are four characteristics of online learning and teaching, namely: Personal, Structured, Active and Connective. These four characteristics for online design are founded on a mix of theories and approaches that are acknowledged in the field of online learning as 'good practice'.

1. Personal. This aspect of online learning is based on social presence theory. One of the advantages of the online environment is that; it can create a teaching presence all the time: whenever the student logs on, the teaching begins. It is important that learners can feel connected to people, artefacts and ideas rather than to a machine or computer. The learning environment should be professional, but also humanized as much as possible.
2. Structured. This aspect of online learning helps the student to understand the syllabus. It emphasizes selection, organization and representation of ideas and things in the online environment. The environment determines the 'character' of the topic, and importantly, sets the conditions for learning. FU (n.d) suggested ideas for practice in this aspect, namely: format the ideas as a whole; connect instructions, activities and resources; provide time on tasks; easy to navigate; unpacked, chunked, staged and contextualized instructions; and utilization of graphic visuals.
3. Active. This aspect examines the interactivity of the learners to the modules or online materials, to teachers, as well as to their classmates. Interactivity is a two-way activity between elements – people and technology – in the environment. Since teaching, learning and assessment are all based in activities, the online environment should utilize the activities through its technological advancements.
4. Connective. Traditionally, online environments and activities connect learners to each other. It serves as a medium for interaction, and a platform for learning. Online learning can make full use of being in a web-based space together with good design; it can be integrated in this aspect of learning into the online

activities. Students in online learning are mostly connected to other forms of online platforms such as social media and other business applications. Therefore, teachers, and institutions which offer online learning should expect a level of connectedness among its students. FU (n.d) suggested ideas for practice for this aspect such as to make use of Open Educational Resources (OER); position the lectures in a global context; prepare activities to students that will demonstrate learning, develop digital literacy skills and citizenship; and inclusion of mobile in learning.

There are also misconceptions about e-learning in higher education like the space and time as barriers to overcome; the urge to extend student population; lack of clear problems as 'problem'; and making e-learning as profit activity.

One of the erroneous assumptions about e-learning is the notion of absence in socializing. Toffler (1980, as cited by Guri-Rosenblit, 2005), predicted the return to the cottage industry on a new, higher, electronic basis, and a new emphasis on the home as the center of society. This became a reality during the COVID-19 pandemic wherein people were confined not only to study from office but also to work from home. However, it is also recognized that there will be workers and students who would still prefer high demands for personal interaction contrary to Toffler's assumption.

Guri-Rosenblit (2005) concluded that space and time constraints serve as barriers to those students who cannot attend a campus or a residential school at specific times. E-learning, in this sense, becomes an alternative among the individual who prefers or in a variety of chances, cannot come to a regular class.

Another misconception in e-learning is that the impact of the development of electronic media on the academe gives the notion to the academic institutions to expand their student population. However, the readiness of faculty, programs and the institution itself has been compromised. Part of the reason is the complicated and demanding task to design a program for distance education; the effectiveness of the delivery of each course should not be compromised considering that the students are not required to attend a class regularly.

On the other hand, the faculty that will facilitate the e-learning programs should comprehend the developing electronic media for learning purposes. In this regard, Guri-Rosenblit (2005) identified that distance education gives the excessive merits to new technology without the effort of defining clear vision of problems and opportunity out of it. In the old and traditional distance education, the use of media has clear parameters – “to deliver study content to students that are unable to attend face-to-face classroom” (pg. 483).

The use of new technology in education agrees with Laurillard's (2001, as cited by Guri-Rosenblit, 2005) perspective. He stated that the higher institutions (both campus-based and distance education) should comply with the demands of the knowledge society by utilizing the technology in teaching. The role of policymakers as system designers and resource allocators are crucial to produce an interactive, reflective and adaptive learning and teaching process.

Finally, the academic institutions should be ready for the infrastructure that will be used for the programs. However, some higher education institutions perceive education, particularly e-learning, as an opportunity to make more profit. It is more economical to bring training and education through e-learning wherein travel, accommodation and insurance expenses would decrease. However, the considerations of the corporate and business sectors are different from the academic institutions. There would be no flights and accommodation needed frequently by students.

Ironically in academic institutions, e-learning infrastructure requires large investment. The institutions should finance the process from acquiring appropriate hardware and software up to the operational maintenance and system upgrades of the infrastructure. Also, the institutions have to consider the rapid development of technology. The technological innovations are fast developing and must be adapted simultaneously.

#### **4. Open and Distance Learning (ODL)**

Open and distance learning (ODL) is a system which combines the methodology of DE with the concepts of open learning and flexible learning. DE specialists believe strongly, however, that many ODL principles can be fulfilled better by DE methods than by conventional face-to-face (f2f) educational approaches (Belawati, 2008). The terms open learning and distance education represent approaches that focus on opening access to education and training provision, freeing learners from the constraints of time and place, and offering flexible learning opportunities to individuals and groups of learners (UNESCO, 2002).

ODL is a combination of the principles of learner centeredness, lifelong learning, flexibility of learning provision, the removal of barriers to access, the recognition of credit for prior learning, and the provision of learner support (Council on Higher Education, 2009).

Learning includes any provision in which a significant element of the management of the provision is at the discretion of the learner, supported and facilitated by the provider. This ranges from traditional correspondence courses; on-line provision and interactive CD ROMS, to open learning centers and face-to-face provision where a

significant element of flexibility, self-study, and learning support, is integral to the provision (Open and Distance Learning Quality Council, 2010).

## **5. Open and Distance e-Learning (ODeL)**

This refers to the University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU) brand of Online Education. Although the University started as a distance education institution, it started to use e-learning as early as 2001. It started out by using electronic mail to send out its learning resources to the students. It eventually went online through the use of the Integrated Virtual Learning Environment (IVLE) to facilitate online connectivity of learners and teachers. ODeL combines all the approaches of open, distance and e-learning.

ODeL aims to remove barriers by encouraging lifelong learning. It is also distance in the sense that learners and teachers are separated by space and time. Learners can study at their own pace and time. It also utilizes e-learning through the use of a learning management system. Thus, ODeL refers to “forms of education provision that use contemporary technologies to enable varied combinations of synchronous and asynchronous communication among learners and educators who are physically separated from one another for part or all of the education experience” (Alfonso, 2012; as cited by Arinto, 2016).

## **6. Remote Teaching and Learning (RTL)**

Remote Teaching and Learning (RTL) refers to a mode of learning that is temporary in nature. During the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a temporary shift of instructional delivery to an alternate delivery mode due to the crisis. It involves the use of fully remote teaching solutions for instruction or education that would otherwise be delivered face-to-face or as blended or hybrid courses and that will return to that format once the crisis or emergency has abated. The primary objective is to provide temporary access to instruction and instructional support in a manner that is quick to set up and is reliably available during an emergency or crisis (Hodges, et. al., 2020)

However, the shift to remote teaching was not easy. For many countries, there were issues regarding the availability and affordability of gadgets and internet connectivity. Moreover, there was little information on the level of knowledge and skills of teachers and academic staff regarding the use of information and communication technology. Unlike in distance learning where learners can study at their own pace and time, remote teaching and learning focuses on the spatial distance.

Table 4 provides a summary of the different terminologies related to Online Education.

Table 4. Online Education Terminologies, Definitions and Description

Terminologies	Definitions	Description
<p><b>Distance Education (DE)/ Learning (DL)</b></p>	<p>“Teaching and planned learning in which teaching normally occurs in a different place from learning, requiring communication through technologies as well as special institutional organization.” (2004, as cited in Kovanović, et.al, 2012)</p>	<p>“Industrialized” type of education, and as the product of an industrial society (Peters, 1967).</p> <p>Distance learning is one particular form of open learning in which tutors and learners are separated by geographical distance (UNESCO, n.d.)</p> <p>A method of education where students can study in their own time, at the place of their choice (home, work or learning centre), and without face-to-face contact with a teacher. Technology is a critical element of distance education. (Bates, 2008)</p> <p>However, distance education programs may not be open.</p>
<p><b>Open Education/Learning</b></p>	<p>Open learning is an umbrella term for any scheme of education or training that seeks systematically to remove barriers to learning, whether they are concerned with age, time, place or space. Individuals take responsibility for what they learn, how they learn, where they learn, how quickly they learn, who helps them and when they have their learning assessed. (UNESCO, n.d.)</p>	<p>Open education, or open learning, is a vision of an educational system accessible to every individual with minimal restrictions. (Belawati, 2008)</p> <p>This philosophy stresses the flexibility of the system to eliminate problems caused by barriers of, for example, age, geographical location, time constraints, and economic situation (Bates, 1995)</p> <p>It is primarily a goal, or an educational policy. An essential characteristic is the removal of barriers to learning. This means no prior qualifications to study, and for students with disabilities, a determined effort to provide education in a suitable form that overcomes the disability). Ideally, no-one should be denied access to an open learning program. Thus, open learning must be scalable as well as flexible. (Bates, 2008)</p>

<p><b>e-Learning/Online Learning/Online Education</b></p>	<p>E-learning is commonly referred to the intentional use of networked information and communications technology in teaching and learning. (Naidu, 2006)</p> <p>Courses that are specifically delivered via the internet to somewhere other than the classroom where the professor is teaching. (eLearningNC, 2016)</p> <p>Online education is the globalization of ideas and other human acts, and the use of technology in exchanging ideas and providing access to more people. (Bebawi, nd.)</p>	<p>As the letter “e” in e-learning stands for the word “electronic”, e-learning would incorporate all educational activities that are carried out by individuals or groups working online or offline, and synchronously or asynchronously via networked or standalone computers and other electronic devices. (Naidu, 2006)</p> <p>The use of electronic media for a variety of learning purposes that range from add-on functions in conventional classrooms to full substitution for the face-to-face meetings by online encounters” (Guri-Rosenblit, 2005)</p> <p>“E-learning is an approach to teaching and learning, representing all or part of the educational model applied, that is based on the use of electronic media and devices as tools for improving access to training, communication and interaction and that facilitates the adoption of new ways of understanding and developing learning” (Sangra et. al., 2012, p.152).</p>
<p><b>Open and Distance Learning (ODL)</b></p>	<p>Open and distance learning (ODL) is a system which combines the methodology of DE with the concepts of open learning and flexible learning. (Belawati, 2008)</p>	<p>Approaches that focus on opening access to education and training provision, freeing learners from the constraints of time and place, and offering flexible learning opportunities to individuals and groups of learners (UNESCO, 2002)</p> <p>Combination of the principles of learner centeredness, lifelong learning, flexibility of learning provision, the removal of barriers to access, the recognition for credit of prior learning, and the provision of learner support (Council on Higher Education, 2009)</p> <p>Any provision in which a significant element of the management of the provision is at the</p>

		discretion of the learner, supported and facilitated by the provider (Open and Distance Learning Quality Council, 2010).
<b>Open and Distance e-Learning (ODeL)</b>	This refers to UPOU's brand of Online Education wherein as early as 2001, it went online through the use of the Integrated Virtual Learning Environment (IVLE) to facilitate online connectivity of learners and teachers.	"Forms of education provision that use contemporary technologies to enable varied combinations of synchronous and asynchronous communication among learners and educators who are physically separated from one another for part or all of the education experience" (Alfonso, 2012; as cited by Arinto, 2016)
<b>(Emergency) Remote Teaching and Learning (COVID-19 era)</b>	Remote Teaching and Learning is a temporary shift of instructional delivery to an alternate delivery mode due to crisis brought in by a crisis. This was utilized during the COVID-19 pandemic.	The use of fully remote teaching solutions for instruction or education that would otherwise be delivered face-to-face or as blended or hybrid courses and that will return to that format once the crisis or emergency has abated. The primary objective is to provide temporary access to instruction and instructional support in a manner that is quick to set up and is reliably available during an emergency or crisis (Hodges, et. al., 2020)

## D. The Public Servants and their Role in Development

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought in a lot of implications in all sectors of the society, like the health and education sectors, businesses and economies and disruption in the social lives of people. This highlighted the role of public servants wherein delivery of public services is crucial.

### 1. Definition of Public Servants

But who are the public servants? In the context of public administration and governance, it is important to identify who they are. The term "Public Servants" is a broad description of people working to achieve the greater good. Whether they are employed in the private or public sector, so long as their work serves the general public, they are called "Public Servants". An inclusive definition of the term is someone working in public services (even outside the public sector) (Needham & Mangan, 2014).



Public servants are entrusted with the responsibility of carrying out tasks of the government and providing services to the public. One factor that is unique to the public sector is the environment where they operate, given the political, social, economic and technological aspects which affect the implementation of government services. Public servants are expected to work in the executive, legislative branches of government including local government (Hayes & Reeves, 1984; as cited by Cabo, 1997).

One of the immediate effects of the pandemic is to transform the work and workplaces of the public servants. They play an important role in the response to the pandemic, more particularly those in the healthcare services.

Public servants were told to adopt an alternative work arrangement and to use technology as a tool in their work. There was a shift to some digital procedures and processes to ensure that public services are still delivered. Thus, it is expected that in the post-pandemic era, governments will shift to digitalization and public servants must have the capacity to do their tasks.

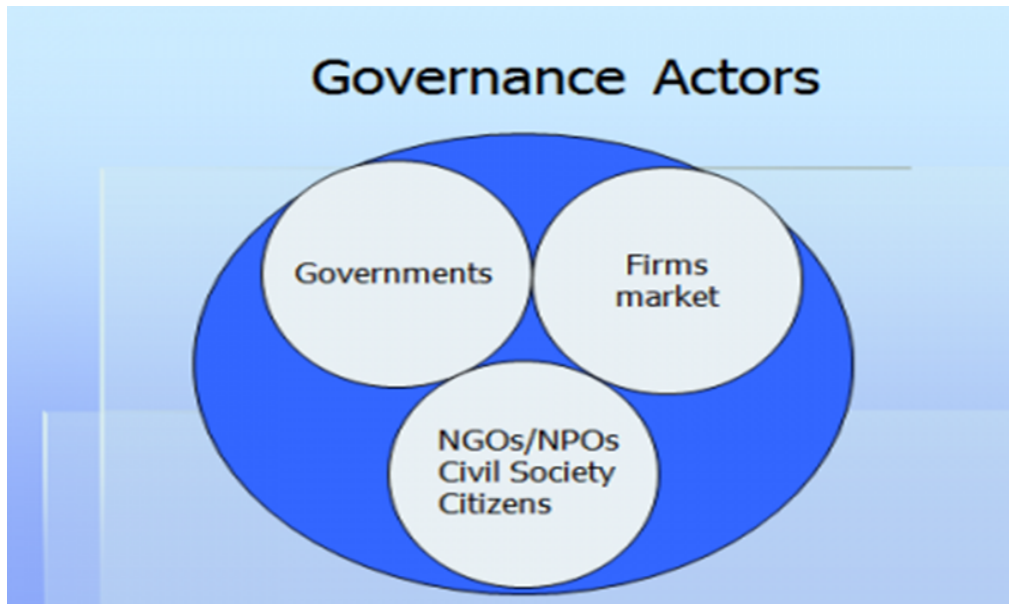
In a study by the Development Academy of the Philippines on the Adoption of Alternative Work Arrangement (2021), they concluded that government employees reported satisfactory levels of productivity during the community quarantine period. They recommended to maximize the use of digital technologies; establish concrete performance standards for functions and tasks done remotely; and recalibrate policies and guidelines in relation to human resource and performance management.

## **2. Capacity Actors**

The scope of public servants is broad since it draws from the concept of "governance" which refers to the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented). Government is one of the actors in governance. Other actors involved in governance vary depending on the level of government and may include associations of peasant farmers, cooperatives, NGOs, research institutes, religious leaders, finance institutions, political parties, the military etc. which may play a role in decision-making or in influencing the decision-making process. All actors other than government and the military are grouped together as part of the "civil society" (UN-ESCAP, n.d.)

Suzuki (2017) presents a diagram of the various actors of governance. They include the government, Non-Government Organization (NGOs)/Non Public Organizations, Civil Society Citizens and the Firm's/Market. These three governance actors all play a role in the country's various aspects of decision making and program implementation related to public service.

Figure 2. Governance Actors



Source: Suzuki (1997), *Summing Up: Reflections from Japan on “Good” Public Governance – Local, National and Global*

To provide a clearer concept of the different capacity actors based on the levels of CD, Table 5 presents the examples of capacity actors for individuals, organizations, and sectors based on the category of the public, private and non-government sectors. For the public sector, individual capacity actors are public servants who serve as decision-makers/managers, including parliamentary representatives and heads of local governments. On the other hand, those from the private for-profit sector, the actors are the executives and employees. For the non-profit sector, the individuals refer to the citizens (JICA, 2004).

Table 3. Examples of Capacity Actors

Category	Capacity Actors
Public Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individuals: public servants (decision-makers, middle-management, field managers), parliamentary representatives, heads of local governments</li> <li>Organizations: organizations and affiliated bodies in the country or municipality country, local governments</li> </ul>
Private for-profit sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual: corporate executives, employees</li> <li>Organizations: companies, business organizations</li> <li>Society: private sector, individual industries</li> </ul>

Private not-for-profit sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Individuals: citizens</li> <li>● Organizations: NGOs, NPOs, community groups</li> <li>● Society: civil society, individual local communities, individual occupational societies</li> </ul>
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*Sources: JICA (2004). Capacity Development Handbook for JICA staff*

Further, a more detailed table was also prepared by Suzuki (1997) by identifying the different actors/levels of governance. Figure 3 presents the private sector or market as transnational corporations and firms. The government aspect can be from national, local and intergovernmental organizations. The non-government or non-profit sectors are represented by NGOs, Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs), civil society and individual citizens.

*Figure 3. Actors/Levels of Governance*

## Actors /levels of Governance

Actors Levels/ Arenas	Private /market	Government	Non- Governmental/No n-profit
<b>Global/inter- national</b>	Trans- National Corporations (TNCs) Firms	Inter-Governmenta Organizations (IGO) States(Central/local Gov.)	NGOs/NPOs Civil Society Individual citizens
<b>National</b>	TNCs Firms	States (Governments) IGOs	NGOs/NPOs NGOs/NPOs/ Civil Society Individual citizens
<b>Local</b>	TNCs Firms	Inter Governmental Organizations (IGOs) Local government Central Government	NGOs/NPOs Civil Society Individual citizens

Source: Suzuki (1997), *Summing Up: Reflections from Japan on "Good" Public Governance – Local, National and Global*

### 3. The Role of Public Servants in Development

Public servants play a crucial law in the achievement of the Social Agenda. The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs Policy's Brief No. 79 on *"The Role of Public Service and Public Servants During the COVID-19 Pandemic (2020)* identifies the roles public servants in implementing the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and they pertain to: a) policy and strategy planning; b) provision of services; c) development of infrastructure; d) mobilization and utilization of resources; e) monitoring and evaluation; and f) institutional and human resource capacity development.

They emphasized that public servants are at the heart of and in devising strategies and plans to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. They also identified nine key roles public servants:

- ensuring continuity of public services;
- providing service before self: courage and humanness in practice;
- quick thinking, creativity and innovation;
- information and awareness creation;
- strategic thinking and planning amidst chaos;

- sustaining resilience and building a better effective and more responsive public service;
- building and enhancing State legitimacy, government credibility and
- people's trust;
- resource allocation and distributive accountability; and
- collaborative and networked leadership (UN, 2020)

Further, the National Academy of Public Administration (n.d.) recognizes the new challenges for governments as it prepares for the future. The public sector has often been in a reactive mode; hence it is important that all sectors of society must work together to address the critical issues of protecting and advancing democracy, strengthening social and economic development, ensuring environmental sustainability, and managing technological changes. This can be done if governments at all levels must improve operations.

The 12 grand challenges in public administration include the following:

- Protect Electoral Integrity and Enhance Voter Participation
- Modernize and Reinvigorate the Public Service
- Develop New Approaches to Public Governance and Engagement
- Advance National Interests in a Changing Global Context
- Foster Social Equity
- Connect Individuals to Meaningful Work
- Build Resilient Communities
- Advance the Nation's Long-Term Fiscal Health
- Steward Natural Resources and Address Climate Change
- Create Modern Water Systems for Safe and Sustainable Use
- Ensure Data Security and Privacy Rights of Individuals
- Make Government AI Ready (NAPA, n.d.)

The UN Policy Paper 97 (2020) also prescribes a comprehensive public service capacity development. "Governments must pay attention to developing the capacities of the public service and public servants; be it in their numbers, their competences, values, the protective gear they need, the incentives for their productivity, the tools and facilities as well as the technology they require to effectively do their jobs. Governments must invest in having very well-functioning public services and effective public servants" (UN, 2020, p.4.).

Meerkerk & Edelenbos (2019) claimed that there is growing interdependencies and cross-boundary collaborations in the public sector. Thus, there are three types of competencies wherein public servants must be trained and these are: cognitive, social

and emotional competencies. They are all related so they must be developed next to each other to make them become competent “boundary spanners.”

They define boundary spanners as “people who proactively scan the organizational environment, employ activities to collect information and to gain support across organizational or institutional boundaries, disseminate information and coordinate activities between their ‘home’ organization or organizational unit and its environment, and connect processes and actors across these boundaries” (p.3).

Cognitive competencies refer to information processing, content expertise and analytical thinking. On the other hand, social competencies include communication, conflict management, (Inter-)organizational awareness, and political savvy. The emotional competencies refer to empathy and otherness; self-efficacy and self-confidence; and self-monitoring and self-awareness (Meerkerk & Edelenbos, 2019).

## **E. Online Education’s Contribution to Capacity Development Programs**

### **1. Online Education as a Capacity Development strategy**

As mentioned earlier, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought in new challenges as well as innovations in the methods and approaches to capacity development which could even be used even post the pandemic. With the lockdowns, one of the obvious consequences is the shift from face-to-face to online activities. However, it is also important to note that challenges exist like the lack of stable internet connection; lack of organizational capacity, and limited human and infrastructure resources and capacity to implement capacity development online.

Even before the pandemic, there were already enough reasons to rethink the traditional mode of delivery of capacity building and to try new and different methods. Travel restrictions together with internet difficulties resulted in a shift to using expertise within the country for technical assistance interventions in contrast to reliance on expertise outside of the country before the pandemic (Reliefweb, 2020).

The 2021 Global Forum Capacity Building Report also came up with innovative ways to deliver capacity building activities. The delivery of capacity-building activities had to be reinvented, hence, included in its action plan is the acceleration of the development of new tools such as e-learning courses and toolkits.

As defined earlier, CD interventions target the knowledge and skills of people which usually come in the form of training and education. Vallejo and Wehn (2016) noted that CD interventions are implemented in diverse modes such as formal (basic and higher) education and distance learning; advisory services and peer learning to foster change and innovation within organizations and institutions; partnerships, knowledge networks, and collaboration for social learning; and leadership development of individuals and organizations to effect change.

Oshionebo (2002, as cited by Abdul & Edino, 2014) mentioned that education/training is being regarded increasingly as the catalyst for social development and this could be accomplished through training and education provided by schools, colleges, universities and professional training and management institutions.

Hope (2011) outlines the strategies that developing countries could adopt to address capacity deficit. Some of the notable ones include the following:

- a) On-the-job training (OJT). This involves workplace training and employees are trained at their own worksite. It is especially useful for developing proficiency skills unique to an employee's job. The employees are not away from their workplace; hence they are more productive.
- b) Online distance learning (ODL). This dimension utilizes technology that allows online communication and expands access to training for a larger number of employees compared to classroom training.
- c) Study tours. This refers to a brief travel experience with specific learning goals with emphasis on experiential learning. It provides opportunities for employees to explore new ideas, new technologies for better workplace performance.
- d) Staff secondments. This pertains to a temporary movement or loan of an employee to another part of an organization or to a completely different organization. It is expected that seconded employees return to their organizations with valuable skills and experience and also provide their host institutions with a different set of skills and expertise.
- e) E-government. This refers to the use of ICTs, and particularly the Internet, as a tool to improve governance (Hope, 2011).

Recent years saw the growing recognition of the need to integrate the use of ICT for capacity development of public servants. The use of ICT in human resource strategies is seen to improve the managerial, technical and professional skills of public employees (Committee of Experts on Public Administration, 2009).

The United Nations Economic and Social Council recognizes government organizations as knowledge-based organizations where effective utilization of knowledge resources and knowledge management enables governments to formulate policies which lead to effective and improved services (Committee of Experts on Public Administration, 2009). The use of e-learning is considered as relevant since “it encourages governments to learn at the workplace” at their own pace and time (Stoffregen et al., 2015). This has become the norm during the pandemic where most of the government workers were asked to work from home while providing public service, except for the frontliners who must be physically present to provide public services.

Online learning also means employing information technology to access, gather, analyze and utilize information and knowledge to improve organizational performance and public service delivery. Furthermore, it is recognized that ICT can deliver skill training and capacity-building programs specifically targeted to civil servants and decision makers which is self-paced and provides flexibility to choose content and tools appropriate to differing interests, needs and skill levels (Committee of Experts on Public Administration, 2009).

They also recognize that the application of ICT in training in the public sector can:

- a) Broaden availability of quality knowledge resources 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for learning and decision-making;
- b) Deliver skill training and capacity-building programs specifically targeted to civil servants and decision makers, using appropriate technologies;
- c) Increase information, specialist support and remote diagnosis capability for effective project management;
- d) Allow for greater transparency and monitoring of project management decisions;
- e) Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public sector departments and organizations through the strategic application of technologies and ICT-enabled skill development;
- f) Facilitate knowledge, horizontal and vertical exchange and networking among departments; and
- (g) Enhance the ability of developing countries to participate in and learn from best practices in public administration around the world (Committee of Experts on Public Administration, 2009, pp. 18-19).

Further, Msomi (2016) claimed that the goal of e-learning for public servants is to ensure that larger number of government officials are trained at minimum costs and that training reaches people with different responsibilities such as top management and



people who cannot afford to be away from home of office (Msomi, Munapo, & Choga, 2016)

In terms of implementation of online education for public servants, the G20 countries, during the Moscow Summit in 2013, noted the importance of human resource development and high level of performance among government staff, hence the concerned countries embarked on the use of e-learning as a means for education and lifelong learning . The G20 members represent almost 90% of GDP and 2/3 of world's population lives in these states, hence, the impact of online learning can be significant. The study described how each of the G20 countries deployed e-learning and concluded that they have deployed e-learning either as online or blended mode (Bere, Silvestru & Nemes, 2013).

Other public sectors around the world that have also utilized online education or e-learning within their organizations include the Korea Central Officials Training Institute (COTI) which introduced e-Learning for Korean government employees in 2009 (Hur and Im, 2013, p. 192 as cited in (Msomi et al., 2016). Moreover, they also conducted a study on the conceptualization of e-learning in the public sector in South Africa. They noted the processes that need to be followed in order to conceptualize e-learning in an effective and efficient way.

In the case of Romania, where they introduced blended learning to public administration, they concluded that connecting projects and activities that include training for public servants can contribute to ensuring efficiency and sustainability of e-learning (Ramona Camelia BERE; Catalin Ionut SILVESTRU and Lavinia Nemes, 2013).

In Zaheer, et. al.'s article, they also discussed the role of e-learning as a tool for capacity building in developing countries, specifically in Pakistan. E-learning, as a tool for capacity development, addresses the issue of access to and quality of education (Zaheer et al., 2015).

According to Biancalani, Chocholata and Gillet (2020), although distance learning tools were already utilized in capacity development efforts in the pre-COVID-19 era, the global pandemic served as a catalyst in the global shift towards an effective distance learning. Organizations adapting to new conditions are recognized including the willingness of the audiences worldwide to take advantage of distance learning tools. Based on their experiences in implementing online capacity development programs at the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN, the modality enabled them to reach many more relevant country staff compared to their in-person workshops. The interaction within country teams also intensified since they were given exercises designed as country group work.

They also noted that interactive online courses have proven to be an excellent complementary modality for capacity development. The in-person and online modalities can be used to deliver different kinds of support such as establishing relationships and

in facilitating exchange of experience as well as addressing more technical subjects and for increasing the outreach and potential impact (Biancalani, et.al. 2020).

In the Philippines, The Civil Service Commission (CSC) also issued Resolution No. 2100190 on 17 February 2021 which specifies the General Guidelines on Digital/Online Learning in the Public Sector. The guideline recognizes the importance for civil servants to upgrade their knowledge or upgrade their competencies in order to satisfy performance levels and continue delivering public service. It also prescribes four modalities which include webinars, e-learning, microlearning modules and blended learning.

## **2. Measures of Learning Outcomes of Capacity Development Programs**

Having established Online Education as a CD strategy for public servants, it is important to determine if it has made an impact. However, despite all the initiatives, there is very little effort to evaluate the use of online education to strengthen capacities of public servants. Hence, it is important to revisit frameworks related to CD as well as Online Education.

Capacity development cuts across several social science disciplines but there is no agreed theoretical framework that would encompass all the various approaches of CD, much more with online education as an approach. Taylor and Clarke (2008) gathered several frameworks of different development organizations which are discussed below:

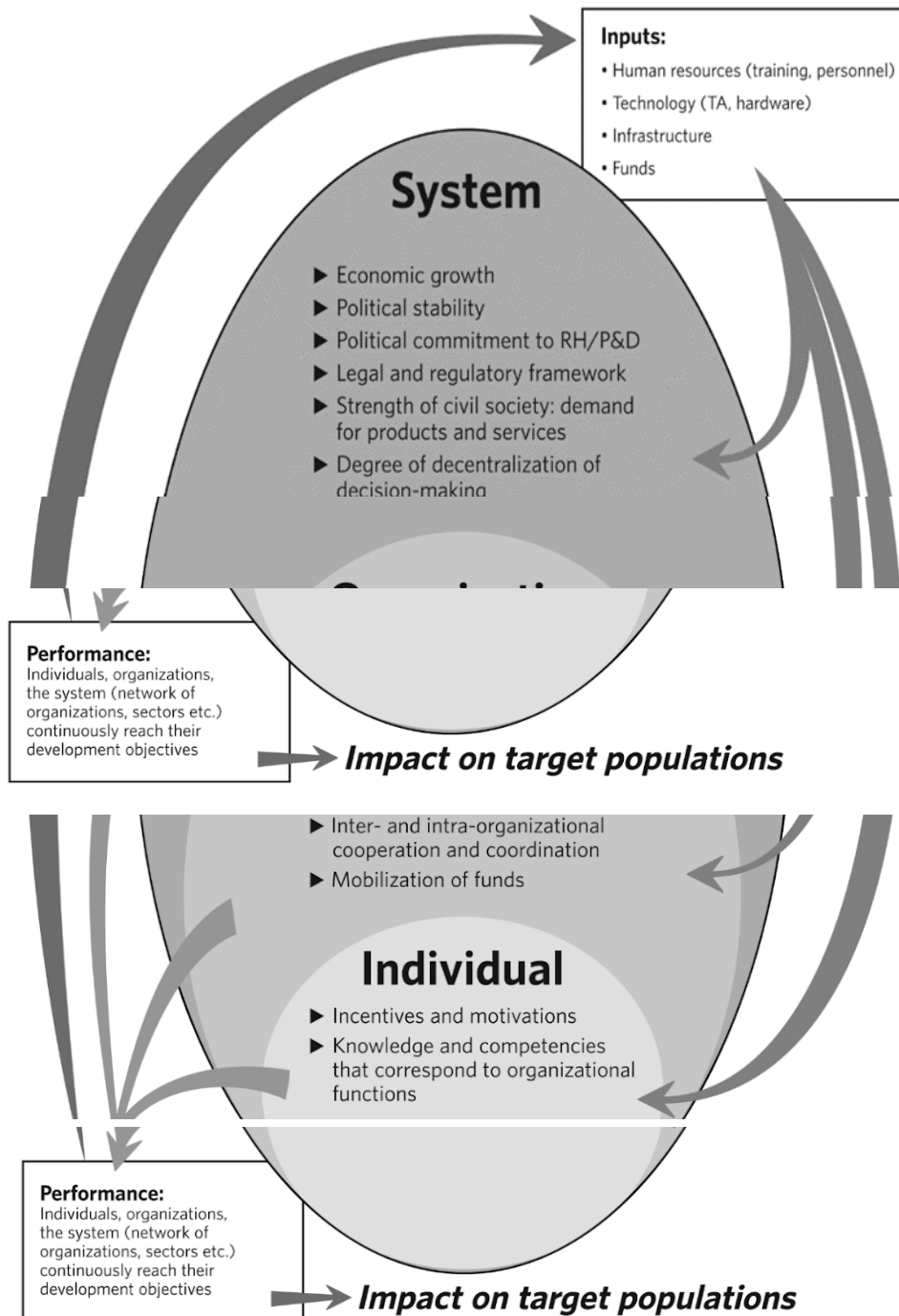
1. The UNFPA in 2003 came up with a framework that focused on the system, organization and individual levels. The inputs include human resources, technology, infrastructure and funds. The System includes economic growth, political stability, political commitment including regulatory framework, strength of civil society and degree of decentralization of decision making. See Figure 4.

At the organization level, the indicators are vision and mission, human resource development, systems development, planning and monitoring of plans, inter and intra organizational cooperation and mobilization of funds.

The individual level includes incentives and motivation and knowledge and competencies. All these various elements are expected to have an impact on target populations.

*Figure 4. UNFPA (2003) Framework*

## Focus of the Thematic Evaluation Key Elements of Capacity Development

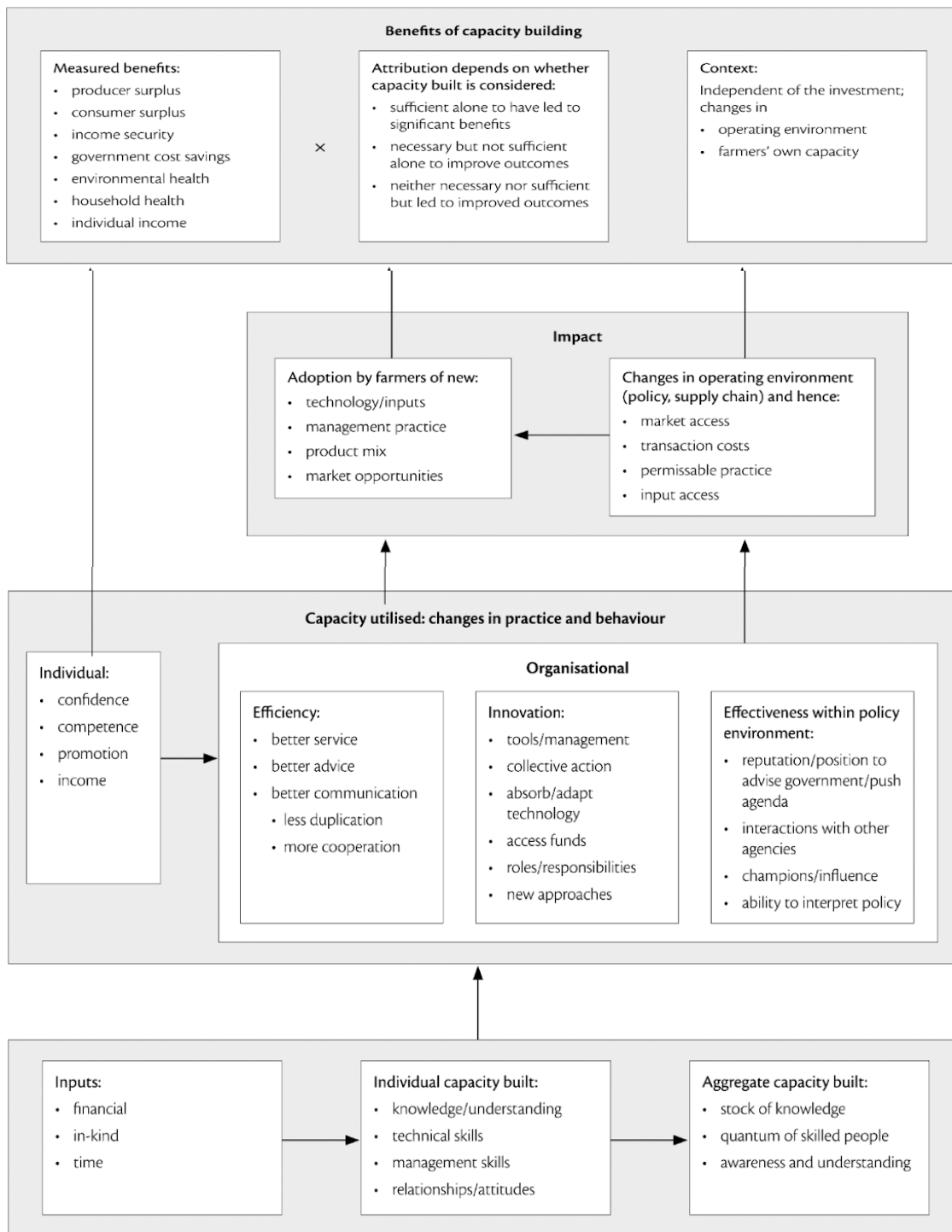


Source: UNFPA's Support to National Capacity Development: Achievement and Challenges, Evaluation Report # 20. New York: UNFPA. p.5.

2. Gordon and Chadwick (2007) also came up with a framework for the Australian for International Agricultural Research which dealt with the impact and benefits of CD. For the individual capacity, they include knowledge, technical skills, management skills and relationships/attitudes built. At the organizational level, it included indicators of efficiency, innovation and effectiveness within the policy environment.

The impact is the adoption of new technologies, management practice, etc. as well as changes in the operating environment. The framework also includes the benefits of capacity building. See Figure 5.

*Figure 5. Gordon and Chadwick Framework*

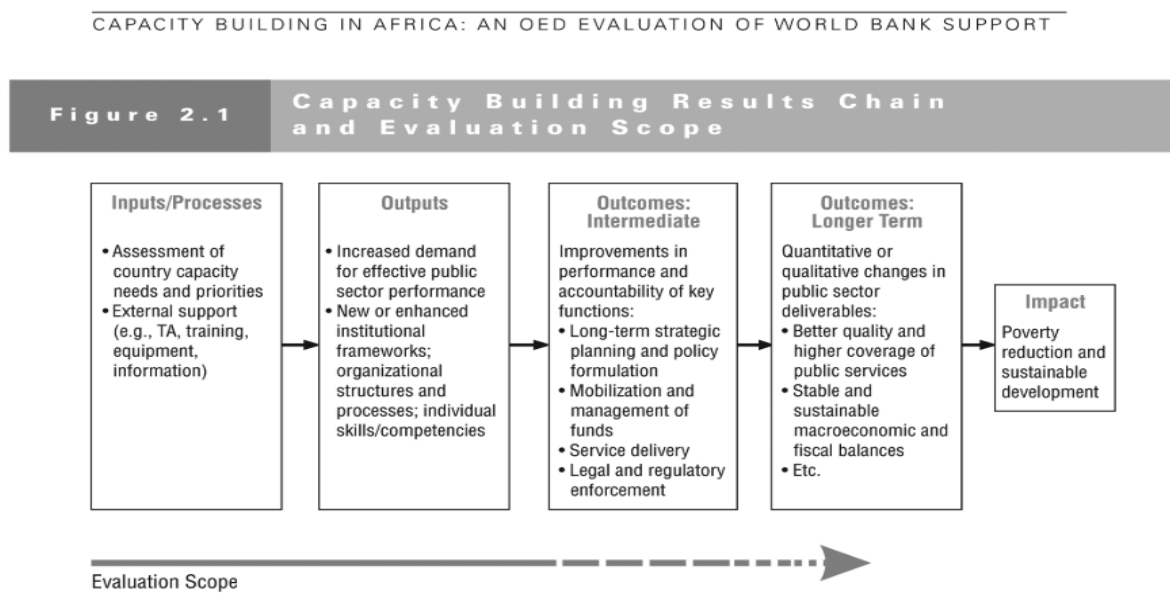


Source: Gordon, J. and Chadwick, K. (2007), *Impact Assessment of Capacity Building and Training: Assessment and Two Case Studies*. ACIAR Impact Assessment Series Report No. 44, Canberra: Australian Center for International Agricultural Research, p. 44.

3. The World Bank Framework (2005) was more focused on the capacity building results chain where they included inputs/process, outputs, outcomes and impact (Taylor& Clarke, 2008). The input/process refers to assessment capacity and external capacity. Outcomes is the increased demand for effective public sector performance and enhanced institutional frameworks.

The outcomes are categorized as intermediate and long-term. Intermediate outcome is the improvement in performance and accountability while the long-term outcome refers to qualitative and quantitative changes in the public sector. The impact is poverty reduction and sustainable development. See Figure 6.

Figure 6: World Bank Framework



Source: World Bank Operations Evaluation Department (2005). *Capacity Building in Africa: AN OED Evaluation of World Bank Support*. Washington DC: World Bank, p.10.

4. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2010) promotes the capacity development systems approach which is also adopted by other UN entities. It includes three important elements such as the enabling environment; the organization level and the individual level. (See Figure 7).

*Figure 7. Capacity Development Systems Approach*



*Source: UNDP, 2010, p. 11*

### **3. Evaluating Capacity Development Activities**

Understanding capacity development also requires the identification of appropriate indicators depending on the program and the target beneficiaries of the CD. For example, Salajegheh, Gandomkar, Mirzazadeh and Sandars (2020) in their study of faculty development of health profession educators, they identified capacity development indicators for faculty development programs in the context of Tehran University of medical sciences (TUMS).

Kotvojs (2017) noted that there has been little guidance on how to evaluate capacity development activities. It was only in the late 2000s that a small number of models for evaluation of capacity development emerged. These include the following:

- AusAID's (2006) framework, developed by Patricia Lyons
- The European Centre for Development Program Management's Balanced Framework (Watson, 2006)
- The Capacity Development Evaluation Framework (Kotvojs, 2009)
- Capacity Development Results Framework (Otoo, Agapitova & Behrens, 2009)
- The United Nations (2010) Development Programme Capacity Development Framework (Kotvojs, 2017).

Among all these frameworks, the Capacity Development Results Framework (CDRF) provides very detailed indicators that can be customized. The conceptualization was brought about in 2005, when the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness was signed by more than 100 multilateral and bilateral donors and developing countries to make capacity development a key goal of their national development strategies. This was aimed to increase the impact of aid in developing countries as well as to harmonize development efforts by various development organizations (Development Assistance Committee, 2008).

As a response, the World Bank Institute developed in a period of three years the Capacity Development Results Framework (CDRF) to promote a systematic approach to CD. The team that formulated the framework emphasized that it could be customized according to the country's needs (Otoo, Agapitova, & Behrens, 2009).

In coming up with the proposed framework, it was important for the team to define two basic concepts. They distinguished two concepts, namely: "capacity for development" and "capacity development/capacity building." They defined "capacity for development as the availability of resources and the efficiency and effectiveness with which societies deploy those resources to identify and pursue their development goals on a sustainable basis" (Otoo et al., 2009).

To understand it much better, they also provided other definitions for the variables:

- The availability of resources (human, financial, technical) is a necessary but not sufficient condition for achieving the development goals of a society.
- The effectiveness and efficiency with which resources are acquired and used depend on specific configurations of sociopolitical, policy-related (institutional), and organizational factors that condition the behavior of political and economic actors.
- Social and economic development is sustainable when results and performance are locally owned and can be replicated and scaled up by local actors (Otoo et al., 2009).



In addition, they defined “capacity development as a locally driven process of learning by leaders, coalitions and other agents of change that brings about changes in sociopolitical, policy-related, and organizational factors to enhance local ownership for and the effectiveness and efficiency of efforts to achieve a development goal”(Otoo et al., 2009).

The Framework also provides a common framework for:

- Analyzing capacity constraints and opportunities with respect to any development goal in a country or local context;
- Understanding the need for capacity development; and
- Communicating about the results of capacity development efforts (Otoo et al., 2009).

The proponents of the framework explained the various elements of the framework. See Figure 8.

### **Capacity Development Goal**

The goal of the CD should be agreed upon by stakeholders and should be well defined because it determines the purpose and direction of capacity development efforts.

### **Factors Affecting Capacity to Achieve Development Goals**

#### a) Conduciveness of the sociopolitical environment

This refers to the political and social forces that determine the priority given to the development goal by the government, the private sector, and civil society.

Although the proponents of the framework claimed that these capacity factors are all interdependent, it was important to convert these factors into more observable and measurable units.

Table 6 provides specific indicators for these factors. For the socio-political environment, there are six indicators that were identified, namely: a) commitment of leaders to the development goal; b) compatibility of the DG with social norms and values; c) stakeholder participation in decisions about the DG; d) stakeholder voice in decisions about the DG; e) accountability of public service providers for achieving DG; and f) transparency of information to stakeholders about the DG (Otoo et al., 2009).

*Table 6. Standard Indicators of the Conduciveness of the Sociopolitical Environment*

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Description of indicators</b>
<b>Commitment of leaders to the development goal (DG)</b>	Social and political leaders consistently and frequently make statements or take leadership actions and decisions supporting the DG.
<b>Compatibility of the DG with social norms and values</b>	Social norms and beliefs that underpin the behavior of stakeholders are compatible with the development goal.
<b>Stakeholder participation in decisions about the DG</b>	Decision-making processes about the DG consider all stakeholder opinions, and government and other organs of the state are responsive to the views of civil society and the private sector.
<b>Stakeholder voice in decisions about the DG</b>	Stakeholders know their rights related to the DG, claim those rights, and communicate their grievances and proposals for change to the government and legislature.
<b>Accountability of public service providers for achieving the DG</b>	Government and other public service entities take account of and responsibility for the appropriateness of their policies and actions in relation to the DG. If public officials and other public service providers fail to meet expectations about achievement of the DG, stakeholders hold them accountable for their conduct and performance.
<b>Transparency of information to stakeholders about the DG:</b>	Government and other public service entities provide accurate, relevant, verifiable, and timely information about the DG and explain actions concerning the DG in terms that stakeholders and other stakeholders can use to make decisions

*Source:(Otoo et al., 2009)*

b. Efficiency of policy instruments

These are the formal mechanisms such as law, regulations and standards that guide stakeholder actions toward achievement of the development goal.

For the efficiency of policy instruments, there are eight standard indicators that were proposed. (Refer to Table 7). These are: a) clarity of the policy instrument in defining DG and the related rights and responsibilities of stakeholders; b) consistency of the policy instrument that defines the DG with policy instruments for other DGs; c) legitimacy of the policy instrument; d) incentives for compliance provided by the policy instrument; e) administrative ease of implementing the policy instrument; f) freedom on

policy instrument from unintended negative consequences; g) flexibility of the policy instrument in addressing varying DG situations and h) resistance of policy instrument to corruption, rent seeking, and regulatory capture (Otoo et al., 2009).

Figure 8. Capacity Development Results Framework

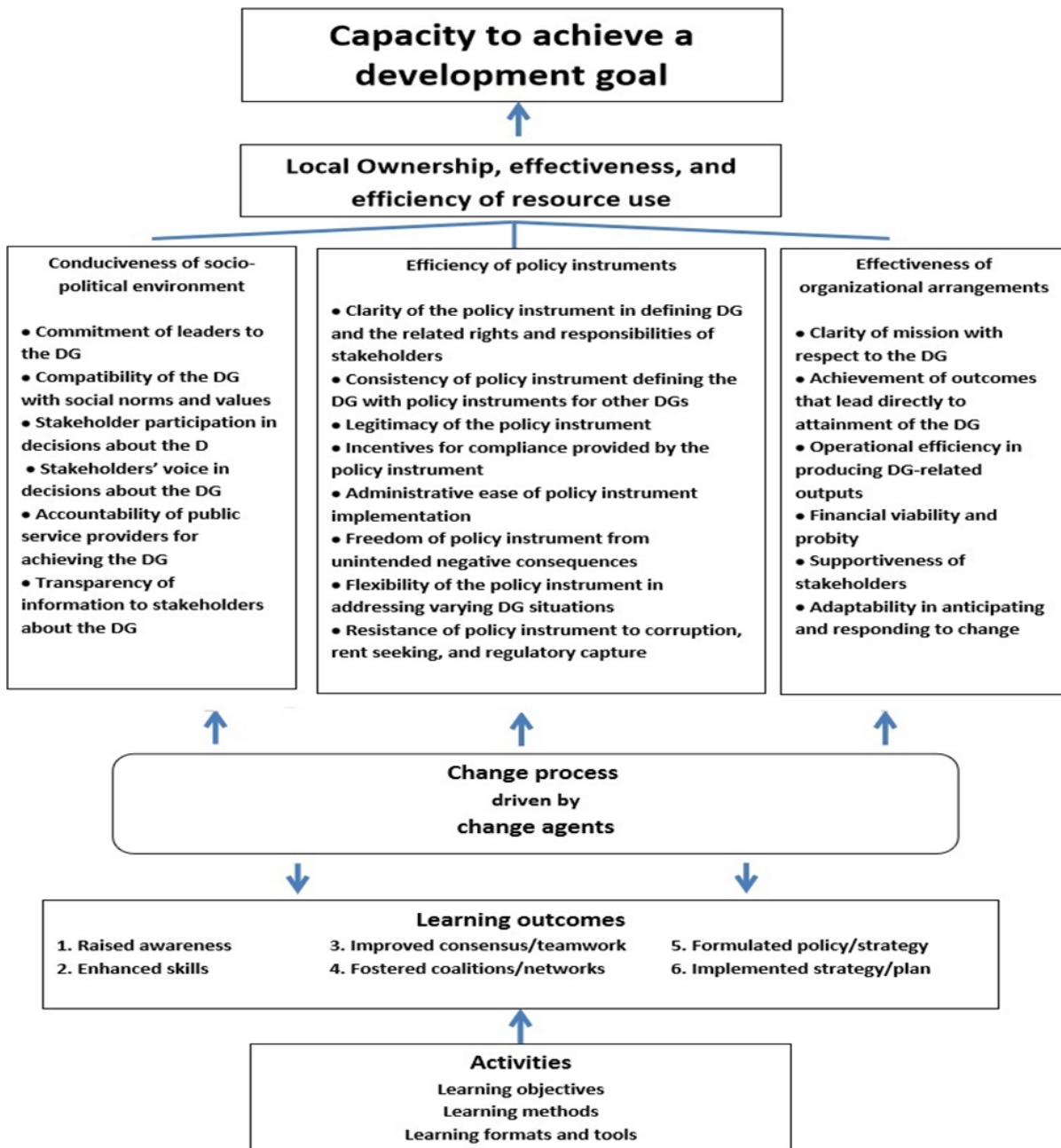


Figure 1. The main elements of the CDRF and their relationships

Source:

Otoo, S., Agapitova, N. & Behrens, J. (2009) *The Capacity Development Results Framework: A strategic and results-oriented approach to learning for capacity development* (pg.19). Retrieved from [http://siteresources.worldbank.org/CSO/Resources/2287161369241545034/The\\_Capacity\\_Development\\_Results\\_Framework.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/CSO/Resources/2287161369241545034/The_Capacity_Development_Results_Framework.pdf)

*Table 7. Standard Indicators of the Efficiency of Policy Instruments*

Indicators	Description of indicators
<b>Clarity of the policy instrument in defining DG and the related rights and responsibilities of stakeholders</b>	The rights and responsibilities of stakeholders related to the DG are clearly defined and specified. Stakeholders have a common understanding of the policy goal and the targets of any specified regulations. The authorities and processes concerning the policy instrument are clear. Policy instruments related to the DG are consistent with each other.
<b>Consistency of the policy instrument that defines the DG with policy instruments for other DGs</b>	Policy instruments related to the DG are consistent with policy instruments for other DGs. Stakeholders have a common understanding of the policy goal and the targets of any specified regulations.
<b>Legitimacy of the policy instrument</b>	Processes for decisions about policy instruments are informed, transparent, participatory, and deliberate. Policy instruments are perceived as desirable and appropriate within the local system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions. The actions and sanctions prescribed by the policy are perceived as fair by stakeholders. Rights to appeal are assured.
<b>Incentives for compliance provided by the policy instrument</b>	The policy instrument imposes low transaction costs for compliance and facilitates desired economic and social exchange activities related to the DG by reducing uncertainty and other costs to the participants in these transactions.
<b>Administrative ease of implementing the policy instrument</b>	Duty bearers specified by the policy instrument are able to execute their responsibilities readily and effectively, and without undue costs in terms of time and resources.
<b>Freedom of policy instrument from unintended negative consequences</b>	The policy instrument minimizes unintended negative impacts in DG-related transactions.
<b>Flexibility of the policy instrument in addressing varying DG situations</b>	Policy instruments are predictably flexible in addressing varying situations. Policy instruments allow for timely revision when the underlying social and political circumstances have changed.
<b>Resistance of policy instrument to corruption, rent seeking, and regulatory capture</b>	Policy instruments minimize opportunities for corruption, include mechanisms to monitor and report corruption, and provide credible and enforceable penalties for corrupt behavior. Policy instruments do not reflect the efforts of vested interests to manipulate the economic and/or legal environment to secure undue privileges or compensation at the expense of the greater public good

Source: (Otoo et al., 2009)

c) Effectiveness of organizational arrangements

This refers to the systems, processes, personnel, and other resources that government and non-government stakeholders bring together to achieve development goals.

For the indicators of effectiveness of organizational arrangements, there are six indicators that were identified in Table 8, namely: 1) clarity of mission with respect to DG; b) achievement of outcomes that lead directly to attainment of the DG; c) operational efficiency; d) financial viability; e) supportiveness of stakeholders; and f) adaptability in anticipating change (Otoo et al., 2009).

*Table 8. Standard Indicators of the Effectiveness of Organizational Arrangements*

Indicators	Description of indicators
<b>Clarity of mission with respect to the DG</b>	The vision and mission of the organization are strongly aligned with the DG and clearly articulated, and provide its members with clear points of reference for making decisions and gaining commitment from management, staff, and other stakeholders to work toward the DG. The mandate of the organization is recognized by relevant stakeholders.
<b>Achievement of outcomes that lead directly to attainment of the DG</b>	The organization consistently achieves outcomes that lead directly to the DG expressed in its mission statement.
<b>Operational efficiency in producing DG-related outputs</b>	The strategies, inputs, processes, and technology of the organization are managed to optimize the quantity and quality of output relative to the cost of accomplishing its DG-related goals.
<b>Financial viability and probity</b>	The organization sustainably secures the funds needed to cover its operating costs. Sound financial management, including reporting of externally verified accounts, helps to ensure that the resources of the organization are allocated effectively to achieve its goals.
<b>Supportiveness of stakeholders</b>	The organization seeks the support of stakeholders for its DG-related work. Organizational decision-making and operational processes involve consultations with appropriate stakeholders.

<b>Adaptability in anticipating and responding to change:</b>	The organization regularly monitors its internal and external environment for information relevant to the DG and is proactive in adapting its strategy accordingly. The organization encourages innovation, manages knowledge, and creates and/or adapts to new technologies.
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*Source: (Otoo et al., 2009)*

The framework also offers a typology of six learning outcomes to capture the immediate results of capacity development efforts as seen in Table 9. The framework proponents noted that learning outcomes measure change at the level of the agent (whether individual or group of individuals). On the other hand, capacity indicators measure whether the actions taken by the agent of change after learning have a favorable impact on the larger system (Otoo et al., 2009).

*Table 9. Six Learning Outcomes and Associated Generic Learning Objectives*

Indicators	Description of indicators
<b>1. Raised awareness</b>	Participant understanding of an issue or situation improved Participant attitude improved Participant confidence improved Participant motivation improved
<b>2. Enhanced skills</b>	New skills/knowledge acquired New skills/knowledge applied
<b>3. Improved consensus/teamwork</b>	Discussion initiated/resumed/activated Participatory process initiated/expanded Consensus reached Action steps/plan formulated/improved Collaboration increased/improved
<b>4. Fostered coalitions/networks</b>	Discussion initiated/resumed/activated Participatory process initiated/improved Informal network(s) created/expanded Formal partnerships or coalitions created/expanded
<b>5. Formulated policy/strategy</b>	Stakeholders involved in process Policy/strategy needs assessment completed Stakeholder agreement reached Action steps/plan formulated Monitoring and evaluation plan designed Policy/reform/strategy/law proposed to decision-makers
<b>6. Implemented strategy/plan</b>	Implementation steps formulated Monitoring and evaluation initiated Implementation steps initiated Implementation know-how improved

*Source: (Otto et al., 2009)*

The “Activities” in the Framework could be learning methods or learning tools.

In all these, the recommended methodology is the use of a structured interview, survey, focus group discussion (FGD), participatory approach, among others.

It can be noted that these proposed frameworks were general in nature and are not specific on the results of Online Education as a capacity development activity. However, the CDRF is highlighted since the Framework is said to be compatible with a broad range of situations and approaches to change management. (Otto, et al. 2009).

Balasubramanian et al. (2014) noted two factors involved in measuring the success of e-Learning: a) is the learning completed at the time it was planned to be completed, and b) is the knowledge that was supposed to be acquired from the course actually acquired (in Msomi et al., 2016).

In an online education environment, it is important to consider the basic e-learning competencies that learners must have. According to Parry (1998), competencies are clusters of related knowledge, skills and abilities that correlate with effective performance in the task or role at hand. They are measurable and can be developed and improved (as cited in Parkes, Reading, & Stein, 2013).

However, according to Parkes, et al., (2013), there is also little evidence in the literature to suggest that the importance of e-learning competencies have ever been assessed. Thus, it is also important if they will be tested.

Moreover, since the learners were expected to have e-learning competencies that are necessary to undertake online education, the following are expected to be further developed.

- Improved autonomy
- Developed Self direction
- Improved Time Management
- Developed Critical Reflection skills
- Improved Computing and internet skills
- Improve Online Interaction and communication skills
- Improved identity and social presence (Parkes et al., 2013)

In a study on ICT competencies of academic e-learning in Poland, the authors concluded that e-learning requires its participants to exhibit certain knowledge in the field of information technology. Moreover there is also a need to acquire certain skills which are often beyond the range of ICT competences learned earlier (Kołodziejczak & Roszak, 2017).



#### **4. Measures of Competencies of Public Servants**

But how can the success of e-learning or online education be measured? The most important aspect of CD lies at the individual level as the measure of competency is more apparent at this level. Abdul and Edino noted that capacity assessment at the individual level depends on the individual's role and assignment. They also claimed that one set of individual contributions to capacity includes the so-called 'soft' competencies –such as crafting relationships, trust and legitimacy– as well as the more conventional 'hard' variety such as technical, logistical and managerial skills (Abdul & Edino, 2014).

A study conducted by Gervacio (2012) on students who were enrolled at the Master of Public Management Program of the University of the Philippines Open University revealed that 93% of the student respondents would recommend e-learning as a means of capacity building for the public sector. Aside from saving time and money, the respondents claimed that online learning helped them develop self-discipline, sense of urgency, self-accountability, time management and independence (Gervacio, 2012).

The results are similar to a study previously conducted on the same Program in 2008. About 90% of the students recommended the use of e-learning to public servants. They said it will improve their knowledge, update their skills, enhance values and better appreciate their duties and responsibilities. Moreover, it is accessible, flexible and cost efficient and will enable them to interact with each other and discuss issues and concerns related to governance. It also helps them develop self-discipline (Gervacio, 2008).

Bolger (2000) also noted that e-learning provides opportunities to citizens to acquire different skills like communication, interpersonal skills, management and leadership skills that facilitate the capacity building of individuals as well as of organizations (as cited in Zaheer, Jabeen, & Qadri, 2015).

Meerkerk & Edelenbos (2019) also noted that as boundary spanners, public servants may not necessarily be experts in the field where they operate (e.g. health, welfare, etc.) but they need to understand the content in their field. Based on the cognitive competency, they must have the ability to understand and follow dialogue and negotiations in a specific field and can ask and understand issues regarding the field.

They must be generalist and have interest in interdisciplinary work. For example, even if they work in the field of health, they are able to understand policymaking, health management, health economics, among others.

As regards social competencies, this refers to competencies related to negotiation, conflict management, facilitative leadership, and network management. These skills are important for public servants since they deal with various stakeholders as well as the public.

Finally, emotional competencies such as empathy, self-efficacy, and self-awareness are important competencies as well but very hard to measure.

These competencies are related to the set of competency standards by the National Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA), for the Master’s Program for public administration. The universal required competencies for graduates are aimed to ensure that learners will be prepared for a career in public service. It is also important to mention that the same competency standard also applies to “programs departing from campus-centered education such as distance learning, international exchanges, or innovative delivery systems” (Haupt, 2017).

Shevchenko (2016) noted that these competencies are “knowledge-based, attitude-based, skills-based and community-based.” She also claimed that they can be used in the theoretical analysis of the content of public administrators’ professional training in the countries of the European Union.

In order to apply these competencies, Haupt, Kapucu & Hu (2017) utilized these competencies in the conduct of an exploratory study that examined local government managers’ perception of NASPAA’s competencies in regard to management practices. For implementation purposes of the competencies, they gathered various stakeholders to develop subcategories of each of the five competencies.

The respondents of the study were local city and county managers and utilized the likert scale of 1 to 5. They concluded that these competencies were all important for a graduate student of public administration. See Table 10 for the measures of the core competencies and sub-competencies.

*Table 10. NASPAA Core Competencies and Sub-Competencies, 2019*

Core Competencies	Sub-Competencies
<b>Lead and manage in public governance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Develop expertise on local government</li> <li>● Develop an ability to lead and manage within multiple networks of stakeholders</li> <li>● Reinforce democratic principles and practices</li> <li>● Produce consensus or consent among diverse stakeholders</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model the skills and power of leadership and utilize principles of public management</li> </ul>
<b>Participate in and contribute to the policy process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop capacity to analyze political theory, policy process, and implementation</li> <li>• Analyze policy issues/problems using different methodologies</li> <li>• Identify, evaluate, and communicate evidence-based policy</li> <li>• Design policy-implementation methodology and actively engage</li> </ul>
<b>Analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop expertise in techniques used in managing government operations</li> <li>• Appraise the concepts of social science research methods, statistical analysis/techniques; apply the skills</li> <li>• Create networked/collaboration solution to complex problems</li> <li>• Identify, evaluate, and model best practices</li> <li>• Develop professional capacity in basic skills</li> </ul>
<b>Articulate and apply a public service perspective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop respect and demonstrate methods for authentic interaction</li> <li>• Value and demonstrate commitment to professionalism and integrity in serving the public</li> <li>• Communicate public interest based on ethical reasoning and democratic participation</li> <li>• Critique instrumental reasoning in order to promote social and economic equity and justice</li> <li>• Incorporate and value principles of democracy, public transparency, and consensus building</li> </ul>
<b>Communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate various communication tools and strategies in the management of public organizations</li> <li>• Incorporate major concepts, skills, processes, and policies in public service management</li> <li>• Develop cultural competency and appreciation of diversity for collaborating</li> <li>• Negotiate interest-based resolutions with stakeholders experiencing conflict</li> <li>• Critique existing partnerships and promote engagement and interaction with citizens, nonprofit organizations, and other entities</li> </ul>

Source: Haupt, Kapucu & Hu (2017).

In the Philippines, similar competencies were proposed in the draft policies, standards and guidelines for graduate programs in public administration and public

management that have been submitted to the Commission on Higher Education. It proposes that graduates of the master's and doctoral programs should be able to:

- Apply adequate knowledge and understanding of fundamentals of good governance;
- Demonstrate high appreciation for the demands and challenges of public service;
- Demonstrate ethical values for public service, accountability, patriotism and sustainability;
- Demonstrate strong sense of duty to promote and protect public interest especially for the depressed and the marginalized communities;
- Demonstrate adequate skills in management including planning, implementation, monitoring and human, material and resource management for government and civil society organizations; and
- Carry out scientific research and national decision-making (Draft policies, standards and guideline for graduate programs in public administration and public management, 2014).

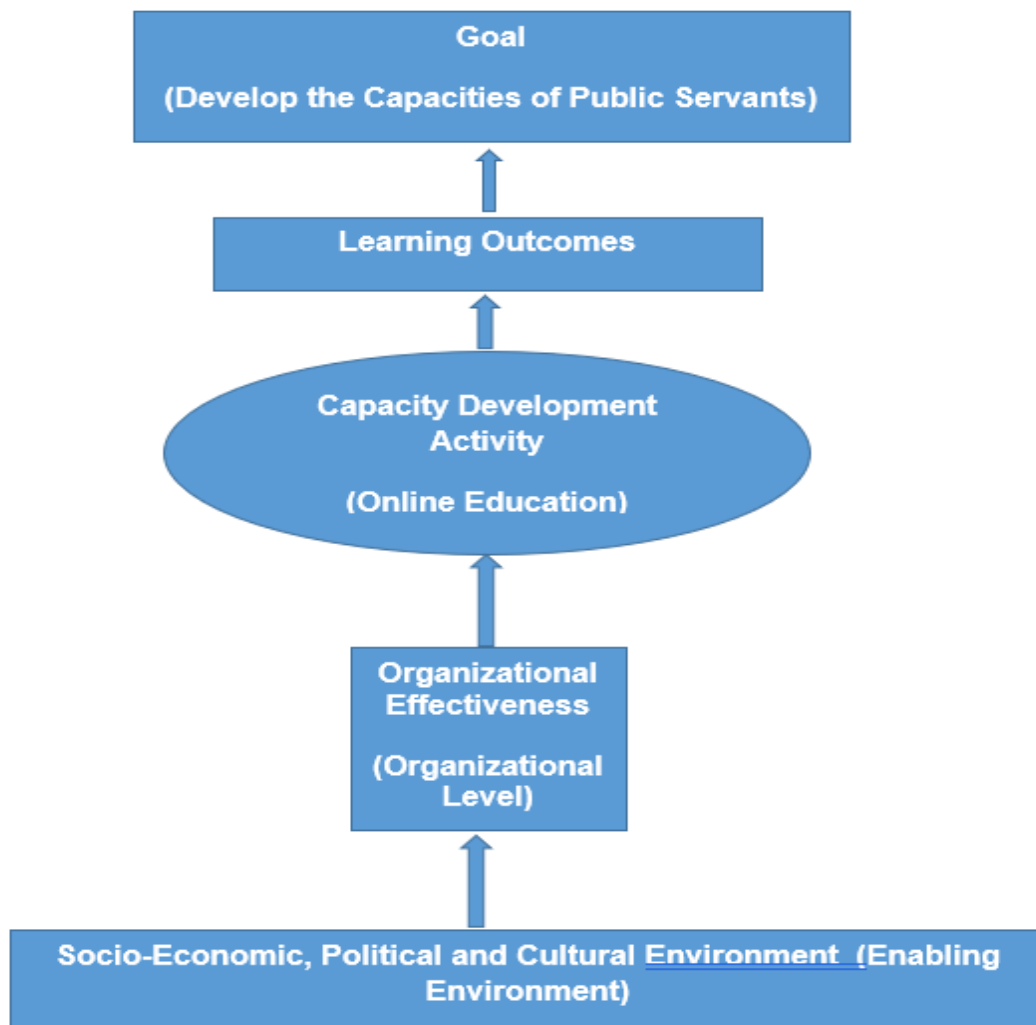
However, these were proposed measures but have not been endorsed by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). In 2020, new members of the Technical Panel on Public Administration were appointed to assist in providing technical expertise and in the development of the discipline including the degree program roadmaps. They are still in the process of developing the guidelines

## **F. Framework of the Study: The Use of Online Education as Capacity Development Strategy for Public Servants**

The study utilizes a framework that integrates indicators of CD as well as Online Education (Figure 2). The framework draws primarily from the Capacity Development Results Framework as proposed by Otoo, et. al. (2009). Moreover, it focuses on the three levels of CD which is on the institutional, organization and individual levels.

For purposes of the research, Online Education is also referred to as Open and Distance e-Learning (ODeL) since this is the terminology used by the University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU). It is a University that offers fully online Programs and is characterized as open, distance and e-learning.

*Figure 9. Framework of the Study*



There are three factors that could affect the implementation of Online Education, namely: a) the enabling environment (political, socio-economic and cultural environment); b) the organizational level (refers to the institutional factors affecting the implementation of Online Education); and c) the individual level.

## 1. The Enabling Environment: Political, Socio-Economic and Cultural Environment

The enabling environment or context that affects Online Education includes, political, socio-economic and cultural context. Governments are expected to address basic issues like internet access with adequate infrastructure, language, computer

literacy, etc. (Liyanagunawardena, Williams and Adams, 2013). To ensure sustainability, it is important that policies are in place to serve as a framework for the use of online learning. The policies serve as guides for institutions that want to harness the full potential of online education. If the government is not so supportive with this endeavor, then chances of failure are more likely to happen.

Powell (2011) compared the effectiveness of the governments of Canada, U.S, and New Zealand in promoting online learning. He explained that in Canada and in the U.S, state governments are the ones creating policies for education. Powell found that while there are states that foster and promote online learning, there are some states that do not. This results in an uneven development of online learning.

In New Zealand, however, it is the Ministry (or the central government) that lays down frameworks for online learning. They also launched various programs that: allow New Zealand to be a leader in the digital world; integrate technology in the education system; and extend that technology in delivering education to those who are physically present in school and to those who prefer online learning (Powell & Barbour, 2011).

This is supported by Smith (2012) who noted that government support, higher education policies, technological resources, cultural biases, and organizational rules can influence online learning in terms of its quality, accessibility, and efficacy. One important reason that online courses can have so many different outcomes is because there are larger political, economic and organizational influences that are guiding the implementation, practices and ultimately consequences.

Bolger (2000) also noted that poorly conceived policies, high levels of corruption, or lack of legitimacy can make for a highly 'disabling' environment, while sound policies, high levels of commitment, effective coordination, and a stable economic environment can provide an enabling environment.

Otoo, et. al. (2009) also highlighted that policy instruments are important which considers the related rights and responsibilities of stakeholders and that incentives for compliance are provided by the policy instrument.

With the pandemic, some countries have also instituted policies related to online learning. In a study in Indonesia, they released a government policy for utilizing e-learning including the use of social media (Salehudin, Zulherman, Arifin & Napitupulu, 2021). This serves as their guideline in the conduct of online learning.

Aside from enabling policies, socio-economic factors are also important. Bere, Silvestru & Nemes (2014) noted that ICT infrastructure is a prerequisite for online learning and knowledge sharing for public administration. Before implementing any online program, it is important to look into possible challenges which include ICT infrastructure. Their study looked into the level of development of infrastructure among the G20 countries in 2010 and 2012. They found out that countries with high levels of

infrastructure development are all high-income countries from Europe, North America and Australia compared to the countries with lowest development of infrastructure include South Africa, Indonesia and India (Bere, et al., 2014).

Hence, in countries whose economies are struggling, acquiring the technologies for online education and allotting a budget for the development of courses might be the least priority. On the other hand, developed countries have lesser problems with infrastructure.

Some specific ICT Infrastructure-related factors include expenses for online education technologies including software licenses and equipment maintenance, internet connectivity, and electrical supply. The lack of ICT infrastructure and support shows how technology itself becomes a hindrance for certain technological advancements.

ICT infrastructure is also identified as one of the factors affecting online learning in Africa. Some specific ICT Infrastructure include the following:

- Expense of e-learning technologies
- Internet Outages
- Limited Electricity Supply
- Underdeveloped technological Infrastructure
- Laptop problems and Issues
- Computer Infrastructure
- Poor Internet Connectivity
- Low Bandwidth
- High Costs of Internet Connectivity
- Software licenses and equipment maintenance (Basak et al., 2017)

The lack of ICT infrastructure and support shows how technology itself becomes a hindrance for certain technological advancements.

The internet bandwidth could also be costly which not only affects course development but also the access of online learners. Ayrdrrie and Eidson (2009) also identified technology related challenges such as connectivity wherein learners have difficulty understanding access related problems related to network performance.

Culture also plays a role in online learning. For example, a study by Mavengere and Rouhonen (2010) in Botswana, as mentioned in Basak, Wotto and Belanger (2017) revealed that there are still some adjustments needed with the collaboration or sharing culture.

Gunawardena (2020) noted the need to design culturally inclusive online learning environments to ensure presence, participation, and achievement of diverse learners from different sociocultural contexts. She studied two international capacity



development projects in Sri Lanka and Ghana and concluded that cultural factors impacted online design in relation to “developing a learning community, negotiating identity, power, and authority, supporting collaboration, engaging in authentic inquiry-based learning, navigating interactions in an additional language, and developing co-mentoring relationships to support learning online” (p.26).

Moreover, one social barrier that is often cited is the lack of ICT skills and knowledge of online courses which leads to resistance to open education and e-learning. A lot of developing countries still need to address the issue of illiteracy hence this can serve as a challenge. Given that they will be able to solve illiteracy per se, they then have to follow it up with digital and information literacy in order to equip learners with the critical skills in handling the voluminous information they can access online. It is also aggravated by the lack of understanding of the time needed in online learning (Stoffregen, et al., 2015)

However, it is important to reiterate how the COVID-19 pandemic altered this kind of thinking. There is a realization that technology can be used in capacity development reducing travel expenses, accommodation, meeting rooms, catering, among others. It also provides an opportunity for innovation and collaboration. As such, it is expected that more people would be more open to use ICT in their everyday lives including education.

## **2. Organizational Factors Affecting Online Education**

The effectiveness of organizations in implementing online education is another important factor in capacity development. Otoo, et. al. (2009) noted several indicators for organization arrangements which include clarity of mission; achievement of outcomes; financial viability; support of stakeholders; and adaptability in anticipating change.

The JICA (2004) also identified variables that could influence an organization's performance” which includes: human resources (capacities of individuals in the organization); physical resources (facilities, equipment, materials, etc.); intellectual resources (organization strategy, strategic planning, management, business know-how, production technology, program management, process management (e.g., problem solving skills, decision-making process, communications, etc.); inter-institutional linkage (network, partnership, etc.); incentive and reward systems; organizational culture and leadership of managers (JICA, 2004). It also refers to the internal structure, policies and procedures that determine an organization's effectiveness (UNDP, 2010).

Brinkerhoff D. and Morgan P. (in Li, 2012) cited a study by the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) that developed an approach in analyzing

CD through iterative analysis of country case studies. The five core capabilities of a system or organization are mentioned below including their description.

1. The capability to commit and engage. Actors are able to mobilize resources (financial, human, organizational); create space and autonomy for independent action; motivate unwilling or unresponsive partners; plan, decide, and engage collectively to exercise their other capabilities.
2. The capability to carry out technical, service delivery, and logistical tasks. Actors are able to produce acceptable levels of performance; generate substantive outputs and outcomes sustain production over time; and add value for their clients, beneficiaries, citizens, etc.
3. The capability to relate and attract support. Actors can establish and manage linkages, alliances, and/or partnerships with others to leverage resources and actions; build legitimacy in the eyes of key stakeholders; deal effectively with competition, politics, and power differentials.
4. The capability to adapt and self-renew. Actors are able to adapt and modify plans and operations based on monitoring of progress and outcomes; proactively anticipate change and new challenges; learn by doing; cope with changing contexts and develop resiliency.
5. The capability to balance diversity and coherence. Actors can: develop shared short- and long-term strategies and visions; balance control, flexibility, and consistency; integrate and harmonize plans and actions in complex, multi-actor settings; and cope with cycles of stability and change (Li, 2012).

Some institutional barriers were also noted in the study of Basak, et. al. (2017). Insufficient departmental support (Meyer and Warnich, 2010); leadership support (Mavengere and Ruohonen, 2010); school leadership (Namafele, 2010), internal investment (Zhu and Mugenyi, 2015); and lack of support for training (Vencatachellum and Munusami, 2006) were identified to be some of the institutional barriers affecting online learning (Basak et al., 2017).

In e-learning organizations, Jung et al. (2010) identified 12 key areas to ensure quality standards. These include the following:

- 1) vision, mission, values, and/or goals;
- 2) assessment and evaluation;
- 3) Educational resources;
- 4) Leadership, governance, and administration;
- 5) Finance;

- 6) IT infrastructure;
- 7) Teaching and learning;
- 8) Curriculum and course development;
- 9) Student support;
- 10) Faculty and staff;
- 11) Internal QA system; and
- 12) Research.

However, out of the 11 Asian countries studied, only five of these 12 QA indicators were adopted by all these cases. They include: 1) vision, mission, values and/or goals, 2) assessment and evaluation, 3) educational resources, 4) teaching and learning, curriculum and course development; and 5) student support.

The study utilizes the indicators of effectiveness of organizations in capacity development and matches them up with the indicators specific for e-learning organizations. The indicators are then operationalized in the context of the University of the Philippines and its ability to implement online education. Similar indicators will also be used to determine the capacity of the MPM Program. See Table below.

*Table 11. Indicators of Effectiveness of Organizations*

<b>Indicators of Effectiveness of Organizations (by Otoo et. al., 2009)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Capability of UPOU in implementing online education (based on Jung, et al., 2010) (UPOU)</b>	<b>Capability of the UPOU's Master of Public Management Program</b>
<b>Clarity of mission</b>	The vision and mission of the organization are strongly aligned with the DG and clearly articulated, and provide its members with clear points of reference for formulating strategy, making decisions and gaining commitment from management, staff, and other stakeholders to work toward the DG. The	The UPOU has a clear vision and mission aligned to what it wants to achieve. The mandate is recognized by relevant stakeholders.	The Program has a clear vision and mission which is also recognized by the stakeholders.

	mandate of the organization is recognized by relevant stakeholders.		
<b>Achievement of outcomes</b>	The organization consistently achieves outcomes that lead directly to the DG expressed in its mission statement	The UPOU is able to achieve its functions in teaching, research, extension and public service.  It develops educational resources, deliver quality teaching and learning Programs, conduct research, public service and provide faculty/staff and student support	The Program is able to achieve its outcomes in the areas of teaching, research, extension and public service. It also develops its educational resources and train its faculty members.
<b>Financial viability</b>	The organization sustainably secures the funds needed to cover its operating costs. Sound financial Management, including reporting of externally verified accounts, helps to ensure that the resources of the organization are allocated effectively to achieve its goals.	The UPOU is able to secure its finances to operate and has a sound financial management	The Program is able to utilize its budget for academic productivity improvement.
<b>Support of stakeholders</b>	The organization seeks the support of stakeholders for its DG-related work. Organizational decision-making and operational processes involve consultations with appropriate stakeholders	The UPOU is able to seek the support of stakeholders and conduct consultations with them.	The Program is able to seek the support of stakeholders and collaborate with them.
<b>Adaptability in anticipating change.</b>	The organization regularly monitors its internal and external	The UPOU is able to monitor the internal and external	The Program is able to monitor the internal and external

	environment for information relevant to the DG and is proactive in adapting its strategy accordingly. The organization encourages innovation, manages knowledge, and creates and/or adapts to new technologies	environment to encourage innovation, manage knowledge and adapt to new technologies.	environment to encourage innovation, manage knowledge and adapts to new technologies
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**3. Achievement of Learning Outcomes at the Individual Level**

The most important aspect of CD lies at the individual level as the measure of competency is more apparent at this level. Abdul and Edino noted that capacity assessment at the individual level depends on the individual’s role and assignment. They also claimed that one set of individual contributions to capacity includes the so-called ‘soft’ competencies –such as crafting relationships, trust and legitimacy– as well as the more conventional ‘hard’ variety such as technical, logistical and managerial skills (Abdul & Edino, 2014).

Bolger (2000) also noted that e-learning provides opportunities to citizens to acquire different skills like communication, interpersonal, management and leadership skills that facilitate the capacity building of individuals as well as of organizations (as cited in Zaheer, Jabeen, & Qadri, 2015).

As for public servants, the expected learning outcome is based on Otoo, et. al., capacity development results framework. The Table below shows how the learning outcomes are operationalized in the study. It adopted Otoo’s (2009) learning outcomes indicators for capacity development programs.

*Table 12. Description of Learning Outcomes of Capacity Development Programs*

Learning Outcome (Otoo et. al., 2009)	Description of the Learning Outcomes (Based on Otoo et. al., 2009)	Learning Outcomes for the Learners of the MPM Program
<b>Raised awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Participants' understanding improved</li> <li>● Attitude improved</li> <li>● Confidence improved</li> <li>● Motivation Increased</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Learners' understanding of public management improved</li> <li>● Attitude as public servant improved</li> <li>● Confidence as public improved</li> <li>● Motivation as public servants increased</li> </ul>
<b>Enhanced skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● New skills/knowledge learned</li> <li>● New skills/knowledge used</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Learners learned new skills/knowledge related to public management</li> <li>● Learners used new skills/knowledge on public management</li> </ul>
<b>Improved consensus and teamwork</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discussion initiated/ resumed/ activated</li> <li>● Participatory process initiated/expanded</li> <li>● Consensus reached</li> <li>● New/improved action steps/plan formulated</li> <li>● Collaboration increased/ improved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Learners initiated/expanded participatory process in their work as public servants</li> <li>● Collaboration increased/improved in their work as public servant</li> </ul>
<b>Fostered networks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discussion initiated/ resumed/ activated</li> <li>● Participatory process initiated/ improved</li> <li>● Informal network(s) created/ expanded</li> <li>● Formal partnerships or coalitions created/ expanded</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Learners has created Informal Networks and Formal partnerships/coalitions with other sectors</li> </ul>
<b>Formulated policy/strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Civil society/private sector involved in process</li> <li>● Policy/strategy needs assessment completed</li> <li>● Stakeholder agreement reached</li> <li>● Action steps/plan formulated</li> <li>● Monitoring and evaluation plan designed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Learners involved the civil society/private sector in the policy/strategy formulation</li> <li>● Learners designed a monitoring an evaluation plan</li> <li>● Learners contributed in policy/reform/strategy to decision makers.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy/reform/strategy/law proposed to decision- makers</li> </ul>	
<b>Implemented strategy/plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation steps formulated</li> <li>• Monitoring and evaluation initiated</li> <li>• Implementation steps initiated</li> <li>• Client's implementation know-how improved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners implemented a strategy or a plan</li> </ul>

#### 4. Capacity Development Goal: Competencies Gained

In the proposed framework, the goal is to strengthen the capacities of public servants in carrying out the task of government and delivering public services. Hence, it is expected that they will gain knowledge; enhance their skills and competencies; improve their attitudes towards delivering public service. Consequently, it is also expected that this will contribute to better crafting and implementation of policies as well as more efficient and effective delivery of public services. As such, the competencies based on the NASPAA (2019) list of competencies are utilized.

#### G. Summary

The review of literature provided the various definitions of capacity development including its evolution. Further, the concept of online education has also been discussed including related terminologies and their descriptions as well as the definition of public servants.

Based on several studies, it can be said that online education is an effective capacity development strategy. The pandemic also serves as a game changer since it has provided an opportunity for institutions to be innovative in the delivery of CD programs.

The review also revealed that public servants are important in the achievement of the development of the country. They participate not only in decision making but also in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programs related to development. Their role is also critical especially in achieving the sustainable development goals.

Thus, it is important that they should be provided with the necessary capacities to enable them to achieve the competencies required in their work.

The study posits that online education is an effective strategy for the CD of public servants. However, it is only in recent years that there are proposed frameworks on how to evaluate CDs. Moreover, there is no specific framework pertaining to online

education. Thus, it is important to integrate and utilize frameworks from Capacity Development and Online Education.

There are three important factors that affect the implementation of Online Education, namely: the enabling environment, the institutional level and the individual aspect. The enabling environment includes the political, socio-economic and cultural aspects; while the organizational aspects refer to the mission, vision and other aspects that could facilitate or hamper the implementation of Online Education. At the individual level, the e-learning competencies are considered important in the success of the learner.

For the learning outcomes, it is expected that one aspect will be related to CD while the other aspect can be attributed to the development of digital skills.

Customizing the proposed framework in the context of online education, the review of the literature also shows that policies, infrastructure and ICT knowledge and skills play an important role in online education. Moreover, the organization implementing online education needs to be analyzed to determine its capacity to deliver online programs.

Finally, assessing the success of online education can be determined through the knowledge, competencies and skills gained by those who participated in the online education.

## **Chapter III. Methodology**

### **A. Introduction**

This section discusses the procedures and strategies used to identify, gather and analyze the relevant information needed for the research. The first part explains the



research scenario or the context of the study. It also discusses the design of the research focusing on the research paradigm, strategy and methods.

The third section is on the design of the research instruments, validation of the instruments and how the data were gathered. The fourth section is on the description of the research participants.

Finally, the last part is on how the data was processed and analyzed.

## B. The Research Scenario

The research scenario is placed in the Philippines, a middle-income country, with about 110 million population, wherein capacity development of its public servants is an important factor to achieve a better quality of life for every Filipino. It is also one of the most vulnerable countries to natural disasters and climate change. Figure 10 provides a picture of the Philippines as an archipelago and part of Southeast Asia.

*Figure 10. Map of the Philippines and Southeast Asia*



The case study is conducted at two levels. The first level focuses on the University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU) as an institution implementing online education in the Philippines; while the second level highlights, more specifically, the Master of Public Management Program (MPM) of UPOU which is a Program designed to cater to public servants. The UPOU was chosen as the case study since it

is the premier University that delivers online education in the Philippines and at the same time where the researcher also works as a faculty member.

It was deemed that a case study is the most appropriate strategy for this research because it investigated the peculiar experiences of the UPOU in implementing online education in the context of the Philippines and at the same time highlights the program that caters to public servants.

The UPOU was established as a distance learning institution in 1995 and is a pioneer in utilizing Online Education in the Philippines since 2007 when it started to use its first virtual learning management system. It is also mandated by law to provide capacity development to all higher educational institutions that implement open and distance learning. With this mandate, it is important to determine the organizational capacity of the UPOU and its contribution to Online Education in capacity development, specifically in the Philippines.

One of the major programs that UPOU initially implemented in 1998 is the Master of Public Management (MPM). This the context of the study since the Researcher not only handles courses but has been serving as Program Chair for several years. First offered in 1997 through the distance education mode, the MPM Program has also evolved and is now offered as a full Online Education program.

The Program was designed for policy makers, administrators, and managers of public, private, and non-government organizations; practitioners in local government and administration; and other individuals interested in good governance, public policy and administration.

It aims to provide a high level of competence in public policy, local governance, and management of the voluntary sector. It prepares students to become better public managers, administrators, workers and/or advocates of social change, administrative reform and national development.

However, despite the growth of the Program, there has been no attempt to determine the contributions of Online Education to capacity development, specifically focusing on public servants. Thus, it is important that this should be established that learning outcomes are achieved by the students and competencies are developed by graduates of the Program.

## **C. The Design of the Research**

### **1. The Research Paradigm**

The research follows a socio-constructivist and interpretive paradigm using a case study approach. These two paradigms share the same goal of understanding the “lived experience from the point of view of those who live it” (Scwandt, 1994). They believe that to understand this world of meaning, one must interpret it.

An interpretative paradigm is an epistemological orientation within qualitative research that assumes that reality is constructed through the meanings and understandings developed socially and through experiences. Thus, the researcher and the object of investigation are linked.

The advantage of the interpretative paradigm is that it cuts across areas such as cross-cultural differences in organizations, issues of ethics, leadership and analysis of factors impacting leadership etc. and these can be studied in a great level of depth. The primary data generated via Interpretivism can be associated with a high level of validity because data in such studies tends to be trustworthy and honest (Dudovskiy, n.d.).

On the other hand, the constructivist approach tells how knowledge is built through the understanding of the world. Thus, the researcher combines the two paradigms.

One school of thought under the Interpretivism paradigm is ‘Phenomenology.’ This refers to the theoretical viewpoint which believes that individual behavior is determined by the experience gained out of one’s direct interaction with the phenomena. Human beings interpret the interaction with the phenomena and attach meanings to different actions and thereby construct new experiences. Thus, the researcher develops empathic understanding to know the process of interpretation by individuals and understand their feelings, motives and thoughts (Integrity, n.d.)

The focus of the research is to examine the perceptions of four groups of research participants. They are the UPOU officials who manage the University; the MPM Faculty who are composed of affiliates, lecturers, former Program Chairs and course developers; the MPM students; and the MPM alumni.

It is expected that the prospective respondents modify and interpret the world they live in, in accordance with their subjective experiences. Further, the study also assumes that the research participants have their own understanding about Online Education in the Philippines. Thus, the study will put together the explanations and interpretations about the “lived experience” of the participants.

The study intends to make inferences from its subjects and understanding of the respondents’ perceptions by using an induction process. By probing into the account of

respondents' action, it will provide an understanding about what they are really doing based on their settings.

It is an advantage that the researcher is directly involved in the Program and most of the research participants, hence, it is easier to understand their views on the research topic.

## **2. The Research Strategy**

The research is a case study. A case study is defined by Yin (1994) as “an empirical inquiry about a contemporary phenomenon (e.g., a “case”), set within its real-world context—especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. According to Yazan (2015), this definition addresses the “how” or “why” questions concerning the phenomenon. Using this approach, data gathering is influenced by the investigator’s skills and training for a specific case study.

Further, case studies, in their true essence, explore and investigate contemporary real-life phenomenon through detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions, and their relationships. (Zainal, 2007).

The research is focused on the context of the Philippines which is the macro level of the study. It provides an overview of how Online Education is implemented in the country, given its enabling environment of political, economic, social and cultural context. Hence, it is important to have the relevant information about the context of the research to have a better understanding of the case. At the meso level, it highlights the UPOU that offers its Programs and Degrees completely online. Thus, it is important to interview the University officials regarding UPOU as an Online University and determine their perceptions on its capability in performing its role in capacity development. At the micro level, the research focuses on the Master of Public Management Program, its faculty complement, its students and alumni.

## **3. The Research Method**

The research utilized the mixed method or the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods to get a more comprehensive result. Combining methods enabled the researcher to get in-depth information and insights from qualitative research supported by the predictability of quantitative research.

Mixed methods research is defined as “research in which the investigator collects and analyzes data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both quantitative and qualitative approaches” (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007, p. 4 as cited by McCrudden, et al. 2019). In mixed methods research, the researcher combines at least one

quantitative method and one qualitative method in a way that potentially maximizes the strengths and minimizes weaknesses of each respective method.

Creamer, (2018) defines mixed methods research as “an approach where there is the intention to mix or integrate the qualitative and quantitative strands of study throughout each of the stages or phases of the research process” (p. 12).

Integration occurs when the researcher combines quantitative and qualitative approaches in a study such that their combination provides a more comprehensive understanding of the topic. The integration of the two is essential in establishing the quality of the study design, and ultimately of the quality of the inferences and conclusions drawn from the study. (Fetters & Molina-Azorin, 2017).

Qualitative puts emphasis on the processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured (if measured at all) in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency. In contrast, quantitative studies emphasize the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not processes (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Qualitative data, reports, institutional documents, etc. were gathered and analyzed in order to determine the socio-economic, political and cultural factors influencing the implementation of ODeL at UPOU in the Philippines. Similar types of documents were also reviewed on the role of UPOU in implementing ODeL. Due to the pandemic, the political, socio-economic and cultural factors affecting Online Education were magnified. It resulted in more Online Education policies and guidelines available which are part of the qualitative aspect of the study.

In conducting the research, semi-structured interviews were also designed. Interviews provide in-depth information related to participants’ perceptions and experiences on the research topic. Oftentimes, interviews are coupled with other forms of data collection in order to provide the researcher with a well-rounded collection of information for analyses (Turner, 2010). Cohen and Crabtree (2006) noted that an interview guide is developed with a list of questions and topics that need to be covered in a particular order. Most of the questions for the key informants were open ended questions. Moreover, clear instructions were also sent for them to follow.

The interview of key informants was conducted to determine all the necessary information on how UPOU implements Online Education of ODeL efficiently. An interview guide was designed to guide the researcher on the questions that will be asked.

The first set of key informants are UPOU officials, while the other set of key informants is composed of those who are lecturers and other knowledgeable experts

related to the MPM Program. Since the researcher is a full time faculty member of UPOU and also serves as MPM Program Chair, the data gathering was initially perceived to be faster and more efficient.

For the MPM students and alumni, online surveys were deployed to determine their perceptions on the learning outcomes and competencies gained from the Program. Surveys are important tools to gather accurate information regarding opinions and experiences (Pew Research Center, n.d.). They were deployed to the students and alumni to determine their perceptions regarding learning outcomes and competencies gained from the Program. The questions included open and closed-ended questions. The framing of the surveys were based on the research questions and the framework of the study.

Direct observations of the researcher were also included in the study as experiences in managing the MPM Programs as well as teaching are also included. The Program review reports, publication and documents of the researcher were incorporated in the discussion of the review of related literature.

## **D. Designing the Research Instruments, Validation and Data Gathering**

### **1. Designing the Research Instruments**

Four research instruments were developed for this research for the four types of research participants. Table 13 shows the four instruments that were developed for the different respondents.

*Table 13. Research Instruments*

Research Instrument	Research Participants	Sample Instrument
Interview Guide	UPOU Key Informants	See Annex A
Interview Guide	MPM Key Informants	See Annex B
Online Survey	Students enrolled during the 2 <sup>nd</sup> semester of Academic Year 2020-2021	See Annex C
Online Survey	MPM Alumni from 2001 to 2020	See Annex D

Table 14 provides a summary of the four different research instruments that were designed to get information for the research. They were structured to be able to gather both qualitative and quantitative data. These techniques are important because qualitative puts emphasis on the processes and meanings that are not experimentally examined or measured (if measured at all) in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency. In contrast, quantitative studies emphasize the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not processes (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

The Interview Guides were designed as semi-structured interviews. As mentioned earlier, it is important to gather information from the research participants to complement the secondary information that are initially gathered from relevant documents. This also serves as a validation or confirmation of existing data available.

They were structured based on a sequential manner to capture the objectives of the study. Using the framework of the research, the questions focused on the political, economic and socio-cultural context of the study to be able to validate the results of the review of related literature on this topic. Considering the expertise of the research participants, questions on Online Education and their benefits and challenges were also included. The capacity of the UPOU as an organization was also measured through a scale to determine the strength of their perceptions including the possible explanations for the rating. The profile of the key informants was also included to determine the relationship of the key informants to the study.

*UPOU Key Informants.* This set of research participants is composed of the University Officials of the UPOU, namely: the Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Deans, and Directors of UPOU offices. They are not only knowledgeable and experts about Online Education or ODeL but they also have the experience in managing the organization. The questions focused on their perceptions on the effectiveness of UPOU as an ODeL provider based on indicators referring to organizational effectiveness, the factors affecting online education; and the benefits and challenges of online education in the Philippines, including their recommendations. The questions were formulated based on the review of literature and the framework of the study. Since their perceptions are

important, the questions focused on the context of Online Education in the context of the Philippines and the UPOU an ODeL institution. Thus, questions were grouped according to the following topics:

- a. Profile of the Respondent
- b. Perceptions on the Effectiveness of UPOU as an ODeL Provider
- c. Factors Affecting Online education
- d. Benefits and challenges of Online Education in the Philippines
- e. Recommendations

*MPM Key Informants.* They are composed of faculty affiliates who come from the different campuses under the University of the Philippines system but serve as faculty affiliates, the lecturers who are practitioners and serve in different government agencies; from civil society and also those who served as Program Chairs of the MPM Program in previous years.

This is also a semi-structured questionnaire which asked the participants on their perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the UPOU and MPM Program in implementing ODeL; learning outcomes and competencies gained from the MPM Program and factors affecting online education in the Philippines.

Similarly, the questions were formulated based on the literature review. Since they are implementers of Online Education, particularly the MPM Program, the questions focused on their perceptions on the learning outcomes and competencies. Moreover, questions about UPOU and the MPM Program were also included. The questions that were asked are related to the following topics:

- a. Profile of the Respondent
- b. Perceptions on the effectiveness of the UPOU and MPM Program in implementing Open and Distance e-Learning (ODeL)
- c. Learning Outcomes of the MPM Program
- d. Competencies Gained from the MPM Program
- e. Factors Affecting Online education in the Philippines
- f. Strengths/Challenges of UPOU as an ODeL Institution
- g. Recommendations

For the online surveys, they were also designed as semi-structured with a combination of open and closed-ended questions. The surveys contained questions based on scaling techniques or using Likert scale. It consisted of various items showing a scale of “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” and the respondents simply check their preferred response. Open-ended questions were also included to explain their preferences. The online surveys contained a request explaining the reason for the survey.



*MPM Students.* This refers to the MPM students who were enrolled as of the 2nd semester of Academic Year 2020-2021. The survey was designed to determine the students' source of program information, the perceptions of the students on the learning outcomes; the benefits and challenges of online education for public servants and their recommendations on how the program can be improved. The questions were also formulated based on literature review so that the study will be able to gather relevant information. The questions were grouped in a systematic order to enable them to follow accordingly. They are grouped based on the following topics:

- a. Profile
- b. Program Information
- c. Learning Outcomes
- d. Benefits and Challenges of Online Education for Public Servants
- e. Recommendations on the MPM Program

*MPM Alumni.* The research respondents are those who graduated from the Program from the years 2001 to 2020 which has a total of 315. The online survey was designed to get information primarily on the competencies gained by the alumni from the program and their mobility status after graduation. It also includes their perceptions on the benefits and challenges of online education for public servants and recommendations to improve the MPM Program.

The questions were designed based on the indicators mentioned in the framework of the study and are also grouped according to different topics:

- a. Profile
- b. Program Information
- c. Competencies Gained from the MPM Program
- d. Benefits and Challenges of Online Education for Public Servants
- e. Recommendations on the MPM Program

*Table 14. Content of the Research Instruments, UPOU and MPM Key Informants,*

*MPM Students and Alumni*

Instruments	Interview Guides		Online Survey	
Research Respondents	UPOU Key Informants	MPM Key Informants	MPM Students	MPM Alumni
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Profile</li> <li>● Perceptions on the effectiveness of UPOU as an ODeL provider</li> <li>● Factors Affecting Online education</li> <li>● Benefits and challenges of Online Education in the Philippines</li> <li>● Recommendations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Profile</li> <li>● Perceptions on the effectiveness of the UPOU and MPM Program in implementing Open and Distance e-Learning (ODeL)</li> <li>● Perceptions on the Learning Outcomes of the MPM Program; Perceptions on Competencies Gained from the MPM Program</li> <li>● Factors Affecting Online education in the Philippines</li> <li>● Strengths/Challenges of UPOU as an ODeL Institution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Profile</li> <li>● Program Information</li> <li>● Learning Outcomes</li> <li>● Benefits and Challenges of Online Education for Public Servants</li> <li>● Recommendations on the MPM Program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Profile</li> <li>● Program Information</li> <li>● Competencies Gained from the MPM Program</li> <li>● Benefits and Challenges of Online Education for Public Servants</li> <li>● Recommendations on the MPM Program</li> </ul>

		• Recommendations		
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## 2. Validation of Research Instruments

The Interview Guides were prepared and reviewed by experts and the thesis advisors. The questions were also transferred to an online tool that was shared to them. On the other hand, the online surveys were sent to six validators from the UOC pool of experts. These experts have vast experiences in research on e-learning, online learning methodologies including survey designs. They were given two weeks to send their feedback. Their comments and suggestions were incorporated and finalized using an online survey tool.

## 3. Data Gathering

The data gathering was conducted in May 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the initial plan to do the face-to-face key informant interview for UPOU officials was not pursued. This was substituted with an online interview tool which were sent to the respondents who were asked to either fill up the interview guide or schedule for an online interview. There was no one who wished to be interviewed personally.

There were those who were fast in completing the interview. While there were those who did not respond at all despite sending them at least three follow up emails. This can be attributed to the busy schedules of the target respondents.

For the MPM Program key informants, they all completed the online interview guide except for one who did not give any reason. However, there was one who completed the offline interview guide and later encoded it. There were two who opted for a zoom interview for clarification.

For the online surveys, since the semester was ongoing during the data gathering, all the students were sent with the link to the online surveys. After a week, a follow-up email was sent to remind them to complete the survey.

The researcher had some challenges regarding access with the MPM alumni database. Due to data privacy issues, the information regarding the alumni was not readily available from UPOU. Hence, the researcher, with the help of the UPOU Information Office posted an enlistment survey on its social media site for the alumni who are willing to participate in the research.

Some of them were also contacted through their social media accounts. They were given two weeks to accomplish the survey and after that, a reminder was sent again. Since the research covers all the graduates for the past 19 years, some of the email addresses of the graduates in the early 2000's are no longer valid. There is also no information if some of them have also passed away. Table 15 shows a summary of the data gathering techniques.

*Table 15. Data Gathering Techniques, Key Informants, MPM Students and Alumni*

Instruments	Interview Guides		Online Survey	
	UPOU Key Informants	MPM Key Informants	MPM Students	MPM Alumni
<b>Research Respondents</b>				
<b>Data Gathering Techniques</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The interview guide was sent through google forms.</li> <li>Follow up emails were sent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The interview guide was sent through google forms. For those who requested for a separate file, the form was sent to them through email.</li> <li>Two key informants were also interviewed using the zoom application.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The online survey was administered to students through google forms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A pre-enlistment survey was conducted to determine who are interested to participate in the research</li> <li>The online survey was administered to the alumni.</li> </ul>

## E. The Research Participants

Table 16 shows the sampling design of the study. The UPOU key informants were chosen purposely since they are officials of UPOU composed of the Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, Deans, Directors of UPOU Offices and former officials who are knowledgeable about online education. Out of the 15 who were selected, only 11 (73.3%) were able to participate. The non-participation of some target participants can be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The same strategy of purposive sampling was utilized for the MPM key informants. The researcher used her knowledge about the Program to identify former MPM Program Chairs as well as current affiliates, lecturers, course developers and

tutors who are deemed knowledgeable about UPOU and the MPM Program. There were 19 of them who were targeted but only 18 managed to participate (94.73%).

Online surveys were administered to students and alumni of the Program. For the students, all those who were currently enrolled for the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of Academic Year 2020-2021 were contacted and they were sent the link to the online survey. After two weeks, a follow-up letter was sent to them. There were 151 respondents (51.01% of the total number of enrolled students).

For the MPM alumni research respondents, there were a total of 315 graduates from 2001 to 2021. A pre-enlistment survey was deployed in the social media account of the UPOU and there were a total of 92 who signed up for the survey. The online survey was sent to the 92 alumni but only 77 were able to complete it (25.4%).

*Table 16. Sampling Design*

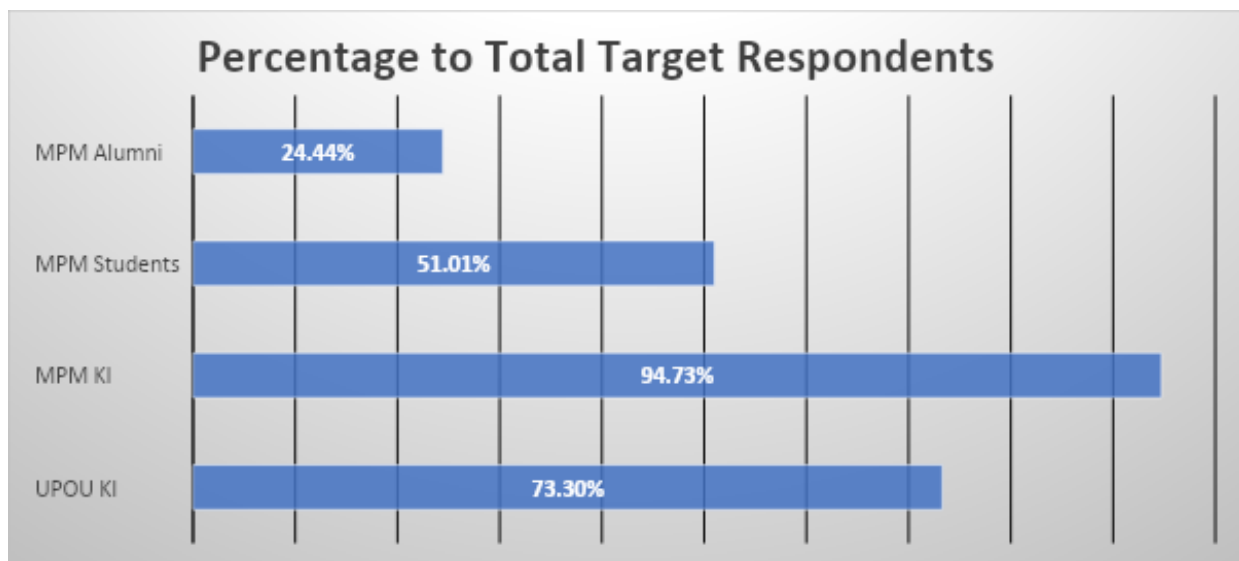
Respondents	UPOU KI	MPM KI	MPM Students	MPM Alumni
<b>Target</b>	15	19	296	315
<b>Actual</b>	11	18	151	77*
<b>Percentage</b>	73.3%	94.73%	51.01%	24.44%

*\*There were 92 who responded to the initial enlistment of the survey but only 77 participated.*

Figure 11 also shows the percentage of compliance for the key informants and the survey respondents. The MPM key informants are almost complete with only one who did not participate in the interview. This is higher compared to only 73.3% respondents for the UPOU key informants.

For the surveys, more than one-half (51.1%) of the targeted MPM students answered the survey compared to only 24.4% respondents for the MPM alumni.

*Figure 11. Percentage of Respondents to Target Population, Key Informants and Survey Respondents*



## F. Data Analysis

The information collected was reviewed and checked to prepare for processing. From the survey tool, the data were extracted into an editable format. The data were then imported to the Statistical Package for Social Sciences 27 (SPSS 27) software for processing and re-coding.

For the qualitative aspects of the research instruments, they were grouped together according to the occurrences of the answers.

The researcher as a participant observer also organized the answers based on her own perceptions, expertise and experiences as course developer, faculty member and as a program manager. For example, when the answers provided regarding challenges of Online Education were quite long, they were categorized whether they were related to policies, ICT infrastructure or capacities of teachers.

The recommendations for the MPM Program were also categorized whether they are specific to the content of the Program, on the learning materials, capacity of the lecturers, among others.

The study analyzed the results based on Robeyn's (2003) procedural approach for the development of a capabilities list for framing gender inequalities which involves the utilization of a two-pronged procedure (Wilson-Strydom, 2016). The first is the top-down formulation of the effectiveness of the organization in implementing Online Education. This brings together the list of capacities that an organization such as the UPOU must meet to be effective in implementing the capacity development program.

The second procedure is the bottom-up adaptation and verification of the learning outcomes and the competencies developed based on the feedback of the learners.

The study posits that there should be a congruence in the capacities of the learning organization to deliver online education and the development of competencies of students

Thus, in comparing and validating the answers of the participants across levels, similar questions were compared for the four sets of participants:

A. UPOU and MPM Key Informants. For the key informants, the following were compared and analyzed

- Profile of Respondents. They were compared in terms of gender, age, years with UPOU and number of years with ODeL experience.
- Factors Affecting Online Education in the Philippines
- Organizational Effectiveness of UPOU as an Online Education Institution

B. MPM Students and Alumni. The following variables are compared:

- Profile
- Program Information
- Other Skills Gained from the Program

C. MPM Key Informants and MPM Students

- The perceptions on the Learning Outcomes of the MPM Program is compared and analyzed.

D. MPM Key Informants and MPM Alumni

- The perceptions on the Competencies Gained from the MPM Program are compared and analyzed.

## **G. Summary**

The above discussion provided a description on how the research was carried out. The research scenario, methodology, research instruments, data gathering and analysis were explained in this chapter.

It can be gleaned from the discussion that the research scenario is the UPOU and the MPM Program. It applied a mixed-methods research design and interview guides and online surveys were designed based on the aims and framework of the study.

Data gathering during the pandemic can be quite challenging but due to the nature of the study, it was facilitated through the use of online tools.

## **Chapter IV: Results and Discussion (1):**

### **Online Education as a Tool for Capacity Development and the UPOU's Master of Public Management Program**

#### **A. Introduction**

Having established online education as a capacity development tool, it is important to determine the enabling or facilitating environment that affects its development and implementation in the context of the Philippines. This section provides an overview of macro, meso and micro levels of the study. The macro refers to the context or the enabling environment for Online Education in the Philippines. The political-socio economic and cultural factors are discussed.

The UPOU as an Online or ODeL University is also highlighted at the meso level. Finally, it also highlights the Master of Public Management (MPM) Program as a tool for



capacity development for public servants which represents the micro level of the case study.

## **B. Political, Socio-economic and Cultural Factors influencing Online Education in the Philippines**

The Philippines is the fourth largest country in Southeast Asia after Indonesia, Myanmar and Thailand. It also has the 13th largest population in the world, seventh in Asia. Over the past decade, the Philippines' average growth per year is at 6.4 percent.

It is an archipelago consisting of more than 7,000 islands with a population of 109.03 million in 2020 (Philippine Statistics Authority). It is predominantly the only Christian country in Asia. English is also the national language of the Philippines next to Filipino (Tagalog) which is widely spoken across the country.

The religion of the Philippines can be attributed to its being a colony of Spain for more than three centuries before the Americans took over until independence in 1946. Consequently, US colonialism had made a huge impact not only in various aspects of the society, but most especially in the education sector.

The country is now gradually shifting towards going back to the face-to-face set up after a three-year bout to the online set up due to the pandemic. There are many lessons and realizations with regard to Online Education since the country utilized remote teaching and learning. Digitalization is now given importance by the Philippine government as it also moves towards a digital economy. The ICT infrastructure is another aspect that needs to be given priority. The need for reskilling and upskilling is also slowly being realized in response to the pandemic. As such, it now recognizes the use of ICT in all sectors of society.

### **1. Political Factors**

The Philippine government has recognized the use of ICT in education by enacting policies that would facilitate Online Education. Moreover, The COVID-19 pandemic also ushered in new policies and guidelines related to higher education institutions that plans to offer Online Education. The following are the relevant policies related to ICT.

#### **1.a. Republic Act No. 10844 (Department of Information and Communications Technology Act of 2015)**

Republic Act 10844 also known as the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) Act of 2015 was approved last May 23, 2016. The creation of DICT is expected to address the gaps of ICT needs in the Philippines and to

lessen the digital divide so the country will truly become competitive in the market. It is the main agency to foresee all ICT related developments in connection to the Philippine Development Plan 2017-2022.

Some of the functions of the DICT is to promote the use of ICT for the enhancement of key public services, such as education, public health and safety, revenue generation, and socio-civic purposes and to promote digital literacy, ICT expertise, and knowledge-building among citizens to enable able them to participate and compete in and evolving ICT age (as cited by Gervacio, 2018).

1.b. Republic Act 10929 (Free Internet Access in Public Places Act)

Republic Act 10929 also known as Piplol Konek: Free WiFi Internet Access in Public Places was signed into law on August 2, 2017. This aims to provide free broadband access to all municipalities and cities nationwide. Its goal is to make Internet access available for all Filipinos to accelerate economic, social and educational opportunities (Piplol Konek, 2018).

The hotspots are located in strategic locations such as parks, public libraries, schools, colleges and universities, government hospitals, train stations, airports and seaports and all national and local government offices.

The DICT aims to establish 200,000 Piplol Konek Sites in Public Places by the end of 2022.

1.c. The Open and Distance Learning Act (Republic Act 10650)

On December 9, 2014, Republic Act 10650 otherwise known as the Open Distance Learning Act was signed which aims to make education accessible through Open and Distance Learning (ODL).

In developing countries like the Philippines, it is quite a challenge to deliver quality education to millions of Filipino learners. Thus, such legislation is a breakthrough to finally give breath and breadth to the opportunity brought by the concept of open and distance education in the country. This law also served as a basis in the conduct of online education during the pandemic.

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) as well as the University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU)'s task is to work together to harness the benefits of this new approach in learning.

Under the law, the UPOU, being the National Center for Excellence in Open Learning and Distance Education, plays a significant role in promoting appropriate information and communications technology to facilitate quality ODL programs in the country.

With the enactment of the Open and Distance Learning Act, the State aims to “expand and further democratize access to quality tertiary education through the promotion and application of open learning as a philosophy of access to educational services, and the use of distance education as an appropriate, efficient and effective system of delivering quality higher and technical educational services in the country.”

1.d. Bayanihan to Recover as One Act or Bayanihan Act 2 (Republic Act No. 11494)

The COVID-19 pandemic also resulted in the formulation of the Republic Act No 11494 also known as Bayanihan to Recover as One Act which was signed into Law last September 11, 2020. The law details the different approaches that will be undertaken by the government to combat COVID19.

The law allocated some funds for the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to assist state universities and colleges (SUCs) in the development of smart campuses through investments in ICT infrastructure, acquisition of learning management systems and other appropriate equipment to fully implement flexible learning modalities (Bayanihan Act 2, 2020).

1.e. CHED’s Memorandum Order No. 4 Series of 2020 “Guidelines on the Implementation of flexible Learning”

The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) also released the guidelines on Flexible Learning which is defined in the documents as a pedagogical approach allowing flexibility of time, place, and audience including, but not solely focused on the use of technology (CHED, 2020).

It involves the use of digital and non-digital technology and covers both face-to-face or in-person learning, out-of-classroom learning modes of delivery, or a combination of modes of delivery. It ensures the continuity of inclusive and accessible education when the use of traditional modes of teaching is not feasible, as in the occurrence of national emergencies (CHED, 2020).

Under the memorandum, HEIs can choose from any of the following modes of flexible learning:

1) Online - A flexible learning mode which is electronic-based and uses available online classrooms for the delivery of instruction. Learning materials are in digital format such as webcast, podcast, videos, audio, and other open educational resources or OERs. To aid online learning, CHED launched a web-based platform, PHL CHED Connect, that provides free learning materials for college students.

2) Offline - A flexible learning mode that does not use internet connectivity at all. Learning is done through printed modules or uses digital forms such as video and audio placed in storage devices.

3) Blended - A type of flexible learning which is a combination of online and offline modes. Online technology will be used for delivering lessons, while other classroom activities will be done offline using printed modules, video tapes, storage devices, and learning packets (Magsambol, 2020).

#### 1.f. PHL CHED Connect

CHED also launched the PHL CHED Connect, a web application that contains higher education course materials in text, media and other digital assets that are useful for teaching, learning and research purposes.

The educational materials range from categories like agriculture, forestry, fishery, architecture, business administration, education, engineering and technology, fine and applied arts, home economics, humanities, IT, criminal justice, and more. The site contains 1,332 modules (content), 1,352 PDFs, 353 videos and 18 HEI contributors. Materials from the academic contributors can easily be downloadable as they are in PDF format (Dillera, 2020).

HEIs are tapped as contributors. Content (PDF or Video) will be shared to CHED Regional Office according to categories. Qualified approvers will review and analyze if the content is suitable. Once approved, students and teachers can easily access the content on the website.

## **2. Socio-economic factors**

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the Philippines had a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 6.7% for 2017. It was considered to be resilient to global economic shocks due to less exposure to troubled international securities, lower dependence on exports, relatively resilient domestic consumption, large remittances from about 10 million overseas Filipino workers and migrants, and a rapidly expanding outsourcing industry (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2019).

According to the World Bank, there has been a 5% decrease of Filipinos living below the poverty line from 26.6% last 2006 to 21.6% last 2015. However, the World Bank in its report titled "Making Growth Work for the Poor: A Poverty Assessment of the Philippines" said that "despite the generally good economic performance, poverty remains high and the pace of poverty reduction has been slow."

This was seconded by Index Mundi on their Philippine Economy Profile 2018. They said that the bigger challenge is the achievement of a more inclusive growth since the wealth is still concentrated in the hands of the rich.

Twenty-two million Filipinos or 1/5 of the population still live below the poverty line. Sixty percent (60%) of people living in poverty reside in the rural areas. This can be connected with the agricultural job loss experienced between 2016-2018.

In 2017, the National Economic and Development Authority of the Philippines published the Philippine Development Plan, 2017-2022, which envisions the Philippines becoming an upper-middle income country by 2022, based on more inclusive economic growth. Human capital development is a key element in this strategy and has been the impetus behind various political reforms over the past years.

However, when the country reported the first COVID-19 case outside China in January 2020, a series of rigorous lockdowns began in March of the same year as a response. The global pandemic has severely impacted the Philippine economy, causing a major decline by 9.5 percent in the country's 2020 gross domestic product (GDP) - the worst contraction since World War II. It is also the first GDP dip since 1998.

Data from the Philippine Statistics Authority show that the annual unemployment rate in 2020 hit 10.3 percent, the highest record since April 2005, which is equivalent to 4.5 million Filipinos. While mass layoffs and company closures perpetuated amid the lockdown, inflation rate rose for the fifth month in a row to 4.7 percent in February 2021, the highest since the January 2019 record of 4.4 percent. This is mainly due to the high cost of food and transportation. Foreign direct investments also contracted by 24.6% (\$6.5 billion) in 2020.

The pandemic made it almost impossible to keep expenses from accelerating as revenues drop. Since more funds are crucial to mitigate the dire effects of COVID-19, the Philippines' debt rose to P10.3 trillion (USD 204.5 billion) by the end of January 2021, as per the Bureau of Treasury. This is still expected to increase through loans from multilateral lenders for COVID-19 vaccines.

In terms of ICT infrastructure, the internet connection in the Philippines can be described in three words - slow, expensive and unstable. The report "Digital Quality of Life Index 2020" by VPN provider Surfshark confirmed this sad state of the Philippine internet. The report focused on five pillars that determine the digital quality of life namely:

- (1) Internet affordability
- (2) Internet quality
- (3) Electronic infrastructure
- (4) Electronic government
- (5) Electronic security

In terms of internet quality, the Philippines ranks 77 out of the 85 countries with an average mobile speed of 16.14 mbps compared to 33.53 mbps global average. The broadband speed of the Philippines is an average of 6.05 mbps compared to the global average of 15.94 mbps. When it comes to mobile internet stability, the Philippines was given a score of 0.8 while the global average is 0.94. And as for broadband internet stability, 0.77 compared to the 0.91 global average.

### 3. Cultural Factors

Resistance to the use of technology in Online Education is also an issue in the Philippines. In the study of Dr. Patricia Arinto entitled “*Issues and Challenges on Open and Distance e-Learning: Perspectives from the Philippines*,” the results showed that faculty indifference and resistance to technology is also experienced even with the country’s leading ODeL institution which is the UPOU. Two of the participants of the study said that ODeL requires not only the acquisition of technology-related skills but also a pedagogical re-orientation, which many academics would find challenging (Arinto, 2016).

One of the respondents pointed out that faculty members are selected to teach courses on the basis of their expertise in the subject matter, and they do not necessarily have knowledge of appropriate and effective pedagogy especially for online learning contexts (Arinto, 2016).

During the period of COVID-19, a quick survey was conducted by the Researcher about the online readiness of 110 Public Administration and Governance faculty members all over the Philippines. Table 17 shows that most of the respondents agreed that they have access to a stable, reasonably fast and reliable internet connection with 86%. When it comes to psychological and emotional preparedness, only 28.8% strongly believed they are ready for e-learning, while 55.9% agreed. There are only 14.4% of the respondents who disagreed while 0.9% strongly disagreed (Gervacio, 2020).

*Table 17. Familiarity with Various Online Tools of ASPAP Faculty Members, April 2020*

Familiarity with online tools	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
MS Word, PPT, PDF	78.4%	19.8%		1.8%
Sending and receiving emails with attachment	85.6%	12.6%		1.8%
Posting and interacting in social media	73.0%	24.3%		1.8%
Surfing the Internet (articles, government sites, news, YouTube, etc.)	78.4%	19.8%		1.8%
Use of synchronous communication tools (SMS, Viber, FB messenger, Zoom, Skype, Google hangouts, etc.)	58.6%	38.7%	0.9%	1.8%

## C. The UPOU as an Online Education Institution

It was in 1995 when the UP Open University became the fifth autonomous campus of the UP System becoming a full-fledged university joining the eight campuses of the UP System. Unlike the other campuses, the mode of delivery of education in UPOU is unique compared to other UP units because it advocates distance education. Distance education is when the teachers and learners are not physically together in one classroom to conduct the classes.

The UPOU has been declared by the Commission of Higher Education (CHED) as the National Center of Excellence in Open Learning and Distance Education for being in the forefront of providing learning for the Filipino people.

UPOU is envisioned as a leader in teaching and learning in the digital age, helping to equip Filipinos with the knowledge and skills they need for life and work in the 21st century. Its mission is to provide Filipinos everywhere access to quality higher education through innovative methods of teaching and learning that are designed to be responsive to their needs as well as to national development priorities. It upholds the values of scholarship, academic excellence, academic freedom, humanism, social responsibility, and service to the nation (UPOU Visitor's Kit, n.d).

The UPOU is the most comprehensive distance education institution, with three undergraduate programs, 13 post-baccalaureate certificate and diploma programs, 12 master's programs, two doctoral programs and non-formal courses. It has a network of 8 learning centers and 20 testing centers in the country and abroad and built a global community of mostly Filipino learners in more than 70 countries (UPOU Visitor's Kit, n.d).

Former UPOU Chancellor Grace Alfonso in her article "*UP Open University: Entering the Fifth Generation of Open and Distance Learning and Building Global Knowledge Communities in the Changing ICT Environment*," describes Online Education in different generations. In what was described as the first generation of Open and Distance Learning, learning modules were created by experts and were distributed through traditional media (print, radio and TV). During this period, print was the dominant medium and radio and TV were just for supplementary materials.

The second generation saw the use of more videos as audiotapes were being used as stand-alone materials. Majority of the print materials were sent directly to the students. This generation also saw the promise of the internet as a means of communication as the use of electronic mail was introduced.

The third generation of ODL saw the rising potential of the internet as a means of delivery, therefore, adding an 'e' to Open and Distance Learning making it Open and Distance eLearning (ODeL). ODeL refers to "forms of education provision that use contemporary technologies to enable varied combinations of synchronous and asynchronous communication among learners and educators who are physically separated from one another for part or all of the education experience" (Alfonso, 2012; as cited by Arinto, 2016). As early as 2001, the UPOU declared that it will go online through the use of the Integrated Virtual Learning Environment (IVLE) to facilitate online connectivity of learners and teachers. UPOU was preparing to shift 100% online to also cater to students overseas. From IVLE, UPOU started to develop courses using the open source Modular, Object-Oriented, Dynamic Learning Environment or MOODLE.

MOODLE powered UPOU's MyPortal. All the interactions between and among teachers and students take place in virtual classrooms which we call MyPortal. It has features that simulate those in a physical classroom (UPOU Visitor's Kit, n.d).

As UPOU was entering its fourth generation of transitioning to a fully online university, it was also conscious of those who will be marginalized by this move. In order to address this concern, a flexible approach was used to these diverse sectors.

It was also a time for course development using a Learning Management System (LMS). To ensure the quality of materials in this approach, the Resource-Based Course Development (RBCD) strategy was used. In this strategy, learners are empowered by providing them access to learning materials and deciding for themselves how these will help them in their own learning (Lumanta, 2014).

Premised on a fundamental orientation wherein student and teacher are considered as co-creators of knowledge, the RBCD approach allows for greater flexibility in putting together course materials. In this approach, the faculty-in-charge, after preparing a course guide in which course goals are articulated, takes on a facilitation role through a process of referencing, compilation, integration, and synthesis of resource materials which the students can use, evaluate, and reuse in the learning process (Lumanta, 2014).

The fifth generation of Open and Distance eLearning was identified by further widening the access to education by venturing into the global scene. By 2009, UPOU started doing international collaboration with academic and other institutions for various projects including course development, course offering, short-term training, and institutional assistance (Lumanta, 2014).

By going online, global and international, UPOU did not stop finding a way to fulfil its mission of providing access to quality higher education. UPOU started offering Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) in 2013.



For 2020, UPOU was able to develop 82 MOOCs developed with 8,231 completers as well as 11 continuing education programs for 2020. Some of the MOOCs offered during the pandemic era were focused on online teaching in ODeL.

It also created the UPOU Networks which is the online repository of all multimedia resources produced by UPOU. It is a portal where UPOU stakeholders can access an abundance of knowledge in different types of media, serving as the university's window in the global communal interaction in real-time.

At present the UPOU is adopting the concept of the University of the Future which was first articulated in 2019 as part of its social responsibility. UPOU believes that it should be able to shape the direction of the future industrial revolutions. This can only be achieved through revisiting the essence of Universities with regard to core functions in producing graduates who are competent, capable, and skilled enough to face the challenges and opportunities of the future (Unpacking the University of the Future, 2021).

In a speech by UPOU Chancellor Melinda Dela Peña Bandalaria, she defined the thrusts of UPOU by pushing with relevant concepts of future-proof degrees and future-ready leaders with ethical and open science perspectives. She has also delineated future-proof degrees, as they refer to the basic qualifications of training that would allow individuals and learners to undergo career shifts throughout their lifetime, which would eventually serve as pillars for their lifelong learning (Unpacking the University of the Future, 2021).

With this future-proofing of skills and degrees, Bandalaria believes in the greater scheme of things in the future of education in the country. Hence, she believes and encourages HEIs in the same way to provide curriculum amendments and adjustments necessary to commence this aim of future-proofing students in the "University of the Future."

The UPOU conducts regular virtual round table discussions on the concept of the University of the Future and will be establishing the Center for Immersive Open Pedagogies.

## **D. The UPOU's Master of Public Management as a Capacity Development Program for Public Servants**

The discipline of public management/administration in the Philippines was introduced in 1952 by American scholars as part of American rehabilitation efforts of the

country following its devastation from World War II. The United States sent the Bell Mission to assess the political, economic, and social conditions in the country and found the country in bad shape due to the bureaucracy that was causing the country's slow progress. One of the recommendations was the establishment of an Institute to serve as a training ground for public servants and as a research arm and later on, academic degrees were offered (Cabo, 1997).

The Institute of Public Administration, now the National College of Public Administration and Governance (NCPAG) was set up under a technical agreement between the University of the Philippines and the University of Michigan.

After the creation of the UPOU in 1995, one of the first programs offered was the Master of Public Management (MPM) Program of the Faculty of Management and Development Studies which admitted its first batch of students during the second semester of AY 1997-1998.

The institution of the Program was initiated and led by NCPAG, the country's foremost academic institution in public management, education, research and extension. The UP-NCPAG, with the support of the Philippine Civil Service Commission, had aspired to assist in democratizing education by offering programs in distance mode. Distance education (DE) as an approach to learning aims to provide academic preparation to enhance the skills of practitioners who have no time to attend the University or cannot leave their workplace due to tasks in the office or in the field. It invited faculty from the UP System offering Public Administration courses as course writers and tutors and ensured quality in the offering of programs.

The Program was originally designed as an equivalent to the Master of Public Administration (MPA)-Plan B of the NCPAG program, UP Diliman until AY 2002-2003 when the latter revised its curriculum. This change in the NCPAG curriculum factored prominently in the MPM program review in 2003. In addition, new developments in the field and in UPOU academic policies also made urgent, timely and necessary an examination of the MPM Program for it to remain relevant and responsive to the needs of the times. Some of the measures considered and instituted as a result of the 2003 Program Review.

Gervacio (2021) provides a summary on how the MPM Program evolved as an online capacity development strategy. Figure 12 discusses the transformation of the Program in relation to Anderson's three Pedagogies of Education and Alfonso's Generations of Open and Distance e-Learning (ODeL). During the initial years of the Program, course modules were printed and sent to students via courier services wherever they are located. During the second generation of Open and Distance e-Learning, UPOU shifted to the use of electronic mail in communicating to students. Messages were sent to students through a message app that can communicate directly to the mobile phones of the students. The learning materials were converted into pdf files which were sent to the learners through email.

Eventually, the Program embarked on the use of Open Educational Resources (OERs) in line with technological advances. Moreover, It has partnered with various government and non-government organizations to ensure the quality of the Program.

*Figure 12. The Rise of E-learning in the Philippines' Public Administration and Governance Education*

Terry Anderson's Three Pedagogies of Distance Education	UPOU's Generations of Open and Distance eLearning by Dr. Grace Alfonso	MPM Program
<b>Cognitive Behaviourist</b> Teleconferencing Postal service	<b>First Generation:</b> learning modules were created by experts and were distributed through traditional media	Modules were all written and sent to students via courier
<b>Social Constructivist</b> Email; bulletin boards; world wide web; mobile technologies	<b>Second Generation:</b> -use of more videos -printed materials were sent directly to the students -the internet as a means of communication <b>Third Generation:</b> -addition of an 'e' to Open and Distance Learning	The use of electronic mail in communicating with students  Modules were made available through pdf files and shift to IVLE as a repository of assignments and course guides
<b>Connectivism</b> Networked connections between people, digital artifacts, and content.	<b>Fourth Generation:</b> -course development through the use of a Learning Management System (LMS). -Resource-based Course Development (RBCD) <b>Fifth Generation:</b> - widening the access to education by venturing into the global scene -by 2009, UPOU started doing international collaboration with academic and other institutions	The use of OERS in the courses. Modules are contracted for updating using the RBCP approach  Creation of OERs through collaboration with GIZ (ILC) and ASPAP schools  Creation of MOOCS

Source: Gervacio, 2021

The MPM Program has three specializations; Public Policy and Program Administration (PPPA); Local Government and Regional Administration (LGRA); and Voluntary Sector Management (VSM). It consists of 36 units of course work and a mandatory course and a comprehensive examination.

The Program is designed for policymakers, administrators, and managers of public, private, and non-governmental organizations; practitioners in local government and administration; and other individuals interested in good governance, and public policy and administration.

The primary goal of the program is to upgrade the professional and management skills of administrators and practitioners at their own pace and time. In particular, the program aims to provide a high level of competence in public policy, governance, and administration; prepare its students to become better public servants and volunteers; and equip them with necessary skills and knowledge to manage and develop

organizations that work for the welfare and interests of the Filipino people. (<https://fmds.upou.edu.ph/academics/post-bac/mpm/>).

The program has an average of 330 students every semester and was able to produce a total of 343 graduates from 2001 to 2020.

The following are the innovations that were introduced by the program.

- a. Open Admission. The MPM is the only program of UPOU that conducts a Graduate Admission Test (GAT). In order to align the Program with UPOU's principle of openness, the Program started to recognize prior learning starting from the 1st Semester of AY 2013-2014. This means that the Graduate Admission Test (TEST) is not the only basis of admission to the Program, but it also considers the nature of work, education, position among others, of the applicant.
- b. Utilization of Open Educational Resources (OERs). The Program has started utilizing open education resources (OERs) in updating the learning materials. Later, it also started producing its own learning materials.
- c. Creation of the MPM Playlist. The Program has created a playlist to be utilized not only for its lecturer and students but for everyone. The playlist includes several lectures conducted by different experts from the field. They were curated and edited for 21<sup>st</sup> century learners. The playlist is available through [networks.upou.edu.ph](https://networks.upou.edu.ph).
- d. Collaboration with Partners. The MPM Program has coordinated with international organizations such as the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH, (GIZ), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), the Association of Schools of Public Administration in the Philippines (ASPAP) including other universities offering public administration in the areas of content development, research and consultancy and production of learning materials.
- e. Offering of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) – The Program also developed and offered four courses on Inter-local Cooperation for Local Government Unit (Gervacio, 2021).

5

## **E. Summary**

The development and implementation of online education as a capacity development strategy is anchored on the political, socio economic and cultural environment of the Philippines. There are several policies that were instituted by the country that facilitates the use of ICT in education. However, these policies can be hampered by poor implementation. The COVID-19 pandemic also led to the issuances of new guidelines that will definitely affect the future of higher education in the country.

The country, being an archipelago, is conducive to Online Education. However, the ICT infrastructure still needs to be improved. A big chunk of the Filipino people remains poor and with a strong and reliable internet connectivity, learners will be able to study and earn a degree online. Hence, it is important that the government should hasten internet connectivity in order to reach even the rural areas. Educators are also challenged when it comes to teaching online. Although the pandemic may have forced them to learn how to teach remotely, there is still a lot that needs to be done to enable teachers to learn more on how to deliver online teaching and learning effectively.

In the Philippines, the UPOU is considered as the pioneer institution in offering Online Education or how it is referred to as Open and Distance e-Learning (ODEL). The University has constantly been transforming in accordance with the latest developments in technology and online pedagogy. The country recognizes its expertise by instituting the UPOU as one of the implementers of the Open and Distance Learning Act.

One of the early Programs that was offered by UPOU is the Master of Public Management. In fact, the MPM Program is considered to be a “working model” on how Online Public Administration and Governance education should be administered. The other attempts are only done during the COVID-19 pandemic where remote teaching has been adopted by higher education institutions. Hence, it is just befitting that the Program has to be evaluated to determine if the learning outcomes are achieved and if the graduates developed the required competencies.

# **Chapter V: Results and Discussion (2):**

## **Factors Affecting Online Education in the Philippines and the Effectiveness of UPOU as an Online Education Institution**

### **A. Introduction**

One of the good determinants of the effectiveness of the implementation of any capacity development program is the context or the environment where the program operates. They help facilitate or sometimes hinder the success of a program.

This chapter discusses the answers to the research questions: “What are the socio-economic, political and cultural factors influencing online education and its implementation in the Philippines?” and “how is online education utilized by UPOU to develop capacities of public servants through its Master of Public Management Program (MPM)?”

This chapter presents the results of the online interviews that were conducted to the UPOU and MPM key informants. The answers of the research respondents were categorized and summarized to reflect their answers and explanations.

There were 11 UPOU key informants and 18 MPM Key informants. In presenting the data, their profile and perceptions about UPOU are compared to show the similarities and differences in their answers. All the 11 UPOU key informants are full time faculty members of UPOU. Hence, it is expected that they have a higher level of knowledge, experiences and appreciation regarding Online Education and the everyday activities of UPOU.

On the other hand, all the MPM key informants work as faculty affiliates or lecturers of the Program. Thus, their level of knowledge and experiences about UPOUs capacity is not expected to be very comprehensive. They are more knowledgeable about the MPM Program and the courses that they handle.

The first section delves on the environment where online education is being implemented. This refers to the political, socio-economic, and cultural factors that affect the implementation of Online Education (OE) in the Philippines including its perceived benefits and challenges.

The second part discusses the organizational effectiveness of the University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU) in implementing OE and as a capacity development institution offering the Master of Public Management (MPM) Program for public servants.

## **B. Profile of the UPOU and MPM Key Informants**

### **1. UPOU Key Informants**

There were 11 key informants who are all organic to UPOU. They are mostly the administrators of UPOU composed of the Chancellor, Vice Chancellor, Faculty Deans and heads of offices, mostly female (72.7%) who have been working at UPOU with an average of 18.82 years spent with UPOU.

The UPOU is a small University with only 33 full time faculty members. During the time of the study, about 7 of the faculty members are on study leave while another two are on special assignment in other campuses of the University of the Philippines.

Table 18 shows the profile of UPOU key informants. The age of respondents ranges from 34 to 67 years of age. The mean age of the respondents is 51 years. The average number of years in the current post of the respondents is 7.27 years. Although there are six who claimed to be in the position for 5 years and below, the highest is 21 years.

In terms of the number of years with UPOU, the answers range from 8 to 26. There are five respondents who have been with UPOU for more than 20 years. In terms of the number of years of ODeL experiences, the average is 21 years. The range is from 9 to 45 years. There are six respondents who have at least 20 years of ODeL experience. For purposes of the study, the informants are given an identification number from "OU1" to "OU11."



Table 18. Profile of the UPOU Key Informants

UPOU Key Informant No.	Gender	Age	Number of Years in current position	Number of Years with UPOU	Number of Years of experience in Open and Distance E-Learning
OU1	Male	47	5	15	15
OU2	Female	60	5	26	20
OU3	Female	53	12	24	24
OU4	Female	49	6	21	20
OU5	Female	56	8	17	17
OU6	Female	48	10	10	14
OU7	Male	67	21	19	45
OU8	Female	46	3	23	23
OU9	Female	47	3	25	25
OU10	Male	49	5	19	19
OU11	Female	34	2	8	9

## 2. MPM Key Informants

Table 19 shows that there are 18 key informants for the MPM Program composed of faculty affiliates from other University of the Philippine Campuses, lecturers, course writers, consultants and former MPM Program Chairs. There are more females (61%) and the average age is 57 years old and ranges from 28 to 76 years old. The number of years spent with UPOU ranges from two (2) to 25 years or an average of 9.2 years.

As regards experience in and number of years of experience in ODeL, it ranges from 2 to 26 years or an average of 9.42. Most of the respondents come from the academe (66.7%), followed by those working in government (16.7%), retired (11.0%) and 5.6% in private practice. For purposes of the research, the research participants are given identification numbers from “MPM1” to “MPM18”.

Table 19. Profile of the MPM Key Informants

MPM Informant No.	Sex at Birth	Age	Office	Number of years with UPOU	Number of years of experience in Open and Distance e-Learning (ODEL)
MPM1	Male	54	Academe	15	15
MPM2	Female	64	Academe	25	25
MPM3	Female	76	Academe	7	7
MPM4	Female	28	Academe	2	2
MPM5	Female	38	Private practice (law)	4	4
MPM6	Male	65	Retiree	3	5
MPM7	Male	55	Academe	12	12
MPM8	Female	58	Academe	9	5
MPM9	Female	58	Academe	9	9
MPM10	Female	60	Government	6	6
MPM11	Male	57	Academe	21	26
MPM12	Male	53	Government	11	11
MPM13	Female	65	Government	6	6
MPM14	Female	51	Academe	12	12
MPM15	Male	70	Retired	5	5
MPM16	Female	66	Academe	3.5	3.5
MPM17	Male	50	Academe	3	3
MPM18	Female	62	Academe	12	13

### 3. Comparison of Profile of UPOU and MPM Key Informants

Table 20 is a comparison of the UPOU and MPM key informants. In both groups, there are more females than males with 72.7% and 61.1%, respectively. The MPM research participants are older with a mean age of 57 compared to 51 with UPOU.

It is expected that UPOU key informants have been with UPOU for a much longer time with 18.8 years compared to only 9.2 for the MPM. The same pattern can be gleaned for the mean number of years in ODeL with 21 years for the UPOU KIs and 9.42 years for MPM KIs. While the UPOU KIs are all with UPOU, the MPM Key informants are academics (66.7%), working in government (16.7%), retired (11.0%) and a private law practitioner (5.6%).

*Table 20. Comparison of UPOU and MPM Key Informants*

Profile	UPOU Key Informants (N: 11)	MPM Key Informants (N:18)
Gender		
Male	27.3%	38.9 %
Female	72.7%	61.1 %
Mean Age	51	57
Age Range	34 - 67 years old	28 – 77 years old
Mean No. of Years with UPOU	18.82 years	9.19
Mean No. of Years of experience in Open and Distance E-Learning	21	9.42
Mean No. of Years in current position:	7.27	N/A
Office Affiliation	UPOU	
Academe		66.7
Government		16.7
Retired		11.0
Private Practice		5.6

### **C. Factors Affecting Online Education in the Philippines**

The UPOU key informants were asked on the factors affecting online education in the Philippines. These factors are classified as political, socio-economic and cultural factors and they are explained in their responses below.

## **1. Political, socio-economic, cultural factors influencing online education**

### **1.a. Political Factors**

To have a better and deeper understanding of the implementation of Online Education in the Philippines, there are several factors that should be considered. The key informant from UPOU and the MPM Program identified the political factors that affect online education in the Philippines. They include policies on online education, setting up of ICT infrastructure as well as ensuring quality.

Policies. The most common policy that the key informants cited is the Republic Act 10650 (Open and Distance Learning Act) which is important in online education. This was cited by five research participants. This is because the UPOU is one of the implementers of this policy. However, respondent “OU3” noted that there is a need to “refine the rules of the RA 10650 in terms of implementation.” Some of the respondents noted that the Philippine government must take an active role in “creating and implementing an enabling policy” for online education including a “regulatory framework” that will eliminate digital divide and “promote the use of technology” in education. They noted that policies will facilitate the effectiveness of online education for capacity building.

Respondent OU7 mentioned that there are other policies related to online education and these are “Republic Act 10912 (Continuing Professional Development Act of 2016) and Republic Act 10929 (Free Internet Access in Public Places Act).”

Most of the respondents also noted the need to focus on a policy that is related to “internet infrastructure.” This will ensure connectivity in online learning and enable more people to take online learning. Respondent “OU11” said that “COVID-19 pandemic led teachers and learners to experience teaching and learning in the online mode and this is a gain which can be pursued by many academic institutions as well as learners.” Respondent also “OU3” noted that the government must also “craft policies that provide incentives to the creation of new technologies and research that support innovation.”

ICT infrastructure. Some of the key informants mentioned that there is a lack of political support for online education infrastructure and internet connectivity especially in rural areas. Respondent “MPM12” claimed that the “setback behind the fast shift to

technology is the regulatory policies both by the local and national government agencies' expansion of the ICT infrastructure.” This is shared by respondent “MPM15” who noted that “the expansion of ICT infrastructure is met with bureaucratic barriers” which affect the implementation of online education.

Quality standards. Respondent “OU11” also noted that there is a growing proliferation of educational institutions in various parts of the country offering online education programs and courses. Thus, there are issues regarding meeting the quality standards. Hence, respondents “OU10” and “OU11” suggested that the government should be able “to provide guidelines and monitor the implementation of online education to ensure that there is quality online education in the Philippines.”

#### 1.b. Socio- Economic Factors

In terms of economic factors, the key informants highlighted the availability of resources as well as information regarding online education.

Availability of resources. Some key informants said that higher budget allocation could lead to acquisition and retention of better resources such as human resources and software for online education in the Philippines. They also noted that adequate resources would result in updated online resource materials, competent educators who are paid better, smaller professor-to-student ratio and more effective course sites.” One respondent (MPM8) also raised the “need for funding for scholarships and research” related to online education.

Information on online education. Research participants also noted the need for a “massive information campaign on online education.” This is because there seems to be little knowledge on the relevance and potential of open and distance learning. They noted that the COVID-19 pandemic pushed the stakeholders” to adopt both the technology and culture of the online industry.” Hence, they emphasized the need to promote the use of online education in all programs including public administration and governance education among public servants.

#### 1.c. Cultural Factors

With regard to the cultural factors, the research participants noted the disruptions, reluctance to online education and the challenges brought by the internet as some of the factors.

Disruptions. Respondent “OU2” defines “disruptions” as “disturbances or problems which interrupt an event, activity, or process. They can facilitate the effectiveness of online education for capacity development in the Philippines as what

was experienced during the COVID 19 wherein the use of e-learning grew exponentially.”

Respondent “OU9” cited that according to research, “e-learning adoption has been achieved in four months what would normally have taken ten years and COVID-19 pandemic is a disruption that has become a catalyst.” However, the respondent said that it can also be a “hindrance since many educators, specifically teachers are not prepared for the drastic changes in online technology”, the changes may revert to their original state once the peak of the crisis is over.

*Factors Affecting Online Education:*

*“COVID-19 as a disruption has become a catalyst. But it can also be a hindrance since many educators specifically teachers are not prepared for the drastic changes in online technology.”*

*-Key Informant (OU9)*

Reluctance to online education. Some respondents said that the Philippines was not yet accustomed to online learning before the pandemic happened. Respondent “MPM4” noted that in obtaining a degree, “Filipinos still prefer to earn it via traditional classroom set-up than through distance education.” Although online courses are very timely especially during this pandemic, some respondents claimed that there are still those who claim that the “the quality may not be the same with programs undertaken in the classrooms.”

Challenges brought about by the internet. Respondent “OU11” also claimed that in recent years, there are some negative effects brought in by the internet such as: “cheating, deception, bashing, dishonesty, etc. These concerns also penetrate online education which have an influence on the quality of online learning.”

## **2. Factors that Facilitate Online Education**

The research participants were also asked to identify specific factors that could facilitate online education and they were categorized as well.

### **2.a. Political**

The existence of relevant policies and strong ICT infrastructure were mentioned as facilitating factors to online education

Existence of relevant policies. Most of the participants noted that the existence of policies that would encourage the adoption and recognition of distance learning as a substitute to traditional learning set-up is important especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Moreover, some of their answers also included the government policy recognizing UPOU as the leader and enabler of online education. The respondents noted that under the University of the Philippines Charter, the UPOU gets a regular budget from the government which facilitates online education in the country.

Strong ICT Infrastructure. Most of the respondents recognize that a strong online education infrastructure such as “wide coverage of a strong internet connectivity, affordable gadgets, accessible learning platforms,” etc. facilitates online learning. They noted that the internet is widely accessible in urban cities; hence it facilitates the use of online learning. Moreover, they said that a strong resolve by the national government to address the poor ICT Infrastructure and attract more industry players also facilitates the use of online education. Due to the pandemic, Respondent “MPM12” said that “the government now acknowledges all possible providers like satellite internet without going through franchise process and allowing Common ICT Towers within public school premises. This will enable the presence of other competing companies providing internet service and access to quality internet across the country.”

## 2.b. Socio-economic factors

The research participants also recognized several socio-economic factors that facilitate online education which include strong network and collaboration with stakeholders, capacities of teachers and learners and the increasing demand for professional development.

Strong network and collaboration with stakeholders. The respondents mentioned the existence of a strong network with government and non-government institutions as an important facilitator of online education. Respondent “OU3” cited the example of the “establishment of e-Centers in local government units (LGUs) as an important factor that facilitates online learning.” Further, they also noted that collaboration with other institutions offering online education is important.

Capacities of teachers and learners. The respondents noted that one of the facilitators of online education is the “capacity of teachers and learners.” Respondent “OU4” said that this refers to “teacher’s attitude toward learner-centered learning and facilitation of interactivity, student’s level of engagement to learning and technology

(intrinsic motivation) and clear learning outcomes and career mobility (extrinsic motivation).” To sum it up, the respondents highlighted the “technological adeptness of learners and educators, instructional design, learning management system, course outlines, resources, appropriate use of synchronous and asynchronous modes facilitate online education.”

Demand for professional development. Respondent “MPM10” noted that “for those who live in urban centers, where most of the workers are tied up to the 8 to 5 work, online classes will be better for them.” Another claimed that the desire to obtain higher education for personal as well as professional development is good for online education. For example, a master’s degree is required for one to be appointed/promoted to a division chief position. Another respondent noted the demand for Programs that produce competent graduates who become effective contributors to the government’s workforce is also good for online education.

### 2.c. Cultural Factors

The key informants also recognized that the culture of “openness to online programs/courses” is one of the facilitators of online education. They noted that online education is now acceptable especially with the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of them emphasized that UP education is regarded as a “standard of quality education.” They claimed that “learners can study and obtain quality online education regardless of where they live or work and at their own pace.” Aside from this, they also gave other facilitating reasons such as: “convenience in class settings and attendance,” “availability of good and working faculty,” “good curricula which are constantly reviewed,” “University support and faculty and staff development.”

## 3. Factors that Hinder Online Education

In contrast, the key informants were also asked for the factors that hinder online education. The following are the hindering factors to online education:

### 3.a. Political

The lack of clear policies as well as lack of ICT infrastructure are some of the challenges that hinder online education.



Lack of clear policies on online education. Some respondents noted that there is a lack of clear policies on distance education, especially “quality assurance of programs” and “regulation of universities offering distance education.

Lack of ICT Infrastructure. Some respondents also noted the lack of ICT infrastructure. They noted the “unavailability of internet” in various locations of the country, the “high cost of internet connection and gadgets” including “unreliable internet connections.” Some also mentioned the limited budget given by the government for ICT infrastructure. They said that this could lead to “poor interface design and interactivity features of online platforms” due to poor internet connection. They suggested that the government should do something to address this issue.

### 3.b. Socio-economic factors

Weak relations with stakeholders and lack of capacity of teachers were also cited as hindrance to online education.

Weak relationship with various stakeholders. The respondents cited poor relationship with stakeholders as an issue that could lead to challenges in the implementation of programs and projects on online education.

Lack of capacity of teachers. The key informants likewise recognized the lack of technical competency both on the part of the teachers and the students that could affect the implementation of online education.

#### *Factors that Hinder Online Education:*

*“Teachers lack proper orientation to constructivist paradigm where learners are the center of teaching and learning (many teachers are traditional and find it difficult to empower students to learn)”*

*- Key Informant (OU4)*

### 3.c. Cultural Factors

The lack of awareness was noted to be one of the cultural barriers to online education. Some of the respondents referred to it as “the traditional mindset” that quality education can only be obtained if the teacher and the students are meeting face-to-face in a conventional mode of instruction which they also think is more superior. Similarly, other respondents cited the “lack of awareness or internalization” of what really constitutes quality learning/education is another concern. See Table 21 for the list of facilitating and hindering factors of online education in the Philippines.

Table 21. Facilitating and Hindering Factors of Online Education, Philippines, 2021

Category	Facilitating Factors	Hindering Factors
<b>Political</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presence of relevant policies</li> <li>• A strong ODL infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of ICT infrastructure.</li> <li>• Lack of clear policies on Online education</li> </ul>
<b>Socio-economic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong Network and collaboration with stakeholders</li> <li>• Capacities of Teachers and Learners</li> <li>• Demand for Professional Development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak relationship with various stakeholders</li> <li>• Lack of capacity of teachers and learners</li> </ul>
<b>Cultural</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Openness to online programs/courses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of awareness on online education</li> </ul>

Based on the above answers of the research informants on the political, socio-economic factors affecting online education, it affirms that the governments play an important role in online education. According to Liyana Gunawardena, et. al. (2013) governments are expected to address basic issues like internet access with adequate infrastructure, language, computer literacy, etc. This is supported by Smith (2012) who noted that government support, higher education policies, technological resources, cultural biases, and organizational rules can influence online learning in terms of its quality, accessibility, and efficacy. One important reason that online courses can have so many different outcomes is because there are larger political, economic and organizational influences that are guiding the implementation, practices and ultimately consequences (Smith, 2012).

In the case of the Philippines, the key informants highlighted the importance of political, socio-economic and cultural support through policies that could facilitate the use of online education. The policies that are in place recognize the use of online education. However, the implementation of the policies should be improved to ensure that there is quality online education in the country. At present, the government should firm up its role as a regulatory framework for online education so that institutions will be properly guided.

Bere, et al. (2014) noted that ICT infrastructure is a prerequisite for online learning and knowledge sharing for public administration. This issue is experienced by the Philippines since urban areas have internet connection compared to rural areas. Providing and improving internet access will also enable learners to study wherever they are.

With regard to cultural barriers, it has been pointed out by the research participants that there is a lack of openness to online learning which needs to be addressed.

## **D. Organizational Effectiveness of UPOU as an Online Education Institution**

This section focuses on the organizational effectiveness of UPOU as an implementer of Online Education. As mentioned in the previous chapter. Online education in the context of UPOU is referred to as Open and Distance e-Learning (ODEL) so they will be used interchangeably in the following discussion.

### **1. Perceptions of the Effectiveness of UPOU as an Institution**

The key informants were asked to rate their perceptions on the effectiveness of UPOU as an organization implementing online education. The study utilized Otoo, et. al's. (2009) proposed "Capacity Development Results Framework" to assess the effectiveness of organizations to implement capacity developing programs based on several indicators.

Table 22 shows that generally, all the key informants from UPOU and the MPM Program agreed on UPOU's effectiveness in implementing online programs and courses.

The highest rating for all organization indicators is on the "clarity of mission, vision and goals" with the key informants from UPOU giving a slightly higher rating with 4.73 compared with 4.62 for the MPM key informants or "strongly agree." In contrast, the lowest rating for the UPOU respondents is on the "support of stakeholders" with 4.0 (agree) compared to a higher rating of 4.39 (strongly agree) from the MPM key informants.

Comparing the figures for the two sets of research participants, the indicator on "financial viability" has the highest difference with the UPOU respondents giving a higher rating by 0.42 or 4.36 (strongly agree) compared to only 3.84 (agree) for the MPM key informants. This means that the MPM key informants were not very aware of the financial aspect of UPOU. On the other hand, the MPM respondents gave "support of stakeholder" a higher rating by 0.39.

Based on the answers of the key informants, the UPOU is indeed perceived to have the capacity to deliver or implement capacity development programs. The explanation can be found below.

*Table 22. Rating on the Indicators of Organizational Effectiveness of UPOU, UPOU and MPM Key Informants*

<b>Indicators of Organizational Effectiveness</b>	<b>UPOU KI (N: 11)*</b>	<b>MPM KI (N:18)*</b>	<b>Difference</b>
a. Clarity of mission, vision and goals (The UPOU has a clear vision, mission and goals aligned to what it wants to achieve; and its mandate is recognized by relevant stakeholders.)	4.73	4.61	0.12
b. Achievement of Outcomes (The UPOU achieves its functions in teaching, research, extension and public service. It develops educational resources, delivers quality teaching and learning programs, conducts research, public service and provides faculty/staff and student support)	4.18	4.44	(0.26)
c. Financial Viability (The UPOU secures its finances to operate and has a sound financial management system)]	4.36	3.94	0.42
d. Support of stakeholders (The UPOU maintains the support of stakeholders and conducts regular consultations with them	4.0	4.39	(0.39)
e. Adaptability in anticipating change (The UPOU monitors the internal and external environment to encourage innovation, manage knowledge and adapt to new technologies)	4.45	4.39	(0.06)

*\*Strongly Agree – 4.21 – 5.00; Agree – 3.41 – 4.20; Undecided – 2.61 – 3.40; Disagree – 1.81 – 2.60; Strongly Disagree – 1.00 – 1.80*

When asked to explain their ratings, the following are the answers of the key informants.

*1.a. Clarity of UPOU’s vision, mission and goals*

The UPOU and MPM key informants strongly agreed that UPOU has a clear vision, mission and goals with a rating of 4.73 and 4.61, respectively. They said that

this information is visible from the website. Some also noted that there are documents showing that the University has a mandate and was established as a National University under Republic Act 9500 or the “The University of the Philippines Charter of 2008 with tripartite functions of teaching, research and public service.” Another said that the mandate “translates into clear targets and priority programs that drive its operations in administration and academic activities.”

Some respondents also mentioned that UPOU’s mandate has also been recognized by the government through the Open and Distance Learning Act (Republic Act 10650). They noted that UPOU is mandated as “one of the institutions to assist in capacitating other academic institutions in the country on ODL.” One respondent also mentioned “UPOU’s contribution and leadership in ODL as being recognized by other open universities in the Asian region.”

Another respondent said that “UPOU also leads in all aspects of ODeL like offering massive open online courses (MOOCs) and making them accessible to all types of learners.” One also noted that “UPOU pioneered distance education in the country as evident in the number of students of UPOU, particularly with the number of students under the MPM Program.”

One respondent said that “there is harmonization in the UPOU and MPM mission, vision and goals but not all stakeholders may have noticed such. Usually, the link and synchronization of these key variables are not too important from the point of view of the students since their primary goal is usually to complete the Program.”

Respondent “MPM2” said: “In the beginning, I should say that I have to learn and understand open and distance learning if I am to be part of UPOU-MPM as teaching staff. There are forums, seminars, consultations and meetings with its stakeholders where information about these is explained and these forums are announced in its portal and emailed to faculty members of the MPM Program.”

“MPM9” key informant however, admitted that s/he has a vague idea of the vision and mission of the UPOU and the MPM Program since it was not clearly articulated in the documents that she received from UPOU.

*On the Clarity of UPOU’s Vision, Mission, and Goals:*

*“I was helped by the training and exposure I got as I agreed to write modules (which I have to learn on the job) and be exposed in an online learning environment (University of Victoria, Canada). I thought then, that one has to have a shift in perspective in favor of open learning, much willingness to do things in a different/new way, and much discipline as faculty-in-charge to make the learning process effective. In a way, this is how I understood open learning.”*

*-Respondent MPM2*

### *1.b. Achievement of Outcomes*

The UPOU key informants gave a lower rating of 4.18 (agree) compared to the MPM key informants with 4.44 (strongly agreed) in terms of achievement of outcomes in the areas of teaching, research, extension, and public service. They mentioned that UPOU is able to achieve its functions by: “offering degree and non-degree academic programs, developing learning resources which can be accessed by the public as Open Educational Resources OERs); conducting discipline based and ODeL research; doing public service by offering MOOCs, conducting training programs, training Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) in ODeL, and other relevant public service.”

The research participants also cited the following reasons for their assessment:

Recognition of UPOU’s students, research and extension services. One mentioned that there is a “recognition of UPOU’s graduates at the local and international levels.” Another said that “the University has pioneered ODeL in the country and has assisted other institutions in developing their programs.” Some also noted that “UPOU has conducted research on ODeL; some of which have even won awards and are recognized in international conferences and published in internationally renowned peer-reviewed scientific journals.” Another said that “Its extension services are responsive to the needs of its stakeholders and communities, some of which had been recognized by reputable awarding bodies.”

Further, “MPM10” key informant highlighted that UPOU “created opportunities for its faculty/staff and students to grow and develop in their fields.” “Through the MPM course, a number of students who are engaged in the voluntary sector, public organizations, and non-government organizations have enhanced their work performance.”

Development of learning materials. The UPOU developed learning modules that are relevant to achieve their outcomes. Another respondent (MPM2) noted: “Together, we developed learning modules, did research, attended training and conferences on online learning and developed our own course sites.”

The research participants also said that “online educational resources are also accessible in the UPOU site and are used in teaching courses in the MPM and other degree programs being offered by the UPOU.” One (MPM18) also mentioned that with the transformation to open and distance e-learning, “the UPOU develops open educational materials with the faculty members to reach out to as many learners as possible and populate the Internet with scholarly and other materials that are more science-based, with practical applications.”

Moreover, another noted that the platform of the UPOU MPM Program or the “MyPortal” is “an effective medium for teaching, research and training. It facilitates better distance learning experience for both students and faculty members.”

Capacity development. The respondents noted that the achievement of outcomes is also facilitated by the “capacity development for its new faculty members that is done regularly every start of semester.” They said that the UPOU and MPM Program support its faculty members and provide opportunities for their further advancement. “They are empowered and provided space to develop their creativity and introduce innovations based on the evolving online education technology.” They added that “instruction, research, and extension outcomes are well-shared.” One avenue is through the orientation of students at the beginning of every semester.

“MPM16” key informant claimed that webinars are conducted to: “a) showcase the best practices of its graduates in entrepreneurial and skills training programs; b) discuss subject matters supporting the degree programs being offered by UPOU such as public policy, online education; c) discuss important issues like climate change and resiliency; d) inform faculty members on online resources/databases being subscribed to by the UPOU; and e) exchange of teaching experiences and methodology in the time of pandemic, among others.”

Challenges in achieving the outcomes. However, achievement of outcomes in terms of teaching, research, extension, and public service leaves a lot to be desired. It was noted that there are certain areas that need to be improved. One noted that “UPOU can be more open and inclusive and has to continuously find ways to re-assess the needs of its stakeholders.” “OU7” key informant mentioned that “UPOU operates within the framework of a brick and mortar institution, thus, it encounters both internal constraints from its university system and external opposition from its education sector environment.” Nevertheless, UPOU is said to have performed remarkably well particularly during the recent COVID-19 lockdowns where it was given an opportunity to showcase its best practices and lessons learned. One informant mentioned that “UPOU can deliver more if it has more resources with the right capability and capacity needed to do the job.”

One respondent personally claimed that “the quality of teaching and research could suffer because more time is spent on extension work and public service.” “MPM9” key informant mentioned that “lecturers do not have much opportunity for UPOU-based research and extension work.”

*On the Achievement of Outcomes:*

*“UPOU has five strategic thrusts from 2016 to present, focusing on (1) inclusive, flexible and innovative teaching and learning, (2) responsive and socially relevant research and innovation in ODeL; (3) public service in ODeL; (4) participatory administration and governance, and (5) quality assurance culture. Through these years, UPOU has conducted important research about open education and OER, and also offers MOOCs in ODeL.”*

### *1.c. Financial Viability*

The UPOU key informants gave a rating of 4.36 (strongly agree) on the financial viability of UPOU while the MPM respondents a lower rating of 3.94 (agree) due to the following reasons that they gave:

UPOU as a state University. Some research participants noted that the finances of the UPOU being part of the National University are “viable coupled with a sound financial management system suited to a set-up of an open university.” As such, UPOU “follows the government’s procurement system and disbursement of funds” such as salary and some other reimbursements do not take long to release.

Another key informant (OU7) noted that: “the scalability and flexibility of online education has resulted in a number of unintended positive financial outcomes in the form of: reduced costs in maintenance, operations and utilities; savings among its faculty, staff and students; reduced opportunity costs among faculty, staff and students due to flexible work and study arrangements; the economics of digital workflows, processes and materials; and minimal capital outlay.”

#### *On the Financial Viability of UPOU:*

*“Budget utilization from the allocation from the University has been judiciously efficient. However, the MPM requires more allocation for more personnel- additional regular faculty members and staff; research and capacity building incentives, e.g., for curricular improvement, faculty training and academic degree completion.”*

*- Key Informant (MPM18)*

Capacity to mobilize resources. One respondent said that it is also important to note that “UPOU is able to augment its research and operational funds that could support its contractual personnel who could assist in some of its academic and administrative operations.” “Though small in size, the University is able to provide the benefits of its employees on time.” Another claimed that “it generates funds through research grants, external funding, etc.” “It has a sound financial management system with some of its funds being invested for additional income.” One respondent also revealed that “aside from funding from the University, UPOU gets a substantial amount of grants from the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), and from external international agencies, such as IDRC Canada, GIZ of Germany, among others.” However, some also noted that as state-funded, there are times that funds are not sufficient to address all the needs of the institution. There are instances that



mobilization of activities is hampered by the government procedures and UPOU could not immediately purchase needed equipment, hire staff, etc.

Lack of information on the financial aspects of UPOU. All the MPM key informants claimed that they have no information on the financial aspects of UPOU and the MPM Program.

However, despite the absence of information, one noted that similar to other units of the University of the Philippines, the UPOU has an allocation every year which is used for its instruction, research, and extension functions. Another mentioned that UPOU runs its programs regularly without disruptions and creates more aligned programs and activities for its faculty and students as well, hence, one can consider its efficiency on its budget utilization.

“MPM2” key informant noted “the leadership of the Program Chair in strategizing to get financial support from UPOU, enter into partnerships with local and foreign universities to widen the audience of the MPM program, gain advocates, allow bigger learning environment for its own students and faculty members alike through conferences and externship programs to local and foreign universities.”

However, one respondent noted that the MPM requires more allocation for more personnel. There is a need for additional regular faculty members and staff; research and capacity building incentives for curricular improvement, faculty training and academic degree completion.

#### *1.d. Support of stakeholders*

The UPOU respondents gave a rating of 4.0 (agree) on the support of stakeholders compared to a higher score of 4.39 (strongly agree) for the MPM key informants.

They claimed that the University maintains a strong relationship with its partners at the local and international levels. It has a huge network from different sectors; hence it is easy to implement learning programs for both government and non-government stakeholders especially if these are designed to address the country's development needs. Some also mentioned that annually, UPOU's partners increase, indicating that more and more institutions are recognizing the University as a credible partner for their programs. The UPOU is also recognized as the National Center of Excellence in Open Learning and Distance Education for its achievements in this field and its vital role in pushing the frontiers of learning in service to the Filipino nation. The University works with CHED, TESDA, and other institutions as part of fulfilling its role as mandated by the law. They also claimed that UPOU regularly conducts series of webinars and serves as technical consultant to other stakeholders in relation to Ode, while on said that in

developing and reviewing its programs, it has been customary to consult with relevant stakeholders.

One MPM respondent also noted that “the strong support also comes from the faculty members belonging to other Component Units (CUs) of the UP System who serve as either affiliate faculty or Chair of the different UPOU programs.” One respondent claimed to fully support the program as a lecturer and another also welcomed most invitations from the Program Chair, whether the activity is meant to enhance teaching, to learn new open learning tools or skills, to improve and promote the program itself, and to support the institution through participation in graduation and faculty meetings.

*On the Support of Stakeholders:*

*“There may be regular consultations with employees and students but it appears that a lot of potential solutions to problems encountered in the University cannot be solved by UPOU's administration on its own. We are after all part of a bigger institution, UP system, and the Philippine government, with even higher levels of bureaucracy.”*

*- Key Informant (OU11)*

Some also noted that the UPOU and the MPM Program have the support of stakeholders and collaborate with them as evidenced by the teaching involvement of affiliate faculty and lecturers, and the linkages with other Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs), Local Government Units (LGUs), etc.

Another key informant (MPM10) mentioned that “the MPM program extended assistance to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in the conduct of the Organizational Development study for the creation of its field offices in Metro Manila. Another example of engagement is the conduct of the e-Solid Waste Management Course that was developed to support the Local Government Units (LGUs) formulate their Solid Waste Management Plan. It is one of the gaps identified why most LGUs cannot fully enforce the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act in their respective area of jurisdictions. The intervention made through the collaboration of UPOU and MPM with DENR provided an opportunity to the eSWM LGU participants to fill said gap.”

One noted that UPOU received strong support from its alumni relation especially when it comes to providing technical as well as professional assistance to its various programs. Some of its alumni had served as lecturers or tutors in many of its degree

and non-degree courses. Hence, there should be more consultation with students and the alumni.

Moreover, a key informant claimed that the “steady student enrolment in UPOU's programs and the demand for UPOU's services in capacity building in ODeL suggest that it maintains the support of its stakeholders.” As part of the institutionalization process of any program, UPOU conducts consultations with potential students of the program. A consultation is also made when a program is being reviewed.

However, it was also noted that more engagements should be done with the industry. More partnerships have to be forged with local and international networks “to upgrade and update program offerings, carry out trail-blazing research and more impactful societal interventions, especially during these challenging times.” One also said that there are some members of the society that UPOU should be able to reach. However, the "shortage" in human and non-human resources are hindrances in doing all these.

#### *1.e. Adaptability in anticipating change*

The key informants from UPOU gave a score of 4.45 for UPOU's adaptability in anticipating change compared to 4.39 for the MPM informants which “strongly agree.” This can be attributed to the following reasons:

Environmental Scanning. The respondents said that at the higher university governance level, “scanning the environment and the current and emerging trends are assessed to enable the University to respond and plan accordingly.” This is important to make necessary adjustments in its degree programs and include more recent changes in the demands for new skills and competences, conduct relevant webinars, publications, research projects.

Some mentioned that the University is an “innovator of change.” It initiates changes in its operations - academic and non-academic - using new technologies. It also introduces innovations in its research and public service, teaching approaches, and academic programs. It introduces new concepts such as ODeL in the field of ODL/DE and approaches in course development. It can easily respond to whatever developments in ODL/DE in the global environment. One noted that UPOU conducts regular dialogue internally and externally to monitor and anticipate changes.

They also claimed that “the future's strategic thinking” must be enhanced and supported by the University and other institutions and stakeholders. This is evident in the UPOU's involvement, participation and memberships in international organizations or associations and conferences/seminars that promote distance learning and Public Management.

One key informant noted the continuous orientation and learning being done by the MPM Program. In fact, before the pandemic, MPM Faculty even conducted off campus activities to support other institutions and universities.

*On the Adaptability in Anticipating Change:*

*“UPOU officials, faculty and staff are keenly tuned into global developments in education, which are supportive to openness, flexibility and agility. Intuitively, they are aware of the correct paths to take given the diverse options on the horizon. This has been proven time and again in their decisions to: adopt eLearning as the main delivery system; employ MOODLE as its LMS; embrace the open educational resources movement; and celebrate MOOCS.”*

*- Key Informant (OU7)*

Presence of international network. Some respondents said that the presence of an international network enables UPOU to anticipate changes in the field of ODeL. The UPOU officials, faculty and staff are keenly tuned into global developments in education, which are supportive to “openness, flexibility and agility.” Intuitively, they are aware of the correct paths to take given the diverse options on the horizon. One claimed that this has been proven time and again in the decisions to “adopt eLearning as the main delivery system; employ MOODLE as its LMS; embrace the open educational resources movement; and celebrate MOOCS.” Currently, UPOU is pursuing the University of the Future in preparation for education and industry structural changes expected to unfold in the coming years.

Continuous updating of technology. Some participants also said that UPOU always upgrades its learning platform and strategies to improve the learning and teaching experiences of both its students and faculty members. Another evidence is the support being given by the Examination Services Program for online proctored examination.

However, one noted that the methods used in teaching in UPOU 10 years ago remain unchanged. The full features of the learning management system is not yet fully utilized including the anti-plagiarism software, which is essential for facilitating ODEL (and learning in general).

Leadership role of the Program Chair. Another key informant (MPM2) noted that the Program Chair keeps track of developments in open learning, locally and internationally. This is evidenced by the partnerships with government agencies she

was able to craft, from which online certificate programs have developed. It is noted how the PC pioneered the development of video materials for learners, targeting multi-outputs from single activities. A conference for instance would generate learning materials from the conference itself, from reading materials, video materials, research proposals, and networks, among others.

Based on the responses on the above indicators of organizational effectiveness, the key informants agreed that UPOU has the capacity to implement online education as a capacity development strategy.

As mentioned in JICA (2004), the factors that affect effectiveness of an organization include human resources (capacities of individuals in the organization); physical resources (facilities, equipment, materials, etc.); intellectual resources; inter-institutional linkage (network, partnership, etc.); incentive and reward systems; organizational culture and leadership of managers.

In using the indicators of Otto, et. al (2009), the UPOU has clear mission, vision and goals and is able to achieve its outcomes in instruction, research and public service. It is also financially viable since it is funded by the government. It also has the support of the stakeholders and can adapt to change. All these factors make the UPOU an effective organization. All these indicators affirm the capacity of UPOU as a capacity development institution offering online programs and courses.

## **2. Strengths of UPOU as an Online Education Institution**

Aside from their perceptions regarding the UPOU as an online education institution, the research participants from UPOU and the MPM Program were also asked regarding their perceptions on the strengths of UPOU as an institution. They identified several factors:

The UPOU brand of education. The respondents claimed that UPOU is part of the University of the Philippines System which has the “tradition of honor and excellence” and makes it different from the rest of other institutions in the Philippines. This reputation helps UPOU in gaining acceptance and recognition not only in the country but in the Asian region and even globally which is also important in generating additional resources.

They also mentioned that UPOU is recognized as the leading institution online education in the Philippines, and it has the pedagogical, technical, human and financial scaffolds of an ODeL institution. It has established “educational architecture” as compared to others and recognized by a national policy which enables it to have sufficient funding from the government. Moreover, they also added that the UP brand

carries with it the quality curricula, faculty and staff complement. They said that UPOU has the distinction and prestige as the pioneer in online teaching and with competent and highly educated and experienced faculty, well developed online resources and available databases, thus making UPOU easier to market.

*On the Strength of UPOU as an Online Education Institution:*

*We are a part of a University which has the tradition of honor and excellence and this makes us different from the rest. This reputation helps a lot for the university to gain acceptance and recognition not only in the country but in the region and yes, even globally and generate additional resources as well.*

*-Key Informant (OU2)*

Vast experiences in ODeL. The research participants also claimed that UPOU has the experience in offering capacity development programs. It has been delivering online and distance learning Programs/courses for more than two decades. They also said that the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and other stakeholders recognizes UPOU as the National Center for Distance Education. The UPOU has an established platform for distance/online learning and is already known for providing quality online education within and outside the country.

Strong human resources. The UPOU and MPM key informants also noted that UPOU has a very good human resource since many of the faculty and staff have been with the institution for several years. The strength of UPOU is its systems approach to distance education focusing on the academic side (course development and delivery), student support, and administration (finance, Human Resource, infrastructure, budget, etc). They also mentioned that it maintains flexible human resources and flat organizational structure which contributes to its agility. The UPOU has tech support that is useful. Moreover, one also noted the library of open educational resources is also improving and growing.

Presence of strong networks. The respondents also noted that UPOU maintains its network with key government institutions like the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Technical Education Skills Development Authority (TESDA), and other private institutions. Hence, this is one of its strengths.

UPOU Values. The research participants also commented that “UPOU values openness and innovation.” It is open to adopt new formats, technologies and has a diverse pool of experts. Its long experience in ODeL has made UPOU adapt to changing times. The UPOU is at the forefront of open and distance e-learning, and it has the expertise to offer such programs for public servants. They also noted that UPOU has a futuristic orientation; public service values; wide reach of the program, even to overseas Filipinos. There is the UP brand which respects “diversity” and pedagogical beliefs that are central to ODeL (constructivist, learner-centered, self-directed learning, action-oriented; and "family" spirit) within the University.

Flexible Learning. The key informants also claimed that UPOU has made learning become accessible to areas with internet connection. They mentioned that the schedule allows learners and instructors to customize learning experience with current personal and professional demands, the program offers tracks that accommodate varied professionals and is flexible in holding classes. They also noted that UPOU, being an open and distance e-learning institution, has already an advantage in offering capacity development programs for public servants.

### **3. Challenges of UPOU as an ODeL institution**

Aside from the strengths of UPOU as an ODeL institution, the research key informants were also asked on their perceived challenges for UPOU.

Lack of Human Resources. The key informants admitted that UPOU has a thin-based workforce. There is a need for additional plantilla positions to enable UPOU to retain young people with good potential. Additional human resources will enable the University to do more capability building/public service programs not only in terms of the training programs but also in providing technical assistance to other academic institutions. One respondent noted that since UPOU's MPM Program operates mainly with lecturers and one full time faculty member, there is little opportunity for discussions, exchange of ideas and review of courses.

Lack of ICT Infrastructure and Learning Materials. Some respondents noted that at present, UPOU is internet dependent and has a single model content delivery system, thus, other modes of delivery should be explored. Moreover, there is a need to keep up and continue searching for online platforms which are user friendly. Another challenge mentioned is keeping the learning materials up to date. Since faculty members identify open access materials themselves, it takes considerable time for them to review and pick the most appropriate ones. They also noted that some good materials are not openly accessible.

Adherence to Government Procedures. The UPOU respondents claimed that one of the challenges is for UPOU being a government institution and under the UP System where it should follow strict government policies and procedures which makes it difficult to organize activities sometimes. One respondent (OU7) noted that in some ways, the UPOU's open learning philosophy is inconsistent with "conservatism, academic pride and Intellectual snobbery."

Misconceptions and Biases. Another challenge that was mentioned by respondents is the "notion" that online education is inferior to residential mode of education. Hence, UPOU needs to investigate how the academe-practice gap can be bridged especially in programs/courses requiring face-to-face learning because of the need for acquisition of specific skills and attitudes. They claimed that the pedagogy of ODeL is not too understood, and institutions just transform face-to-face sessions into online sessions, without regard to the preparedness, maturity, and virtue of independent learning.

Networking with the Industry. The key informants also saw the need for UPOU to improve its network with the industry in relation to its degree programs. It must identify sustainable partnerships for its planned activities, capitalizing on its access to technology providers and other private enterprises. They also noted that having a strong network will enable the promotion of UPOU programs and reach its respective target audiences. This is important not only in maintaining the number of enrollees but also in improving the graduation rate of students.

Capacity of Teachers. The respondents also identified the need to develop the capacities of teachers in online teaching and learning. Thus, it should continue to provide more learning and training to have better online teachers. They also noted that "a good number of MPM faculty members are senior citizens and therefore not too good with technology." There should also be continuing further formal education and training for its faculty and staff.

*On the Challenges of UPOU as an ODeL Institution:*

*"UPOU needs to re-envision the future of online learning given the many challenges in developing countries that are related to socio-economic profile."*

*- Key Informant (OU4)*

## **E. Summary**



This chapter discussed two main questions of the study which is on the enabling environment of online education in the context of the Philippines and how the UPOU operates as an organization including its strengths and weaknesses in implementing online capacity development programs, particularly the MPM Program. The discussion can be summarized as follows:

1. There exists an enabling environment for online education in the Philippines as shown by the presence of policies and the efforts to improve the ICT infrastructure. Moreover, a network of institutions that support online education also exists and there is an effort for the continuous capacity development of teachers. However, there are still some reservations when it comes to online education because of the notion that “face-to-face” learning is much better than online learning.
2. Despite having policies on online education, the government should be able to institute mechanisms to ensure quality standards of online education and improve ICT infrastructure especially in the rural areas so that more learners will be able to have access to online education. There is a need to provide appropriate information about online education to address misconceptions about it.
3. The UPOU and MPM key informants agree that UPOU has the organizational capacity to deliver capacity development programs, including the MPM Program. The UPOU has a clear vision, mission and goals and has the mandate to offer online education. It also achieves its outcomes in the areas of teaching, research, training and public service. It also has the support of its stakeholders. It has also the capacity to anticipate change as evidenced by its performance during the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. The UPOU has to improve its human resources by hiring more faculty members and staff to respond to the increasing demand in its programs. It has also to improve its partnership with different stakeholders such as the industry in order to address the competency needs of the industry.
5. In terms of the strengths of UPOU, its branding is already an advantage since the University of the Philippines is already known for providing quality education and it adheres to values such as honor and excellence. The UPOU also has capable faculty and staff.

6. The challenges for UPOU include lack of human resources, lack of ICT infrastructure, misconceptions and biases against online education, lack of capacity of teachers and the need to improve its network with the industry.

## **Chapter VI: Results and Discussion (3):**

### **The Effectiveness of the Master of Public Management Program as a Capacity Development Tool for Public Servants**

#### **A. Introduction**

This section discusses the effectiveness of the MPM Program as a tool in developing the capacities of public servants. It aims to answer the research question: “how do MPM students and graduates perceive online education as a means for capacity development of public servants in the Philippines?”

It presents the results of the online surveys that were conducted for the MPM students and alumni. There were 151 students who responded to the survey and 77 alumni. The surveys were processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. The results are tabulated for purposes of presentation of the data.

There is also some data culled from the interview of MPM key informants. These are the data on the perceptions on the learning outcomes and perceptions on the learning competencies.

In organizing the data, it is important that the same questions for the students and alumni are compared to provide a better understanding of their profile and perceptions. The perceptions of the students and alumni on the information about the MPM Program, other skills gained as well as the benefits and challenges of online education of public servants are also discussed and compared.

Moreover, the same questions for the MPM key informants and students are also compared. For the perceptions on the learning outcomes, the results for the students were compared with those of the MPM key informants. Further, the results on the competencies gained by the MPM alumni are also compared with her perceptions of the MPM key informants.

## 1. Profile of MPM Students and Alumni Respondents

Table 22 shows the profile of the MPM student and alumni who participated in the study. There are a total of 151 students who responded to the survey out of 296 students or 51.0% of the total number of enrolled students. In contrast, there were 77 alumni respondents out of 307 or 25.1%.

### 1. Profile of the MPM Students

Gender, Civil Status and Age. The respondents of the survey are mostly female with 68.9% and almost half of the respondents are married.

In terms of age, the average age of the student respondents is 35 years old. The age range of the respondents is from 22 to 66 years old. This means that the MPM Program caters to lifelong learners. In terms of age group, almost half the student respondents belong to the 30 to 39 age range with 49.7%.

Position, Type of Office and Office Location. The results on the current position in office reveals that most of the student respondents hold technical positions with 34.4%. This is followed by those occupying managerial posts with 29.8%. Almost one-fourth (23.2%) are employed as administrative/clerical staff.

Most of the student respondents work for the national government with 48.3%. The rest are working in Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) with 13.2%, Private Business/Organizations with 12.6%, Local Government Units (LGUs) with 10.6% and Government-Owned and Controlled Corporations with 9.9%. There are 7 respondents who belong to the category: "Others" which refers to the Academe, International Organizations, Unemployed, Overseas Filipino Worker, Retired etc.

The Philippines is composed of three major land areas – Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. In addition, the Metro Manila region is usually taken as one major area since it is composed of cities situated beside each other. It has high population density; highly urbanized and where most of the National government offices are located.

Thus, for the location of office, it can be surmised that most of the student respondents are based in Metro Manila where the capital of the country is located with 39.1%. This is followed by Luzon with 27.3%, Mindanao (16.6%) and Visayas (9.9%). There are 11 (7.3%) respondents who are based outside of the Philippines.

Number of Semesters in the Program of MPM Students. The student respondents have spent 1 to 15 semesters in the MPM Program. Normally, a regular student spends 6 semesters to complete the Program before they are allowed to take the comprehensive exam.

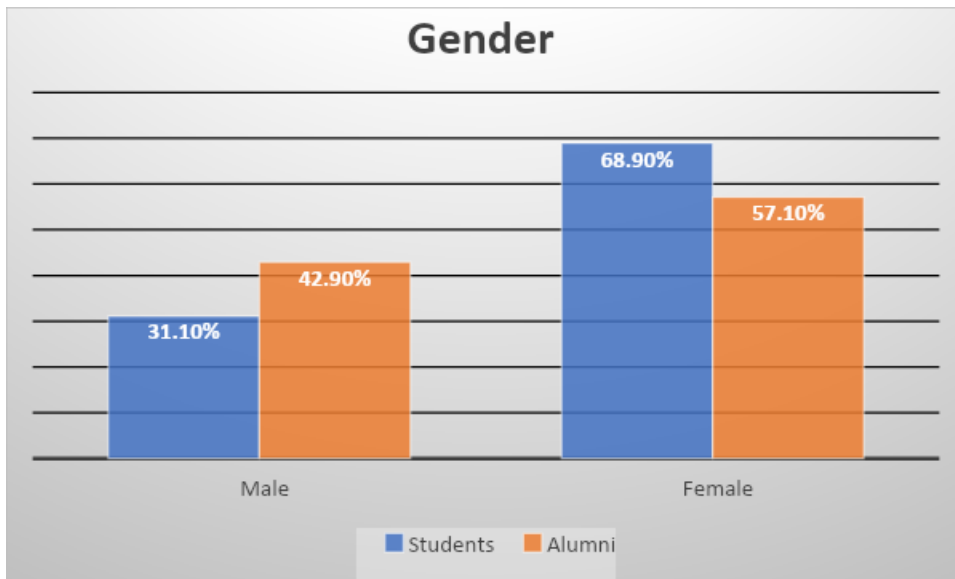
The mean number of semesters is four (4) which means that most of the respondents have already spent 2 years in the Program. Most of the respondents (33.8%) have spent 5 -6 semesters in the Program and are almost done with academic work. This is followed by those who have spent 1- 2 semesters in the Program with 30.5%.

## 2. Profile of the MPM Alumni

Gender, Civil Status and Age. The MPM alumni respondents were mostly female 57.1%. Most of them are also married with 67.5% compared to only 22.9% who are single.

Figure 13 provides a comparison of the gender of the MPM students and alumni respondents. In both sets of respondents, there are more female respondents with 68.9% for the students and 57.1% for the alumni. This means that there are more females who are into the MPM Program.

Figure 13. Comparison of Gender, MPM Students and Alumni

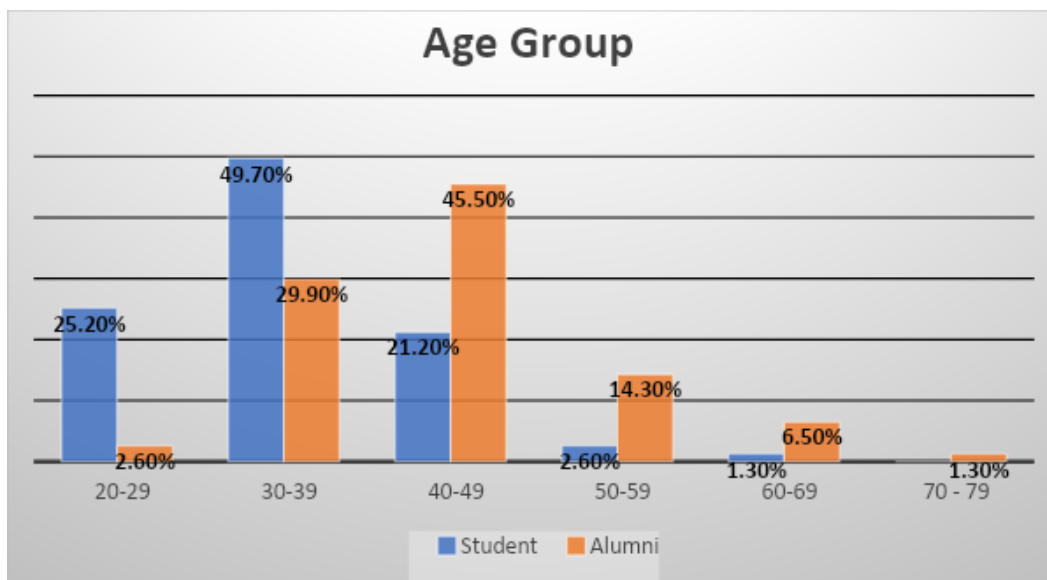


In terms of age, the average age of the alumni respondents is 44 years old and most of them belong to the 40-49 age group with 45.5%. This is followed by those in

30-39 age group with 29.9%. The age range of the respondents is from 27 to 74 years old. Please refer to Table 22.

Figure 14 also shows a comparison of the profile of the respondents by age group. Generally, the alumni respondents are older than the students. Almost half (49.7%) of the students belong to the 30 - 39 age group compared to the alumni with 29.9%. In Contrast, there are more alumni in the age group 40 – 49 with 45.5%. About one-fourth (25.2%) of the students belong to the age group 20 – 29.

Figure 14. Comparison of Respondents by Age Group, MPM Students and Alumni

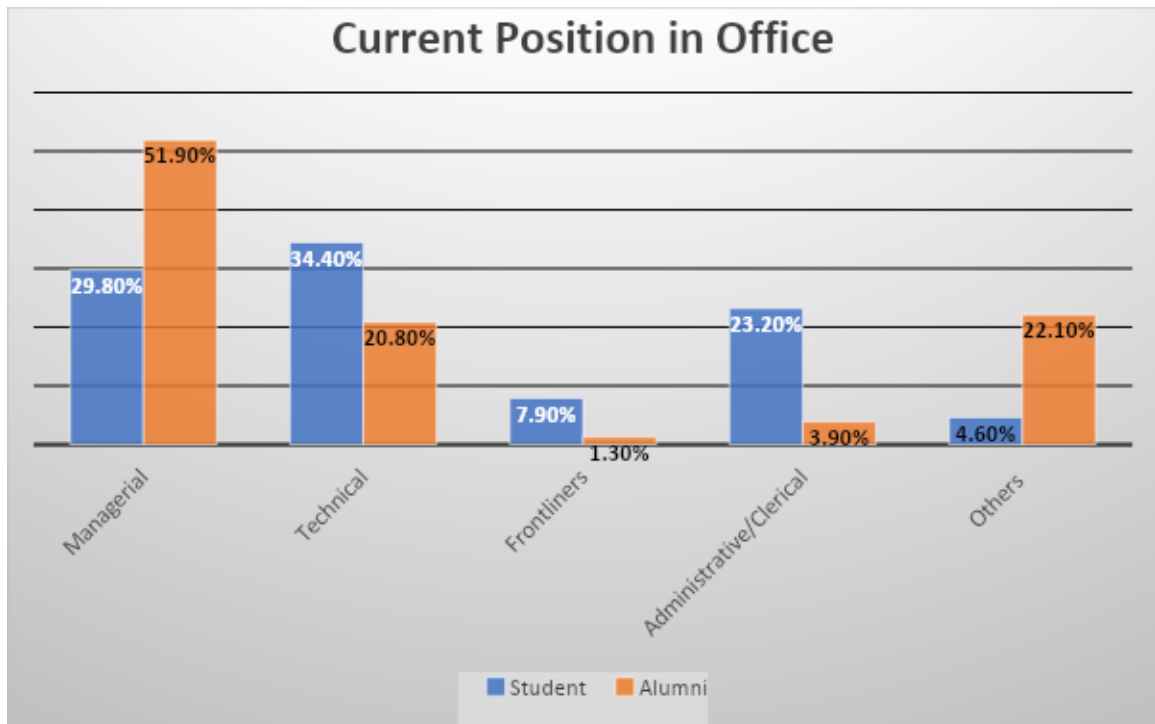


Position, Type of Office and Office Location. More than half (51.9%) of the alumni respondents hold managerial posts. This is followed by the category of “others” which is composed of the academics, workers in international organizations, overseas Filipino workers and retired with 22.1%. About 20.8% are technical personnel while only 3.9% are working as administrative staff.

Figure 15 provides the comparison of the positions held by the MPM students and alumni research participants. There are more alumni occupying managerial positions (51.9%) compared to the students. In contrast, there are more students who occupy technical positions (34.4%). It should also be noted that there are more administrative/clerical workers who are still studying (23.0%). The figure also shows

that the MPM alumni respondents have taken other jobs such as teaching posts and having their own business and consultancy work (22.1%).

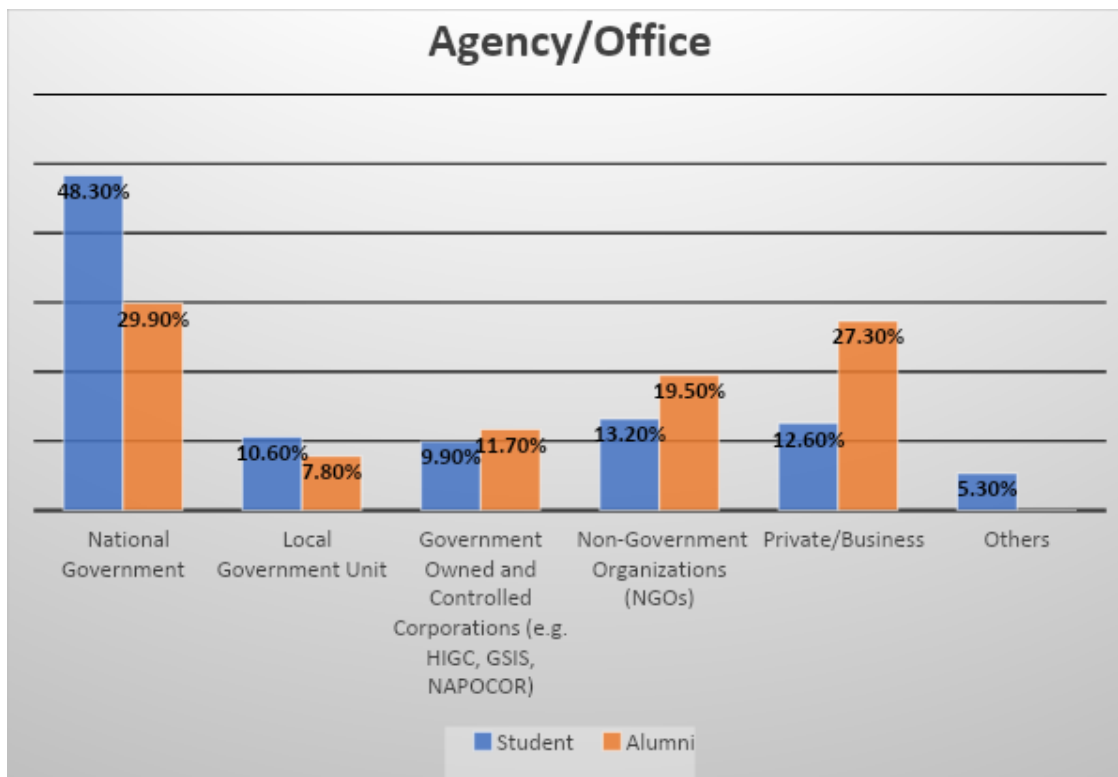
Figure 15. Comparison of the Current Position in Office, MPM Students and Alumni



There are about 29.9% who work for the national government followed by those working for the Academe, International Organizations, Overseas Filipino Workers and retired with 27.3%. About one fifth (19.5%) of the respondents work for the NGOs.

Comparing the Type of Office where the respondents work, Figure 16 shows that MPM students and alumni research participants mostly work for the national government with students having the higher figure (48.3%) compared with the alumni (29.9%). It is also important to note that about one-fourth of the alumni (27.3%) already work in private organizations or businesses compared to only 12.6% for the students.

Figure 16. Comparison of the Type of Organization Where Students Work, MPM Students and Alumni

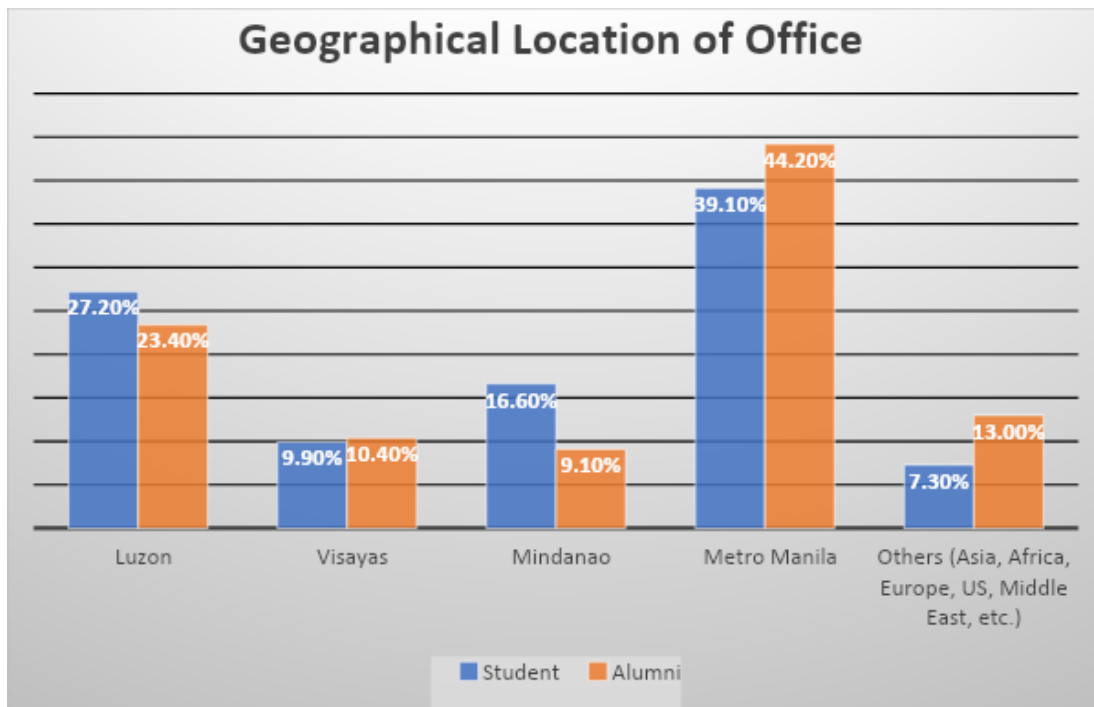


For the location of office, most of the alumni respondents are based in Metro Manila 44.2%, followed by those working in Luzon with 23.4%. There are 10 respondents who are based outside of the country.

Comparing the geographical location of offices of the research participants, Figure 17 shows that most of them are located in the populous and urban areas in Metro Manila where the capital of the Philippines is located with 44.2% of the alumni and 39.1% of the students said to be working. This is followed by the biggest island of Luzon where 27.7% students and 23.4% of the alumni claim to be working. There are more alumni who are based overseas with 13.0% compared to only 7.3% of the students.



Figure 17. Comparison of Geographical Location of Office, MPM Students and Alumni



Year of Graduation and Area of Specialization of MPM Alumni. The respondents who were interviewed were graduates from Years 2002 to 2020 or a span of 18 years. About half of them (50.6%) were graduates from 2016 – 2020. There were only 4 respondents who graduated from 2002 to 2005. This is understandable since it is more difficult to contact those who graduated in the early years of the Program when there was limited use of technology.

More than half of the respondents (53.2%) have the Public Policy and Program Administration (PPPA) as their area of specialization. About 32.5 percent (25) are graduates of the Local Government and Regional Administration (LGRA) while there are only 11 respondents who specialize in Voluntary Sector Management (VSM). This is because the VSM area was first offered only in 2011.

Table 23. Profile of Respondents, MPM Students and Alumni

Profile	Students		Alumni	
	Number (Total: 151)	Percentage	Number (Total: 77)	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	47	31.1	33	42.9
Female	104	68.9	44	57.1
<b>Civil Status</b>				
Single	75	49.7	22	22.9
Married	73	48.3	52	67.5
Separated	3	2.0	1	1.3
Widowed/Widower	0	0.0	2	2.6
<b>Age Group</b>				
20-29	38	25.2	2	2.6
30-39	75	49.7	23	29.9
40-49	32	21.2	35	45.5
50-59	4	2.6	11	14.3
60-69	2	1.3	5	6.5
70 - 79	0	0.0	1	1.3
Mean Age of respondents	35 years old		44 years old	
Age Range of respondents	23 to 66 years old		27 to 74 years old	
<b>Current Position in Office</b>				
Managerial	45	29.8	40	51.9
Technical	52	34.4	16	20.8
Frontliners	12	7.9	1	1.3
Administrative/Clerical	35	23.2	3	3.9
Others (Academe, International Organizations, Unemployed, Overseas Filipino Worker, Retired etc.)	7	4.6	17	22.1
<b>Agency/Office</b>				
National Government	73	48.3	23	29.9

Local Government Unit	16	10.6	6	7.8
Government Owned and Controlled Corporations (e.g. HIGC, GSIS, NAPOCOR)	15	9.9	9	11.7
Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)	8	5.3	3	3.9
Private/Business	20	13.2	15	19.5
Others (Academe, International Organizations, Unemployed, Overseas Filipino Worker, etc.)	19	12.6	21	27.3
<b>Geographical Location of Office</b>				
Luzon	41	27.2	18	23.4
Visayas	15	9.9	8	10.4
Mindanao	25	16.6	7	9.1
Metro Manila	59	39.1	44	44.2
Others (Asia, Africa, Europe, US, Middle East, etc.)	11	7.3	10	13.0
<b>Number of Semesters in the Program</b>				
1 - 2	46	30.5		
3 - 4	38	25.2	N/A	N/A
5 - 6	51	33.8		
7 - 8	13	8.6		
9 +	3	2.0		
Mean No. of semesters	4 semesters			
Range	1 to 15 semesters			
<b>Year Graduated</b>				
2002 – 2005	N/A	N/A	4	5.2
2006 – 2010			10	13.0
2011 – 2015			24	31.2
2016 - 2020			39	50.6
Years Graduated			2002 to 2020	
<b>Area of Specialization</b>				
Public Policy and Program Administration			41	53.2
Local Government and Regional Administration			25	32.5
Voluntary Sector Management			11	14.3

## B. Information about the MPM Program

### 1. Sources of Program Information

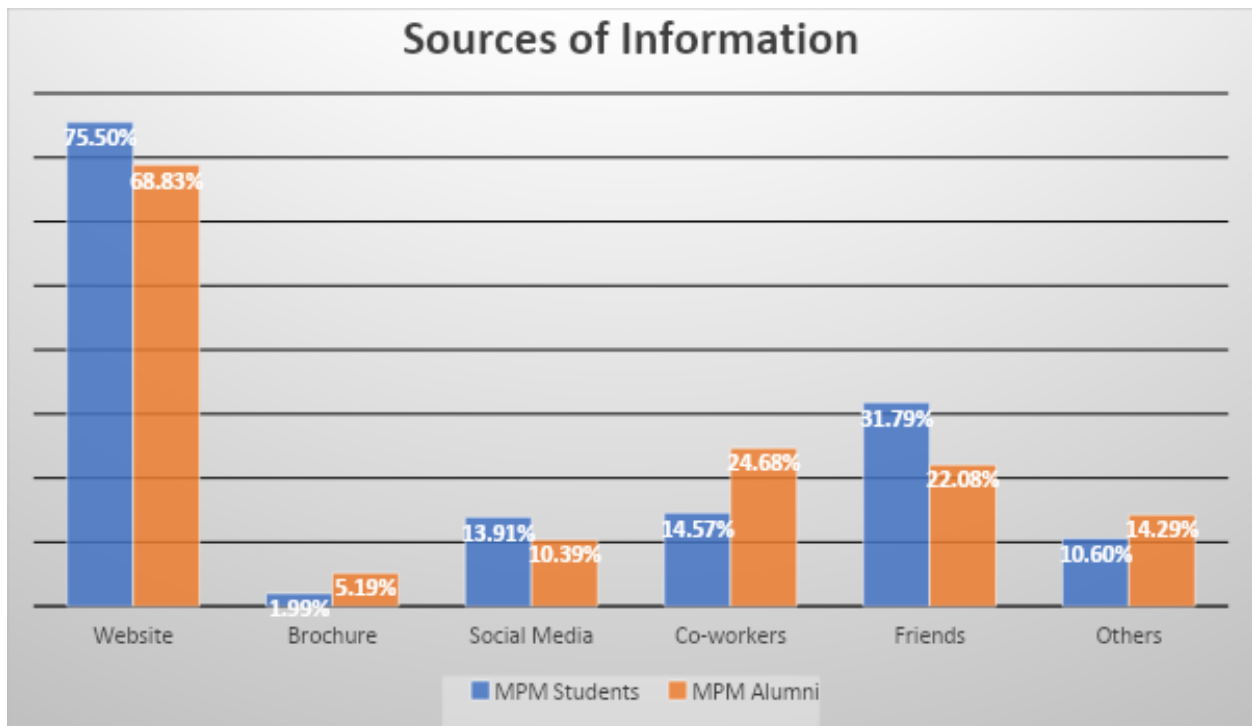
Table 24 shows the sources of information about UPOU’s MPM Program. For most of the students and alumni research participants, the main source of information is the website with 75.5% and 68.8%, respectively. The other source of information for the students are their friends with 31.8%, while co-workers was also a source of information for the alumni with 24.7%. This means that aside from the website, co-workers and friends are the source of information about the Program. For both groups, very few of them claimed to have seen a brochure. This is understandable since the Program is online, hence the website is the main source of information for those who are interested to know more about the Program.

*Table 24. Sources of information about UPOU’s MPM Program,  
MPM Students and Alumni*

Source of Information	MPM Students		MPM Alumni	
	Number (Total: 151)	Percentage	Number (Total: 77)	Percentage
Website	114	75.5	53	68.8
Brochure	3	2.0	4	5.3
Social Media	21	13.9	8	10.4
Co-workers	22	14.6	19	24.7
Friends	48	31.8	17	22.1
Others	16	10.6	11	14.3

Figure 18 shows a high reliance of the students and alumni on the website as the main source of information about the MPM Program. This is followed by friends for the students with 31.8%. On the other hand, the second source of information for the alumni is co-workers with 25.7%. Very few of respondents have availed of a brochure.

Figure 18. Comparison of the Sources of Information About the MPM Program, MPM Students and Alumni



## 2. Reasons for Enrolling in the MPM Program

When the respondents were asked on the reasons why they decided to enroll in the online course, the students gave a high rating for flexibility (85.4%), accessibility

(75.5%), personal reasons/nature of work (71.5%) and personal growth/career advancement (70.1%). On the other hand, the alumni respondents gave the highest rating to personal growth/career advancement (83.1%), flexibility (77.9%), personal reason/nature of work (68.8%) and accessibility (63.6%). In all their answers, they gave a high rating for the mentioned reasons and affordability was the least consideration to them. Since the MPM Program is a graduate course, it is safe to assume that most of them have full time jobs when they applied in the course, hence the cost of the tuition fee was not much of an issue for them compared to the other reasons. (See Table 25).

*Table 25. Reasons for Enrolling in UPOU's Online Program,  
MPM Students and Alumni*

Reasons for Enrolling in UPOU	MPM Students		MPM Alumni	
	Number (Total: 151)	Percentage	Number (Total: 77)	Percentage
Accessibility	114	75.5	49	63.6
Flexibility	129	85.4	60	77.9
Personal Reasons/Nature of Work	108	71.5	53	68.8
Affordability	68	45.0	39	50.6
Personal Growth/Career Advancement	119	70.1	64	83.1
Others	8	5.3	7	9.1

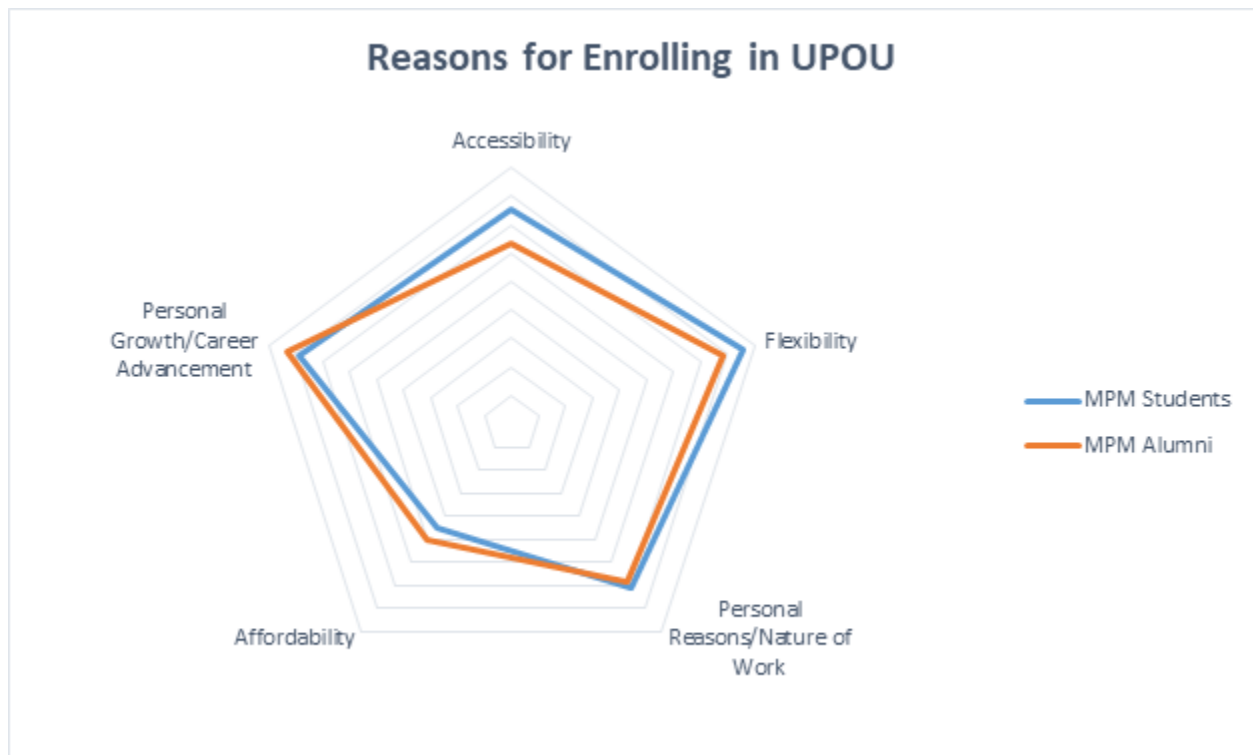
Figure 19 provides a comparison of the reasons of the MPM students and alumni in enrolling at UPOU. For the students, the top three reasons according to this order are the following

1. Flexibility (85.4%)
2. Personal growth/career advancement (78.8%)
3. Accessibility (75.5%)

On the other hand, the alumni's top three reasons according to their answers are the following:

1. Personal growth/career advancement (83.1%)
2. Flexibility (77.9%)
3. Personal Reasons/Nature of Work (68.8%)

Figure 19. Comparison of Reasons for Enrolling at UPOU, MPM Students and Alumni



## C. Perceptions on the Learning Outcomes of the MPM Program

### 1. Perceptions of MPM Students

The MPM students were asked to rate their perceptions regarding the learning outcomes of the program. Table 26 shows that all the respondents agreed that so far,

the MPM Program is helping them. The highest rating was given to the “raised awareness” (4.53) and “enhanced skills” (4.51). The lowest rating is “fostered networks” (3.87) and “formulated a policy/strategy” (3.88).

Among all the indicators, “better understanding of public management” and “acquire new knowledge of public management” received the highest rating with 4.62 and 4.62, respectively. In contrast, “get involved with the private sector in policy/strategy formulation” got the lowest rating with 3.75.

*Table 26. Perceptions on Learning Outcomes, MPM Students*

Learning Outcomes of the MPM Program So far, the MPM Program is helping me:	Rating (N: 151)
<b>A. Raised Awareness</b>	(Ave.: 4.53)
Have a better understanding of public management	4.66
Have a more positive attitude as a public servant	4.50
To be more confident about my job as a public servant	4.47
To be more motivated as a public servant	4.49
<b>B. Enhanced Skills</b>	(Ave.: 4.51)
Acquire new knowledge related to public management	4.62
Acquire new skills related to public management	4.47
Gain new knowledge needed in my work	4.50
Gain new skills needed in my work.	4.44
<b>C. Improved consensus and teamwork</b>	(Ave.: 4.31)
Initiate a participatory process in my work as a public servant	4.51
Expand a participatory process in my work as a public servant	4.11
<b>D. Fostered networks</b>	(Ave.: 3.87)
Initiate/create Informal Networks and Formal partnerships/coalitions with other sectors	3.87
<b>E. Formulated policy/strategy</b>	(Ave.: 3.88)
Get involved in civil society in policy/strategy formulation.	3.81
Get involved with the private sector in policy/strategy formulation.	3.75
Design a monitoring and evaluation plan.	3.93
Contribute in policy/reform/strategy to decision makers	4.04
<b>F. Implemented strategy/plan</b>	(Ave.: 4.20)
Implement a strategy or a plan.	4.14
Improve my implementation know-how.	4.26

*\*Strongly Agree – 4.21 – 5.00; Agree – 3.41 – 4.20; Undecided – 2.61 – 3.40; Disagree – 1.81 – 2.60; Strongly Disagree – 1.00 – 1.80*



The respondents were also asked to give their comments on the rating that they gave to the learning outcomes. Below are their explanations.

- a. Raised Awareness. Most of the respondents strongly agree (4.54) that so far, the MPM Program has helped them in gaining awareness and understanding about public management and the government which helps them in their tasks as public servants. One student noted: “for someone like me who belongs to the technical team of the office, and who's been unaware with the things going on in our administrative system, the MPM Program has been my eye opener and source of knowledge and invaluable information about our country; understanding our system, which motivates me to do more in order to contribute what I can to our country.” Another said that the Program “helps me see the government bureaucracy in a balanced perspective. It has changed my attitude and even my approach on how to be a constructive critic of government and a partner for social change.”

There were also those who mentioned their frustration that despite the concepts that they have learned about governance and management, there is quite little or slow progress in the Philippine government. There is a difference on what they are learning from what is really happening in government. There are two respondents who claimed to work for the private sector and in another country, that is why they were not confident in giving their rating.

- b. Enhanced Skills. This learning outcome was also given a high score of 4.51 (strongly agree) by the research participants. In their explanation, respondents confirmed that the Program was helpful in the drafting of new policies to be implemented in their offices. Another noted that managerial skills are also enhanced by the Program. One skill that was gained is financial management as one respondent claimed of learning how to plan and allocate school funds and resources, including managing public assets including other skills such as procurement, analyzing financial statements and proper recruitment of personnel.

A respondent also learned the skill of giving feedback in the office while another skill that was enhanced was related to analyzing data using statistical methods. Exposure to other learners also enhanced their ability to work with others. Other skills that were mentioned to have been enhanced include critical thinking, writing, communication, collaboration and sharing.

There were about five respondents who claimed that so far, they are not able to use their skills in their current job.

- c. Improved consensus and teamwork. Almost all the respondents strongly agreed that so far, the MPM Program has improved their abilities in consensus building and teamwork with a high rating of 4.31. Some of the reasons mentioned include incorporating learnings in the workplace which improved collaborative activities. One also noted that it “enables one to understand the other functions in the office.” They also claimed that the Program also taught them to be “more proactive, disciplined, and independent in the workplace.”

One student said that during the COVID-19 pandemic, the UPOU online approach has helped the student facilitate and orchestrate better working dynamics in the office. They also mentioned that collaborating with online classmates has also enabled them to be participatory and collaborative with co-employees in the workplace. Another reason is the confidence gained to participate in decision making. One also mentioned an increase in appreciation about the individual work in the office that contributes to the overall achievement of functions.

For a few respondents, they mentioned that their work did not involve working with others, or they are still new in the office.

- d. Fostered networks. The students gave a rating of 3.87 (agree) which is the lowest for all indicators. Some of the answers that they mentioned include their increased ability to work with other people from other agencies or offices. They attribute this to the diverse students in the MPM courses which enables them to meet other people outside of their locality, agency and even from other fields of study. Moreover, they also mentioned that the research that they do in their courses enables them to establish networks with other agencies.

Some students, on the other hand, have claimed that they have not established any network so far. They are still new in the course but look forward to fostering networks with other students from other agencies.

- e. Formulated policy/strategy. The respondents also agreed that so far, they have learned to formulate a policy/strategy with a rating of 3.88. They claim to be able to incorporate what they are learning from the Program in their work. One claimed to have been requested to actively participate in the discussion of policy when the office learned that the student was enrolled in the MPM Program.

There were also some students who claimed that they have no experience yet in policy formulation, but they are sure that they will be able to utilize what they learn in the future.

- f. Implemented strategy/plan. Most of the respondents agreed that so far, they have learned something in implementing a strategy/plan with a rating of 4.20. They claimed that they have a better understanding and appreciation on how to implement plans and programs and this can be attributed to the MPM Program. They also mentioned that the Program also helps them in developing strategies in implementation. For some students, they mentioned that perhaps they will still have to learn this in the Program since this is their first semester.

## 2. Perceptions of MPM Key Informants on Learning Outcomes

The MPM key informants were also asked on their perceptions regarding the learning outcomes of the MPM as a capacity development program. Table 27 shows that the highest rating that was given was on “enhanced skills related to public management” with 4.67 (strongly agree). In contrast, “formulation of a plan/strategy” was given the lowest with 3.83 (agree).

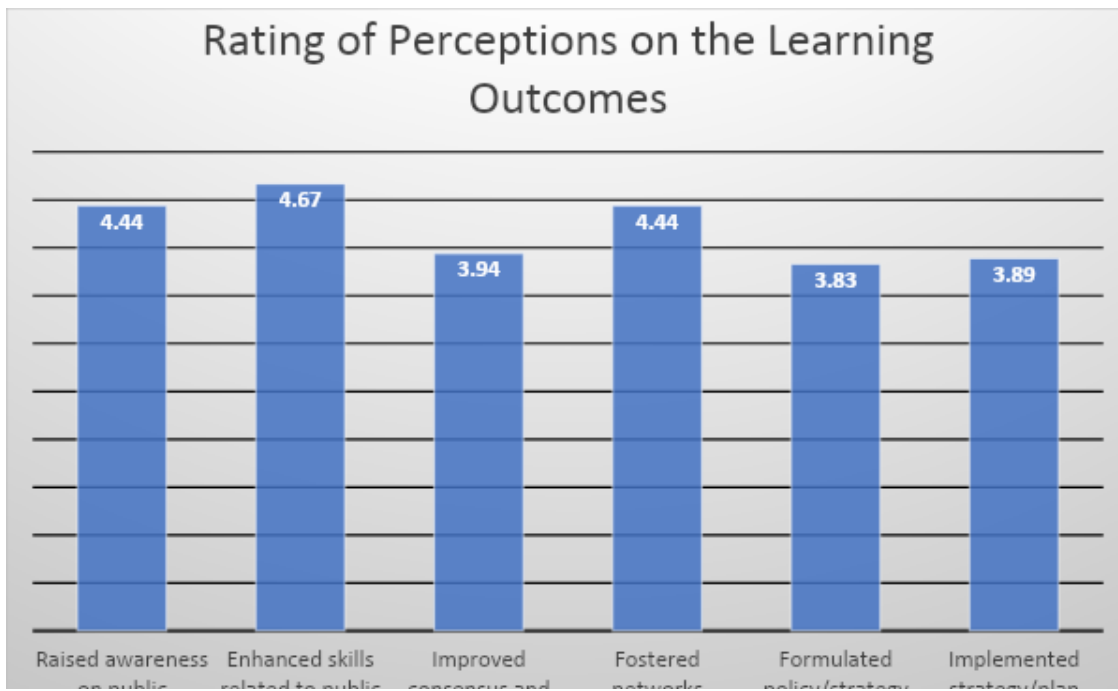
*Table 27. Rating of Perceptions on the Learning Outcomes, MPM Key Informants*

Learning Outcomes (based on Otoo, et al.'s learning outcomes of capacity development)	Perception Rating (N: 18)
Raised awareness on public management	4.44
Enhanced skills related to public management	4.67
Improved consensus and teamwork	3.94
Fostered networks	4.44
Formulated policy/strategy	3.83
Implemented strategy/plan	3.89

\*Strongly Agree – 4.21 – 5.00; Agree – 3.41 – 4.20; Undecided – 2.61 – 3.40; Disagree – 1.81 – 2.60; Strongly Disagree – 1.00 – 1.80

Figure 20 also provides a better picture to illustrate the perceptions of the MPM key informants regarding achievement of learning outcomes of the MPM Program as a capacity development strategy.

*Figure 20. Perceptions on the MPM's Learning Outcomes*



*\*Strongly Agree – 4.21 – 5.00; Agree – 3.41 – 4.20; Undecided – 2.61 – 3.40; Disagree – 1.81 – 2.60; Strongly Disagree – 1.00 – 1.80*

The MPM key informants were also asked to explain their rating on the learning outcomes.

- a. Raised awareness on public management. Most of the key informants agreed that the MPM Program is designed to promote awareness and understanding on public management, financial management, human resources management, etc with a rating 4.4 (strongly agree). They noted that it provides continuous capacity development programs to public servants to widen and enhance their capacities in various areas of governance and public management in general. One also mentioned that the MPM Program is in the radar of its target stakeholders due to its content that reflects the evolving developments in its various fields of learning.

One noted that the topics of its webinars, the increasing number of students in the MPM degree program who are working not only in government but in the private and civil society sectors; the training programs, the online resources such as lectures, video presentation that are open to the public, the engagement of its faculty members in public discussions, all contribute to this raised awareness.

- b. Enhanced skills related to public management. The key informants gave the highest rating for this learning outcome with 4.67 (strongly agree). One claimed that skills competencies in the MPM, (e.g. policy analysis, fiscal administration, local management, etc.) will enable the students and graduates of the program to be more confident in using these competencies in their work. One noted that some students would express to the lecturer the learning benefits they get from the program, *i.e.*, that they better understand how government agencies operate and why they do so.

One also said that many of the MPM students and graduates become familiar with the needed skills in public management as they interact with professors and even their classmates. One mentioned that UPOU and the MPM Program invite progressive leaders, prime movers, and subject matter experts to be part of its

teaching pool. Thus, these faculty members and resource persons continuously provide fresh knowledge and skills to its target clients.

One respondent said that many of the students are in government positions and precisely enrolled for the intended purposes of improving their work of serving the public better. Another claimed that the formal courses that students complete and pass, training programs being offered to the public, available databases and online resources, and webinars that seek to improve the knowledge, skills and attitudes of MPM students and graduates would result in enhanced skills in public management, especially as they apply it to their work.

- c. Improved consensus and teamwork. The key informants gave this learning outcome a rating of 3.94 (agree). One noted that the MPM Program, through the respective course discussion forum, learning activities; collaborative work; and final requirements (paper, project, etc.), has consensus and teamwork improvement as one of its learning outcomes. One said that the virtual platform and the asynchronous and synchronous sessions of the program have enabled collaboration among the learners, highlighting the fact that teamwork and consensus-building are possible in the MPM. Another key informant noted that students develop friendships and networks even in online courses and one respondent claimed that the activities in the courses were designed to improve consensus building.

Moreover, they also claimed that UPOU and MPM Faculty meetings, conferences and activities continuously endeavor the engagement of the team (teaching and non teaching personnel) that results in unified action and services to its clients. "The same values imparted seeds of similar culture." This is particularly true for the administrative support as well as the Research and Extension Committee is concerned.

However, one respondent noted that there was little occasion to interact and build teamwork while about three others did not comment or had no data to prove this.

- d. Fostered networks. The key informants gave a rating of 4.4 (strongly agree) for this learning outcome. They claimed that the MPM Program fostered networks as one of its learning outcomes through the collaborative work between and among the students, faculties-in-charge/lecturers, and their respective institutions. The diverse background of faculty and students create an opportunity to pursue networking and sustained collaboration.

One respondent claimed that the MPM Program has a good number of involvements in networks related to its field, such as the Association of Schools of Public Administration in the Philippines (ASPAP), the Eastern Regional

Organization for Public Administration (EROPA) and associations involving online teaching. Moreover, through the Faculty externships, partnerships with state universities and colleges, and private and government universities locally and abroad, the MPM program became more known and established.

One also mentioned that most MPM students occupy middle to top managers of the public, private and civil society sectors. This enables the affordance of productive networking between and among them, and other networks. One respondent added that even as a former student of the Program, collaboration was already done among the students and even after graduation, their networks have been maintained.

- e. Formulated policy/strategy. This MPM learning outcome was given a rating of 3.8 (agree) by the key informants. Perhaps this is because not all the faculty members handle public policy courses. They noted that the MPM Program, especially those in the public policy and program administration, has policy/strategy formulation as one of its learning outcomes. It usually includes a review, formulation and advocacy of policies and strategies for the public sector.

One noted that critical thinking is encouraged among the faculty and students and could lead towards identification of gaps in the policy and programs levels in the area of public management. Such interplay is productive in introducing new policies and programs that address the current gaps in the public sector. Another mentioned that the research undertaken while still a student, became a policy proposal in the office. The other respondents claimed they did not have enough information about it.

- f. Implemented a strategy/plan. The key informants gave a rating of 3.89 (agree) for this learning outcome. They claimed that the MPM Program which covers the three areas/fields of specialization, has strategy/plan implementation as one of its learning outcomes. Moreover, the course requirements of the MPM include a review and implementation of policies and strategies for the public sector. They note that students develop their ability to implement strategies that are relevant in public service.

One respondent noted that strategic human resource management (SHRM) is included in the course and requires students to develop their own strategy/plan aligned and responsive to human resource management programs in their current organizational settings of their respective offices.

#### **4. Comparison of Rating of the Perceptions of the Learning Outcomes, MPM Students and Key Informants**

There were four out of six learning outcomes wherein the students gave a higher rating compared to the MPM key informants. (See Table 28). This means that the expectations of the key informants are a little bit lower compared to what the students have been learning so far. The highest difference is in “improved consensus and teamwork” with the students giving a 0.37 higher rating than the MPM key informants. This is followed by the “implemented a strategy/plan” with 0.31. On the other hand, “fostered networks” and “enhanced skills” are the two learning outcomes where the key informants gave a higher rating by 0.57 and 0.16, respectively.

It is also important to note that for the students and MPM key informants, there were three learning outcomes that were given a rating of “strongly agree” and the other three learning outcomes a rating of “agree.”

Based on this table, it can be gleaned that MPM key informants and the students have similar perceptions on the learning outcomes although there are more items wherein the students gave a higher rating compared with the MPM key informants.

*Table 28. Rating of Perceptions on the Learning Outcomes,  
MPM Students and Key Informants*

<b>Learning Outcomes (based on Otoo, et al.’s learning outcomes of capacity development</b>	<b>MPM Students Rating (N: 151)</b>	<b>MPM Key Informants Rating (N: 18)</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Raised awareness on public management</b>	4.53	4.44	0.09
<b>Enhanced skills related to public management</b>	4.51	4.67	(0.16)
<b>Improved consensus and teamwork</b>	4.31	3.94	0.37
<b>Fostered networks</b>	3.87	4.44	(0.57)

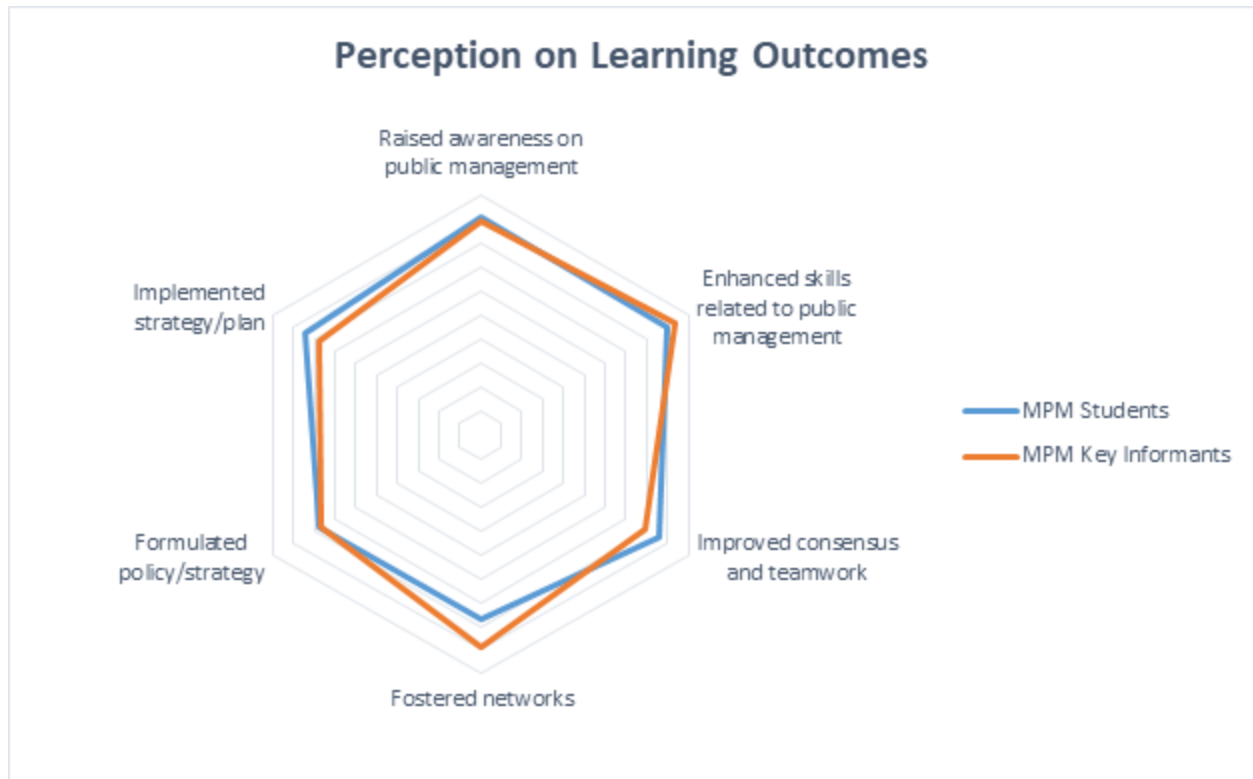


<b>Formulated policy/strategy</b>	3.88	3.83	0.05
<b>Implemented strategy/plan</b>	4.20	3.89	0.31

\*Strongly Agree – 4.21 – 5.00; Agree – 3.41 – 4.20; Undecided – 2.61 – 3.40; Disagree – 1.81 – 2.60; Strongly Disagree – 1.00 – 1.80

Comparing the perceptions of the students with the key informants, Figure 21 reveals that there are four out of six learning outcomes where students gave a higher rating compared to the MPM key informants. It is only in enhanced skills related to public management and fostered networks where the key informants yielded a higher rating.

*Figure 21. Comparison of Perception on Learning Outcomes, MPM Students and Key Informants*



\*Strongly Agree – 4.21 – 5.00; Agree – 3.41 – 4.20; Undecided – 2.61 – 3.40; Disagree – 1.81 – 2.60; Strongly Disagree – 1.00 – 1.80

#### 4.Applicability of Learning

Aside from their perceptions regarding the learning outcomes, the students were also asked if they are able to apply what they are learning from the Program. Table 29 reveals that about 90.7% claimed that they are able to apply what they are learning, and the rest claimed that they are not able to use it in their work. Most of the students mentioned the different applications in their job, from using management techniques, policy analysis and implementation, research, planning, among others.

For those who claimed that they could not apply their learning, they mentioned that they still rely on the decision of the elected official, or they have a very specific job that they could not apply what they have learned so far from the Program.

*Table 29. Applicability of Learning from the Program, MPM Students*

Applicability of learning	Number (151)	Percentage
Yes	137	90.7
No	14	9.3

## D. Competencies Gained from the MPM Program of MPM Graduates

### 1. Perceptions of MPM Alumni on the Competencies Gained from the Program

The MPM alumni were asked to give their perceptions on the competencies that they have gained from the Program. All the respondents strongly agreed that they have gained competencies from the Program. There are three major competencies which were given the highest rating of 4.32 (strongly agree) and these are: “lead and manage in public governance,” “analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions,” and “articulate and apply a public service perspective.” The competency: “communicate and interact productively with diverse and changing workforce and citizenry” was given a rating of 4.29 (strongly agree) and “participate in and contribute to the policy process” with 4.22 (strongly agree). (See Table 30).

Looking at the different indicators of competencies, the respondents strongly agreed by giving a high rating of 4.52 to “utilize the principles of public management.” This is followed by “gain professional capacity in basic skills (4.49) and “value and demonstrate commitment to professionalism and integrity in serving the public (4.47) which means that they also strongly agreed on these competencies.

The lowest rating was given to the items on “incorporate and value principles of democracy, public transparency, and consensus building” (4.0) and “design policy-implementation methodology and actively engage” (4.09).

*Table 30. Perceptions on Competencies, MPM Alumni*

Competencies	Rating (N: 77)
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<p><b>a. Lead and manage in public governance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Become an expert in public management.</li> <li>● To lead and manage within multiple networks of stakeholders.</li> <li>● Reinforce democratic principles and practices.</li> <li>● Produce consensus or consent among diverse stakeholders.</li> <li>● Develop the skills and power of leadership in my work.</li> <li>● Utilize the principles of public management.</li> </ul>	<p>(Ave.: 4.32)</p> <p>4.10</p> <p>4.32</p> <p>4.34</p> <p>4.23</p> <p>4.43</p> <p>4.52</p>
<p><b>b. Participate in and contribute to the policy process</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Develop the capacity to analyze political theory, policy process, and implementation</li> <li>● Analyze policy issues/problems using different methodologies.</li> <li>● Identify, evaluate, and communicate evidence-based policy.</li> <li>● Design policy-implementation methodology and actively engage.</li> </ul>	<p>(Ave.: 4.22)</p> <p>4.25</p> <p>4.22</p> <p>4.30</p> <p>4.09</p>
<p><b>c. Analyze, synthesize think critically, solve problems, and make decisions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Gain expertise in techniques used in managing government operations.</li> <li>● Learn how to appraise the concepts of social science research methods.</li> <li>● Know how to use statistical analysis/technique and apply the skills.</li> <li>● To network/collaborate on a solution to complex problems.</li> <li>● Know how to identify, evaluate, and model best practices.</li> <li>● Gain professional capacity in basic skills.</li> </ul>	<p>(Ave.: 4.32)</p> <p>4.29</p> <p>4.18</p> <p>4.16</p> <p>4.40</p> <p>4.38</p> <p>4.49</p>
<p><b>d. Articulate and apply a public service perspective</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Develop respect and demonstrate methods for authentic interaction.</li> <li>● Value and demonstrate commitment to professionalism and integrity in serving the public.</li> <li>● Communicate public interest based on ethical reasoning and democratic participation.</li> <li>● Critique instrumental reasoning in order to promote social and economic equity and justice.</li> <li>● Incorporate and value principles of democracy, public transparency, and consensus building</li> </ul>	<p>(Ave.: 4.32)</p> <p>4.40</p> <p>4.47</p> <p>4.40</p> <p>4.32</p> <p>4.0</p>
<p><b>e. Communicate and interact productively with diverse and changing workforce and citizenry</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Incorporate various communication tools and strategies in the management of public organizations.</li> <li>● Incorporate major concepts, skills, processes, and policies in public service management.</li> </ul>	<p>(Ave.: 4.29)</p> <p>4.29</p> <p>4.29</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have cultural competency and appreciation of diversity for collaborating.</li> </ul>	4.30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know how to negotiate interest-based resolutions with stakeholders experiencing conflict.</li> </ul>	4.27

*\*Strongly Agree – 4.21 – 5.00; Agree – 3.41 – 4.20; Undecided – 2.61 – 3.40; Disagree – 1.81 – 2.60; Strongly Disagree – 1.00 – 1.80*

The following are the explanations of the MPM alumni regarding their rating on the competencies gained

- a. Lead and manage in public governance. With a high rating of 4.32 (strongly agree), the MPM alumni respondents agreed that they have gained the competencies to lead and manage in public governance. Some noted that they have learned the different factors of management as well as the confidence to manage their organization, especially in decision making and conflict resolution. This helps them come up with solutions in addressing the issues and concerns together with the stakeholders. One noted that most of the decisions done are now backed by policies and regulation while avoiding response based on intuition or emotions. A few respondents also claimed that the Program not only improved their knowledge, but it also improved their creativity and confidence in dealing with challenges at work. There were also some respondents who claimed to be undecided since their work is not related to leading the organization and this is best answered by a practitioner.
  
- b. Participate in and contribute to the policy process. Most of the alumni research participants strongly agreed that they have gained the competency to participate in and contribute to the policy process with a rating of 4.22. Most of the respondents claimed to have been involved in the policy process by providing inputs, dealing with various stakeholders, crafting policies for their office, providing recommendations, among others. The principles learned from the Program has helped them during the deliberation of actual project implementation. Three claimed that the Program has influenced the way they utilize available data and the proper context in aid of programs and plans.

On the other hand, there were also those who said that they are undecided since their work is not related.

- c. Analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions. This competency was also given a rating of 4.32 (strongly agree). Most of them claimed that decision making is made possible given the right tools and techniques gained from the Program which make them competent managers. One respondent claimed that “problem solving/ conflict resolution techniques learned

during the program also contributed to dealing with the local dynamics involving politics, culture and tradition.” The rigor of doing research work under the MPM Program is also appreciated as they learned to use research methodologies in actual cases.

There were two respondents who claimed that they learned some of the techniques when they were in college so their competency cannot be fully accredited to the MPM Program.

- d. Articulate and apply a public service perspective. The MPM alumni respondents also gave a high approval for this competency with 4.32 (strongly agree). They claimed that the Program has enabled them to develop a “sense of honor and excellence,” deeper commitment to improve public services, being accountable and transparent, and how to deal and interact with other stakeholders efficiently. One noted that the biggest takeaway as a graduate of the MPM program is the high value of the lessons/courses on good governance, ethics and integrity, while one noted that public management refers to “management of the people, by the people, and for the people”. Another said that “beyond the formality of the government and laws and rules, service delivery is in essence a human affair. By recognizing that 'public' or that 'human' element is how services could be best delivered.”
- e. Communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry. The alumni respondents gave a rating of 4.29 (strongly agree) to this competency. Most of them explained that they learned communication skills, strategies, peer collaboration, negotiation, appreciation of each contribution and scope, delegation, transparency, and integrity from the Program. They claimed that since they came from diverse backgrounds and different government agencies, they were able to communicate and interact productively with the use of technology. They recognize that cooperation and collaboration among stakeholders is vital in accomplishing government plans, programs, and projects.

One claimed to have “improved communicating with multiple stakeholders, developed sensitivity and concern for the plight of various interest groups, and enhanced skills in conflict resolution.”

### **3. Perceptions on Competencies of MPM Graduates by MPM Key Informants**

Aside from the MPM alumni, the MPM Key informants were also asked to rate their perceptions on the competencies gained by graduates of the Master of Public Management Program. Table 31 reveals that there were only two competencies that they strongly agree with, and these are the indicators on “lead and manage in public governance” (4.28) and “articulate and apply a public service perspective” (4.22). All the rest received a rating of “agree” with the competency to “participate in and contribute to the policy process” getting a score of 3.89.

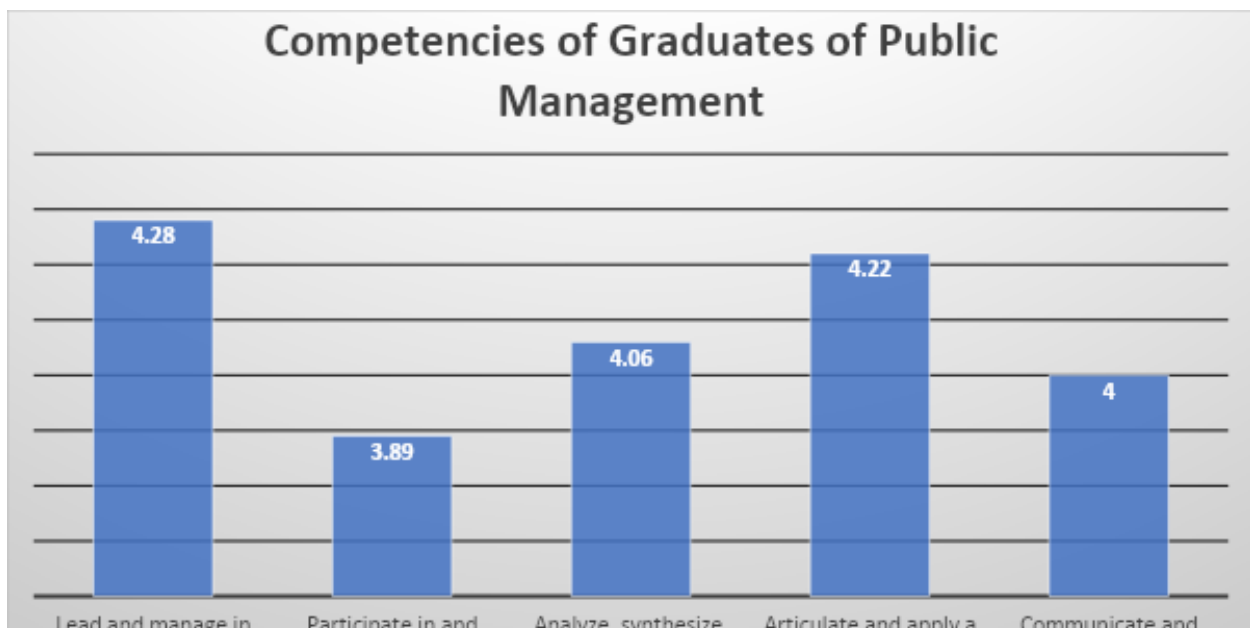
*Table 31. Rating of Perceptions on Competencies of MPM Graduates, MPM Key Informants*

Competencies of Graduate of Public Management	Rating (N: 18)
Lead and manage in public governance	4.28
Participate in and contribute to the policy process	3.89
Analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions	4.06
Articulate and apply a public service perspective	4.22
Communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry	4.0

*\*Strongly Agree – 4.21 – 5.00; Agree – 3.41 – 4.20; Undecided – 2.61 – 3.40; Disagree – 1.81 – 2.60; Strongly Disagree – 1.00 – 1.80*

Figure 22 also shows the comparison of the rating for each of the competencies of graduates of the MPM Program.

*Figure 22. Comparison of the Rating of Competencies, MPM Key Informants*



*\*Strongly Agree – 4.21 – 5.00; Agree – 3.41 – 4.20; Undecided – 2.61 – 3.40; Disagree – 1.81 – 2.60; Strongly Disagree – 1.00 – 1.80*

The MPM key informants explained their answers regarding their perceptions.

- a. Lead and manage in public governance. This competency was given the highest rating with 4.28 (strongly agree). The MPM key informants claimed that MPM graduates are envisioned to be “public servant leaders” and “change agents” and the values they should live by to become such are ingrained in the Program. They also mentioned that several MPM graduates, especially those in the executive branch of the government, have leadership and management competencies in public governance. The ultimate purpose is to create leaders out of the Program. Thus, the students are being challenged to be “trailblazers” in their respective fields. They added that there are many public officials, businessmen and heads of civil society organizations who are graduates of the MPM Program.

The respondents also noted that although some graduates are more prominent than others, MPM graduates continue to do well in their respective jobs. Those in decision making positions are able to make their mark. The importance of good governance is always emphasized to the MPM students including their responsibilities as public servants.

- b. Participate in and contribute to the policy process. This competency garnered the lowest rating with 3.89 (agree) from the participants. Some said that participation and contribution to policy processes can be inferred from the students and graduates of UPOU, most of whom work in government with defined responsibilities. Two respondents noted that a few MPM graduates, especially those in the legislative branch of the government, are able to participate and contribute to the policy process. The MPM graduates are expected to understand policy formulation and thereby contribute to the process.

One also noted that the course requirements of the MPM usually include a review, formulation and advocacy of policies and strategies for the public sector; thus, it is expected that graduates also participate in and contribute to the policy process as influencers, advocates and analysts.

Some respondents claimed that they did not have enough data and feedback on this competency.



- c. Analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions. This competency was given a rating of 4.06 (agree) by the respondents. The respondents claimed that the main framework of the Program is for graduates to be a “social critic” and to suggest options and alternatives for better public administration and governance. Crucial in this framework are “critical thinking, futures and strategic thinking, and passion for good public service.”

One also mentioned that this is one of the competencies that students are taught in the different PM courses and the fact that they were able to graduate means they have developed these skills. Majority of the students are already involved in the policy making process of the government which requires good critical and decision making skills. One commented that several MPM graduates, especially those in the executive branch of government, have competencies in analyzing, synthesizing, critical thinking, solving problems, and making decisions.

One respondent noted that based on the answers in the comprehensive exams, some graduates can think critically. Moreover, through the assignments given to the students, they are trained to analyze and think critically on certain topics discussed during the course. One example was also given by a respondent wherein the students are required to prepare “Managerial Analysis Paper” which puts the students at the center of the case and gives them the chance to showcase their ability in leadership and management.

- d. Articulate and apply a public service perspective. The key informants strongly agreed with this competency with a rating of 4.22. They noted that public service values such as “effective public service; interventions for equity and schism/divides; poverty reduction; development and progress for the people; nation building; ethics and accountability, and participation and transparency” are embedded in all the courses of the MPM Program. Hence, it is expected that graduates have this competency.

They also noted that the values of public service are emphasized and encouraged to be nurtured by the students while they grow in their organization. They said that this can be proven during the pandemic, on how they are able to perform their functions despite being in a difficult situation. They highlighted that the Program improves delivery of public service because it promotes “transparency and accountability.”

- e. Communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry. This competency was given a rating of 4.0 (agree) by the key informants. They noted that learners and graduates of MPM come from diverse backgrounds and constant communication with diverse workforce is common in

the online Program. Being exposed to various theories, ideas and perspectives, interacting with the classmates from different sectors of the society enable them to develop this competency.

They also mentioned that change management is one competency expected among the graduates of the Program. They are exposed to handle change and manage it towards the goals set. Moreover, the courses are designed to enhance the capabilities of students to work with diverse groups. Some commented that they are not sure since they have no way to monitor the graduates.

### 3. Comparison of the Perceptions of MPM Alumni and Key Informants on Competencies Gained by MPM Graduates

Comparing the figures for the MPM alumni and key informants, Table 32 shows that the alumni gave a higher rating in all the MPM competencies compared to the key informants. The highest difference is on “participate in and contribute to the policy process” with 0.33. This is followed by “communicate and interact productively” with the MPM alumni registering 0.29 higher than the key informants. The competencies with very little difference between the two respondents is “lead and manage” with 0.04 and “articulate a public service perspective” with 0.10.

Based on the table, it is apparent that the MPM alumni have provided a higher rating on their perceptions on the different competencies gained from the Program compared with the MPM key informants.

*Table 32. Perceptions on Competencies of MPM Graduates, MPM Alumni and Key Informants*

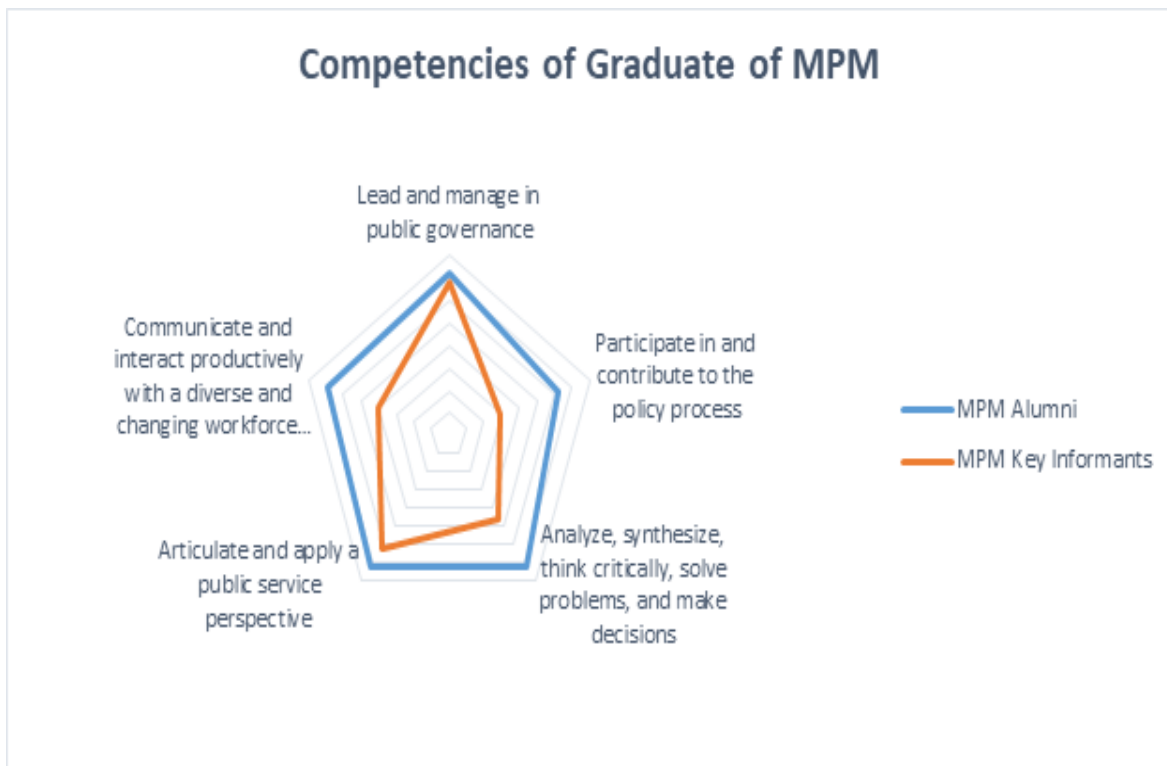
Competencies of Graduate of Public Management	MPM Alumni Rating (N: 77)	MPM Key Informants Rating (N: 18)	Difference
Lead and manage in public governance	4.32	4.28	0.04
Participate in and contribute to the policy process	4.22	3.89	0.33
Analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve	4.32	4.06	0.26

<b>problems, and make decisions</b>			
<b>Articulate and apply a public service perspective</b>	4.32	4.22	0.10
<b>Communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry</b>	4.29	4.0	0.29

\*Strongly Agree – 4.21 – 5.00; Agree – 3.41 – 4.20; Undecided – 2.61 – 3.40; Disagree – 1.81 – 2.60; Strongly Disagree – 1.00 – 1.80

Figure 23 also reveals a comparison of the alumni and MPM key informants' perceptions on the achievement of competencies of the Program. In all the five competencies, the alumni gave a higher rating compared with the MPM key informants.

Figure 23. Comparison of Perception on Competencies Gained by MPM Graduates, MPM Alumni and Key Informants



*\*Strongly Agree – 4.21 – 5.00; Agree – 3.41 – 4.20; Undecided – 2.61 – 3.40; Disagree – 1.81 – 2.60; Strongly Disagree – 1.00 – 1.80*

## **E. Career Mobility of MPM Alumni**

The alumni respondents were also asked regarding their career mobility after graduating from the Program. Table 11 reveals that 44.2% of the respondents claimed that they were promoted after graduating from the Program. This is proof that there is a recognition of the MPM Degree by various institutions. About 37.7% of the alumni also transferred to another office after finishing the Program. These figures show that getting the MPM Program has good prospects for upward career mobility.

When asked about the nature of the promotion, some respondents claimed that the MPM degree was needed as part of the qualifications for promotion. There were also those who claimed to be promoted because they transferred to a different agency or office. The movement to other offices was propelled not only by the competencies acquired but also by new opportunities that were presented to them.

Other respondents also said that they were able to get part time jobs in the academy. One respondent noted to be granted a scholarship in another country due to the degree obtained from the MPM Program.

## **F. Applicability of the MPM Degree**

When the alumni respondents were asked whether they were able to utilize what they have learned from the Program, almost all (94.8%) gave a positive answer. (See Table 33.) This means that the Program has been helpful in their respective work. Some claimed to be able to give a wise decision with concrete basis, reasonable recommendation, and display confidence in pushing for projects and programs that are eventually approved; and stand on issues and concerns.

Some noted that the Program made them have a deeper understanding and appreciation of public management and helped in developing strategic plans and dealing with stakeholders. More importantly, they now uphold the praxis of public administration (good governance) when giving value to people and to be of service to others in both public and private sectors.

Two respondents did not give their answer since one retired from public service, while another one resigned from work due to pregnancy concerns.

*Table 33. Career Mobility of the MPM Alumni*

Background	Number (Total: 77)	Percentage
<b>Promotion After Graduation</b>		
Yes	34	44.2
No	43	55.8
<b>Transferred to Another Office after Graduation</b>		
Yes	29	37.7
No	48	62.3
<b>Application of what was learned from the MPM Program</b>	73	94.8
Yes	4	5.2
No		

## G. Other Skills Gained from the MPM Program

The MPM students and alumni research respondents were also asked if they have gained other skills from taking the online Program. Table 34 shows that both groups claimed that they learned how to manage their time with 96.1% for the alumni and 88.7% for the students.

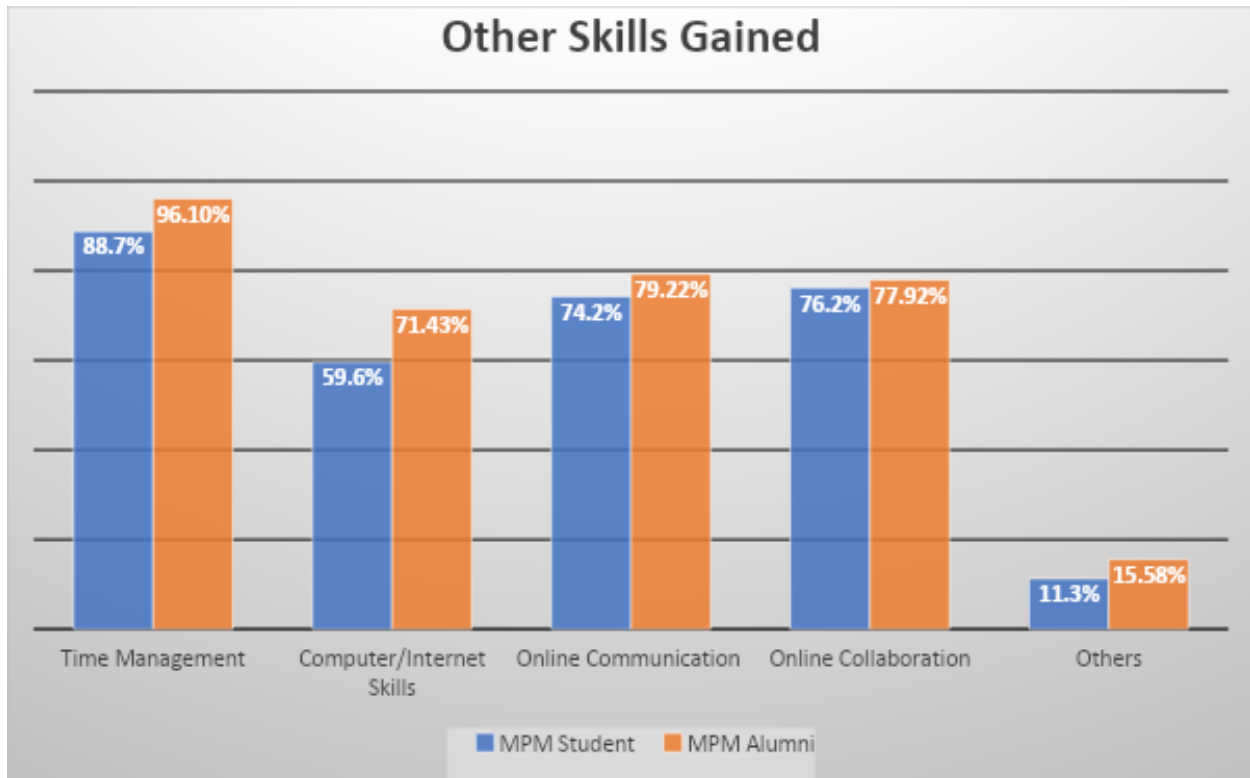
For the alumni, they also claimed that they have learned to communicate online (79.2%), collaborate online (77.9%) and gained computer/internet skills (71.4%). For the students, similar answers can be gleaned from their answers. They are learning to collaborate online (76.2%), communicate online (74.2%) and learn computer/internet skills (59.6%). This lower rating for the latter can be attributed to existing skills that the students have already since they are younger compared to the MPM alumni.

Table 34. Other Skills Gained, MPM Students and Alumni

Other Skills	MPM Students		MPM Alumni	
	Number (Total: 151)	Percentage	Number (Total: 77)	Percentage
Time Management	134	88.7	74	96.1
Computer/Internet Skills	90	59.6	55	71.4
Online Communication	112	74.2	61	79.2
Online Collaboration	115	76.2	60	77.9
Others	17	11.3	12	15.6

Figure 24 provides a comparison of other skills gained by MPM students and alumni from the Online MPM Program. Time Management is the number one skills that both the students (88.7%) and alumni (96.1%) gained.

Figure 24. Comparison of Skills Gained by Research Participants, MPM Students and Alumni



## H. Recommend the MPM Program to Others

When the MPM students and alumni research participants were asked if they would recommend the MPM Program to other people, all of them agreed that they will recommend the Program to other people. (See Table 35).

Table 35. *Recommend the MPM Program to Others, MPM Students and Alumni*

Recommend the Program	Students (N: 151)		Alumni (N:77)	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Yes	151	100.00	77	100.0
No	0	0.0	0	0.0

The respondents were also asked on the reasons why they would recommend the MPM Program to other people and their answers are categorized as follows:

- a. Flexibility of the online program. The research participants claimed that the MPM program enables students to study anywhere and anytime, hence it is fitted for those who seek professional growth but do not have the privilege of time to attend face to face classes. There is no need to take a leave from work, hence an online student will be able to spend quality time with family, friends, and organizations.

They also noted that online education in general, is challenging and filled with opportunities to learn more not only about the subject matter but also about self; and learn about self-discipline and time management, peer socialization with a wide array of references aside from the provided learning resources and links. They noted that one is motivated to learn while doing regular work at home and office. They also mentioned that online learning is ideal for people who wish to advance knowledge in public management but are also facing a hectic schedule as a public servant. It is a good program for people who cannot afford to go to graduate school without working. It is practical and cost effective.

- b. Improve knowledge and skills. The respondents said that they will recommend the Program since it will improve knowledge and skills in public management, mold students to be better leaders and improve performance in the organization. The Program is recommended especially for those aspiring for a public post, be it

appointed or elected, since it provides the essential knowledge on how to be effective as a public servant. They also noted that students will appreciate and learn more about public management and will make them better public servants. One commented that: “although a lot of people would want to serve the public, only a few can.” The knowledge gained can be applied in improving the quality of government service. They also claimed that the Program can also help them understand and analyze policies and programs being implemented by the government. It will give the graduates the knowledge and skills to be good and competent public managers who will enable people to be good citizens and good followers.

- c. The University of the Philippines (UP) brand of quality education. The respondents claimed that public servants must look for credible institutions that would guarantee improved knowledge and understanding about public policy and public administration and UP education is the best institution for it. They said that UP programs and products are of “high quality standards.” It means that taking the MPM program is a very strategic investment with the “highest returns but with the least risks.” It has a high standard of faculty, course materials and curriculum. They also noted that the Program has a good course outline, complete modules and professors are experts in their fields. The teaching method encourages students to think critically and analyze issues affecting government service. One mentioned that even in the first semester, the student has already noticed improvements in his/her writing skills. Another also said that “passing each course requires blood and sweat (and tears)” because each one is very challenging. They said that the Program presents a vast learning opportunity to a person who has willingness to serve the country. One claimed that those in the provinces do not have to go to the capital Manila or some other big cities with big Universities to enroll in this program. They can enroll with UPOU since it is online.
- d. Career and professional growth. The research participants claimed that the MPM Program is aimed at employees and professionals who aspire to become managers or gain leadership roles in their respective business or organization. It is also valuable for those employees who already manage a number of staff and are looking to gain additional skills in the area of people management including those seeking a better understanding of general public management. They mentioned that it is an effective tool for personal and professional growth, and it conserves time and energy and can also lead to career promotion in government ranks. Further, they said that the Program prepares students to the intricacies of government work and other duties and responsibilities. One student claimed that the Program will enable him/her to get promoted. It has also improved the skills in



time management in both personal and professional levels. One added that graduates of the MPM program will have opportunities to get jobs in whatever career paths they choose under the new normal.

## I. Benefits and Challenges of Online Education for Public Servants

### 1. Benefits of Online Education

The MPM students and alumni research participants were also asked on the benefits of online education and the figures show that there is very little difference in their answers although the MPM alumni have slightly higher ratings compared to the students. The figures on Table 36 show that in both sets of respondents, they gave a high rating to the statement: “I can learn anytime and anywhere” with 4.70 for students and 4.77 for the alumni. This is followed by: “ I learn the value of self-discipline” with 4.66 for the students and 4.73 for the alumni. The lowest item for the students is “learning/socializing with peers” with 4.40. In contrast, the lowest rating for the alumni is “computer and internet skills” with 4.51.

The table below also shows that the item on “I learn to communicate online’ was the only item where students gave a higher rating compared with the alumni respondents. All the other items were given a higher rating by the alumni.

*Table 36. Perceptions on the Benefits of Online Education, MPM Students and Alumni*

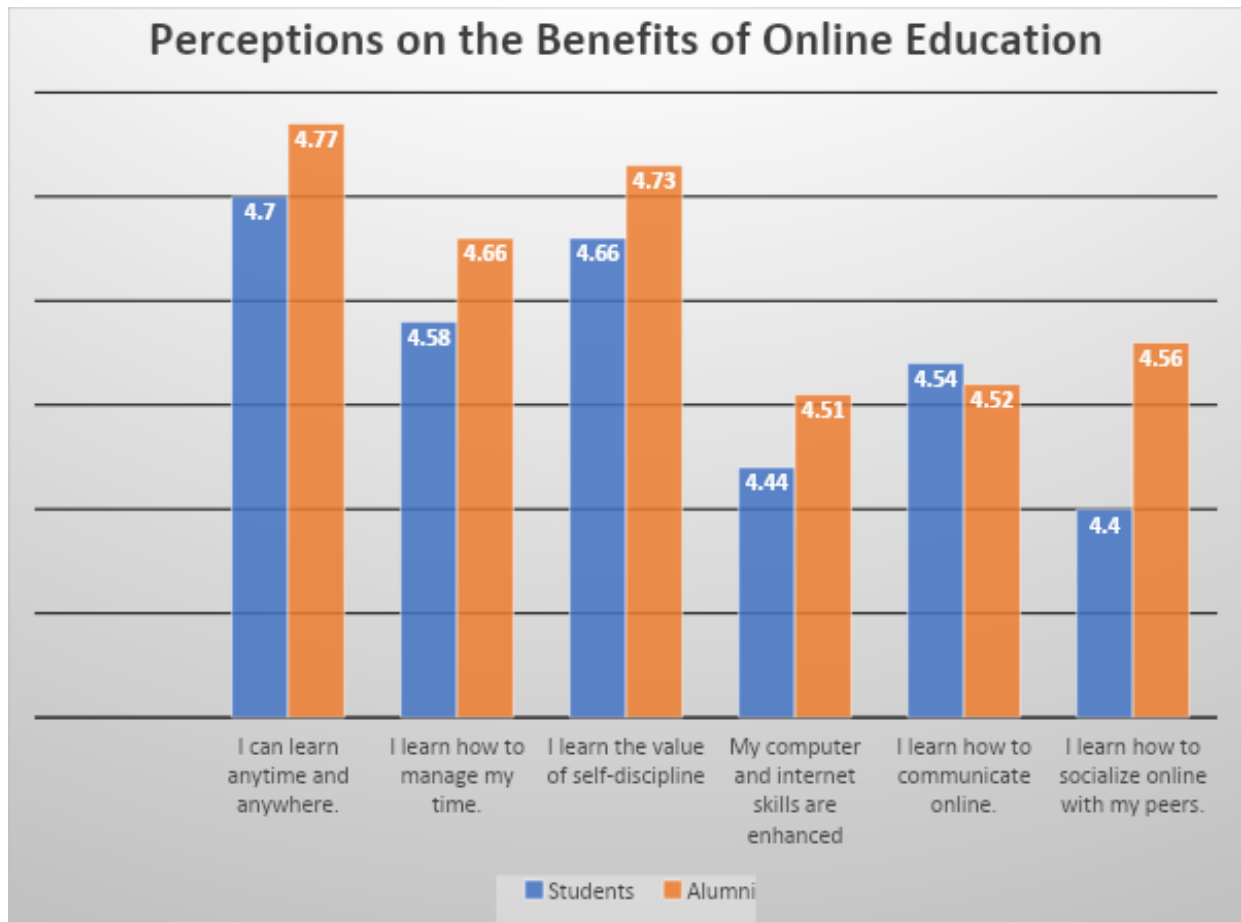
Benefits of Online Education	Rating		Difference
	Students (N: 151)	Alumni (N:77)	
I can learn anytime and anywhere.	4.70	4.77	(0.07)
I learn how to manage my time.	4.58	4.66	(0.08)
I learn the value of self-discipline	4.66	4.73	(0.07)
My computer and internet skills are enhanced	4.44	4.51	(0.07)

I learn how to communicate online.	4.54	4.52	0.02
I learn how to socialize online with my peers.	4.40	4.56	(0.16)

\*Strongly Agree – 4.21 – 5.00; Agree – 3.41 – 4.20; Undecided – 2.61 – 3.40; Disagree – 1.81 – 2.60; Strongly Disagree – 1.00 – 1.80

Figure 25 shows a comparison of the perceptions on the benefits of online education for the MPM students and alumni. The figure reveals that alumni gave a higher rating to five of the six perceived benefits compared with the students. The only indicator where students gave a higher rating is on: “I learn how to communicate online.”

Figure 25. Comparison of the Benefits of Online Education, MPM Students and Alumni



\*Strongly Agree – 4.21 – 5.00; Agree – 3.41 – 4.20; Undecided – 2.61 – 3.40; Disagree – 1.81 – 2.60; Strongly Disagree – 1.00 – 1.80

When asked to explain their answers, most of the students and alumni claimed that online education is very flexible, making them maximize their time and study anytime and anywhere. They said that since the work of public servants requires 24/7, studying online is better since they can learn anytime. They noted that there is no need to spend time and money on travel just to study and can benefit learners engaged in public service across the archipelago. Some also said that if not for online education, it would not have been possible to study due to workload and could not even apply for a study leave. Further, with online education, they do not need to leave their families behind to study in the cities where Universities are located.

They also noted that online education provides students an opportunity to study at the University of the Philippines. It also enables them to meet people from different places around the country and from other countries. One also said that it allows finishing and submitting requirements even while attending a training/conference overseas. One mentioned that it also enables students to verify which online sources are credible to use, especially that Google and Youtube University is widely influential. One respondent, however, claimed that as a journalist, the digital skills are already there even before taking up online education.

## 2.Challenges of Online Education

The students and alumni research participants also shared their perceptions on the challenges of Online Education. Based on Table 37, their ratings are almost similar. For the students, they noted that online education would be better if there is a reliable internet connection (4.60), internet connection is affordable (4.52) and quality of online and teaching and learning is good (4.52). For the alumni respondents, they gave the highest rating to “reliable electricity and internet connection with 4.51 each.

Table 37. Perceptions the Challenges of Online Education, MPM Students and Alumni

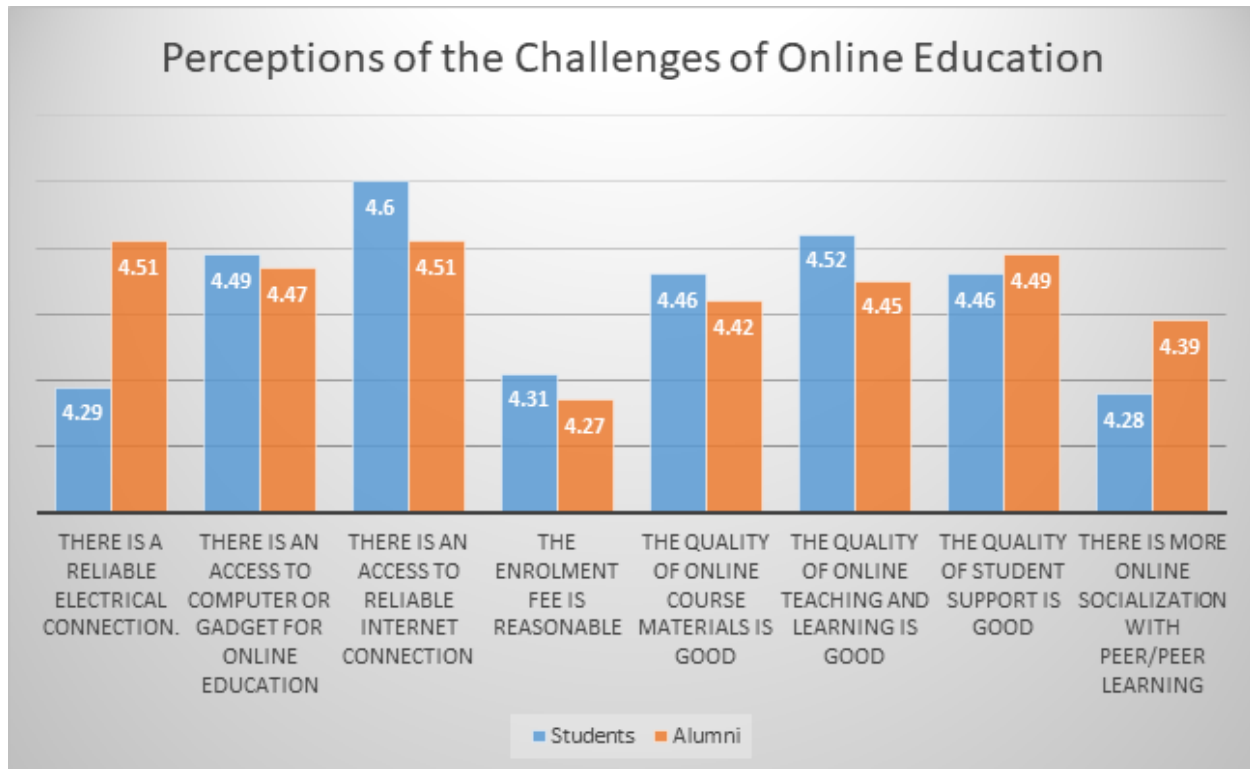
Online Education would be better if:	Rating		Difference
	Students (N: 151)	Alumni (N:77)	
There is a reliable electrical connection.	4.29	4.51	(0.22)
There is an access to computer or gadget for online education	4.49	4.47	0.09

<b>There is an access to reliable internet connection</b>	4.60	4.51	0.09
<b>The enrolment fee is reasonable</b>	4.31	4.27	0.04
<b>The quality of online course materials is good</b>	4.46	4.42	0.04
<b>The quality of online teaching and learning is good</b>	4.52	4.45	0.07
<b>The quality of student support is good</b>	4.46	4.49	(0.03)
<b>There is more online socialization with peer/peer learning</b>	4.28	4.39	(0.11)

*\*Strongly Agree – 4.21 – 5.00; Agree – 3.41 – 4.20; Undecided – 2.61 – 3.40; Disagree – 1.81 – 2.60; Strongly Disagree – 1.00 – 1.80*

Comparing the responses for the MPM students and alumni, Figure 26 reveals that they both gave similar perceptions on the statements regarding challenges of online education. The biggest discrepancy is in the presence of electricity where the alumni gave a higher rating compared with the students. This could be due to the wider coverage of electricity in recent years.

*Figure 26. Comparison of Perceptions on Challenges to Online Education, MPM Students and Alumni*



*\*Strongly Agree – 4.21 – 5.00; Agree – 3.41 – 4.20; Undecided – 2.61 – 3.40; Disagree – 1.81 – 2.60; Strongly Disagree – 1.00 – 1.80*

When asked to comment on their rating, the students claimed that reliable and affordable internet connectivity is an issue in the Philippines which is one of the countries with the slowest internet connections. One noted that at some point, the student had to walk for more than three kilometers just to get a reliable internet connection. Some noted that time management is also a challenge. There were some respondents who wanted to have a more online synchronous interaction that is similar to face-to-face classes that happened during the COVID-19 pandemic. In contrast, there were also those who suggested that virtual meetings should be avoided since it could add to their stress and anxiety.

On the other hand, for the alumni respondents, they have raised more varied challenges in online education. Stable internet connections, familiarization with computer applications and availability of gadgets are some of the challenges that they mentioned. One claimed that nowadays, internet accessibility is much better compared to the time when access to the internet was limited to only once a week or only on weekends at the Internet Café which is three hours away to upload assignments, participate in forums and download instructions. They also noted that some of their

MPM faculty members then, were also not very good at technology and tend to forget that they need to update their online classes.

One important feedback from an alumnus is that “while the online platform has encouraged independence and self-reliance among public servant learners, the lack of certain mechanisms has encouraged (or at least, not dissuaded) some learners to engage into unethical practices (like freeloading in group works, handing in plagiarized submissions, uploading past assignments in websites, among others).” This is an issue that needs to be addressed by institutions offering Online Education.

Some also noted about the mindset of students that Online Education is easy. They said that is harder because “one must manage time for studying on top of work and personal life.” This means less sleep and long hours of studying, without a classmate beside. There were also two respondents who claimed to get tired easily by reading online. As one alumni noted: “I remember having more than 60 classmates. As the semesters went by, that number dwindled dramatically. During graduation, I was surprised that there were only three of us who started our MPM studies in the same semester who graduated on time, and that there are only a handful left in the program. Learning online is indeed not easy.”

## **J. Summary**

The discussion above concludes that the online MPM Program of the UPOU is an effective capacity development tool for public servants.

1. Research participants claimed that they learned about the MPM Program through the website. This means that online presence is very important for any Program to reach its potential targets. The main reason for enrolling in the Program is due to its “flexibility” or to study anytime and anywhere as well as for career and professional growth.
2. Students and key informants generally agree that the different learning outcomes are being achieved by the MPM Program. Moreover, the students claimed to have been able to apply what they are learning from the Program. Applying the indicators of Otoo, et. al. on learning outcomes of capacity development, the study affirms that Online Education is an effective tool to

develop the capacities of public servants. This can be gleaned by the responses of the students.

3. Alumni and key informants of the MPM Program also agree that graduates of the MPM Program gained the competencies that are expected from the Program. Utilizing the NASPAA's competencies of graduates of a graduate course on public administration/management shows that the graduates have acquired the competencies which further supports that Online Education is an effective tool for capacity development.
4. Almost half (44.2%) of the graduates of the MPM Program claimed to have been promoted after getting the degree. Moreover, 37.7% also mentioned that they transferred to another office. This means that graduates of the Program have high prospects for upward career mobility. Further, almost all (94.8%) also admitted that they were able to apply what they have learned from Program. Online education has also proven to have enabled the graduates to be promoted and pursue other jobs in another organization.
5. The research participants claimed that they have learned different skills aside from the learning outcomes and competencies gained from the Program. Time management is one of the skills that they have learned. They have also learned how to communicate and collaborate online which are necessary skills in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
6. All the research participants agreed that they will recommend the MPM Program since it is flexible, students will gain knowledge and skills relevant to public service, it has the quality of a Program offered by the University of the Philippines and provides potential career and professional growth.
7. All the MPM students and alumni strongly agreed that online education has several benefits since they can study at their own pace and time, develop self- discipline, manage time, learn how to communicate online, work with online peers and learn computer skills.
8. The students and alumni respondents also acknowledged that online education has its challenges. It would be better if there is stable electricity and strong internet connectivity, knowledgeable teachers, quality student support and learning materials, among others. This is where the enabling environment is important to consider. Online education will prosper if these conditions are met.

# **Chapter VII: Results and Discussion (4): Benefits, Challenges, and Recommendations to Improve Online Education in the Philippines**

## **A. Introduction**

This section discusses one of the aims of the research which is: to determine the benefits, challenges, and online education as well as to establish guidelines, strategies, and actions to be recommended to improve the effectiveness of online capacity development programs, in the Philippine context and worldwide.



The results come from the qualitative information gathered from the key informants from UPOU and from the MPM Program. The questions are included in the interview guide that was conducted with them. In the processing of their answers, the key words were grouped together to sum up the prevailing themes of their answers.

Their answers are also compared with the answers of students and alumni to be able to verify if they have the same perceptions regarding Online Education.

## **B. Perceived Benefits of Online Education**

The UPOU key informants were asked to determine the benefits of Online Education in the Philippines. The key informants mentioned the following benefits: a) promotes agility; b) inclusive, ubiquitous and international; c) flexible learning where learners can study at their own pace and time; d) development of additional skills necessary for work; e) others.

Promotes Agility. The research participants mentioned that Online Education is agile/flexible which enables the education system to respond to whatever disruptions that happen as in the case of the pandemic and other natural calamities (typhoons, volcanic eruption, earthquakes) and even the human-caused disruption as in the case of peace and order situation. One respondent (OU2) noted that the “Philippines ranks 3rd among 173 countries evaluated when it comes to being disaster-prone, hence the use of Online Education can be beneficial for the country.”

Online education is inclusive, ubiquitous and international. One key informant (OU2) expounded that this refers not only to the removal of the usual barriers like cost and admission requirements but in terms of “integrating the features of the universal design” for learning so that it can also accommodate even the physically-challenged individuals. Other possibilities like a personalized learning environment can also be easily implemented in this mode of instruction. The UPOU key informants also added that it is appropriate for those who cannot attend conventional instruction and very relevant to lifelong learners. It also facilitates exposure to multicultural perspective conversations. It also means that international collaboration can easily be facilitated and established which can contribute to university ranking.

Flexibility (learners can study at their own pace and time). Key informants also claimed that learners can study at their own location without traveling or going to school. Students can demonstrate self-motivation without the fear of not being able to participate in face-to-face classroom activities. It is less expensive because it minimizes travel expenses and allowances.

Students with different needs perform better in an online classroom set up.

Benefits of Online Education:

- “1. Given the needed support, Filipinos can have access to better quality education even if they are geographically isolated from best universities*
- 2. Offers a community of learners and community of practice that is accessible through technology*
- 3. Less costly if one considers mobility expenses (transportation and accommodation of those from provinces)”*

*-Respondent OU4*

Development of additional skills necessary for work. The UPOU key informants also claimed that online learners can develop other skills such as self-discipline, time management, digital literacy, information seeking, digital curatorship, etc.

Others. The research participants noted that Online Education can serve as the platform for working towards attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (not just SDG 4 - Education) since education is at the center of each SDG. One key informant (OU3) also mentioned that “it is less costly with no or less transportation cost; no need to rent a place near school, among others.”

Based on the answers of the key informants on the benefits of online education, it can be said that they coincide with the explanation of the MPM students and alumni as discussed in the previous chapter. They have mentioned having co-learners coming from diverse backgrounds and from different places which enable them to develop networks.

They also identified flexibility as one of the reasons why they would recommend the Online Program. Students can study at their own pace and time, anywhere. They were able to develop competencies not only those related to public management but also digital skills such as online collaboration and communication.

## **C. Perceived Challenges of Online Education**

When asked about the challenges of online education in the Philippines, the UPOU key informants mentioned the following: a) Issues related to quality of online

education; b) lack of ICT infrastructure; c) lack of capacities of teachers; and d) lack of foresight.

Issues related to quality of Online Education. The research participant (OU2) claimed that there is a lingering perception about the lack of quality of online education which is brought about by institutions offering it for “business and profit only,” and also raised the concern about “recognition of online certificates in courses such as MOOCs.” “The quality of online programs/courses are not monitored” according to one respondent (OU11). One respondent mentioned that educational institutions are mostly after the increase in enrollment and government policies on online education are not clear and enforced. Further, there is a lack of capacity to regulate the quality of online

*On the Challenges of Online Education:*

*“Online course are not monitored in terms of quality; teachers are not adequately trained in terms of integrating pedagogy, technology and content; schools/institutions are mostly after the increased enrollment in their institutions; government policies are not clear and not enforced; CHED (Commission on Higher Education) does not have the capacity to regulate.”*

*- Respondent OU9*

education.

Lack of ICT Infrastructure. The respondents claimed that many institutions lack resources from technology, internet connectivity, to technical resources that are in proper context. There is also a lack of a central repository of best practices and resources that should be shared to other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

Lack of Capacities of Teachers. The key informants also noted another challenge which is related to the capacities of teachers. Teachers are not adequately trained in terms of integrating pedagogy, technology and content. They lack proper orientation to the constructivist paradigm where learners are the center of teaching and learning. They said that many of the teachers are still traditional and find it difficult to empower students to learn.

Lack of foresight. They also noted the lack of foresight among education sector leaders thus, they are conservative in their views regarding Online Education.

These challenges are also echoed by the MPM students and alumni research participants as discussed in the previous chapter. They have noted that Online Education would be better if there is a reliable ICT infrastructure, stable electricity and strong internet connectivity, knowledgeable teachers, quality student support and learning materials, among others.

The UP branding of quality education is also one of the reasons why they decided to study at UPOU which means that they are making sure that they get value for their money.

The above discussion also points out that indeed, the enabling factors where capacity development is implemented affects largely the context of Online Education. In the Philippines, the political, socio-economic and cultural factors affect online education in many ways. Policies are important to provide guidance and ensure support from various stakeholders as well as resources needed. However, despite the policy on Open and Distance Learning (ODL), there is still a need to improve its implementation in terms of providing more resources and in improving the quality of online education.

The ICT infrastructure remains to be predominantly located in urban areas hence, the government should be able to facilitate it to be able to reach more people in the rural areas. Moreover, it is also important that the government should be able to regulate Online Education efficiently to ensure quality of online education in the Philippines.

The strong collaboration with partners also facilitates online education to flourish. The recognition of this partnership leads to better programs, development of teachers' capacity in online education, among others. The UPOU partners with international organizations, national government agencies, local government units, private and civil society sectors in its functions. However, this should be expanded and sustained.

Teachers should also be trained continuously to develop their capacities in incorporating the use of ICT in their programs and courses. The UPOU offers regular MOOCs on Open and Distance e-Learning which caters primarily to teachers and educators, officials, among others to develop their capacities.

There is also the prevailing misconception that face-to-face learning is better than online learning and this could be addressed given the proper information about the advantages of online education.

The perceptions regarding the benefits of online education also supports the thesis that online education contributes to capacity development. On the other hand, the perceived challenges can be addressed if proper planning and strategies are implemented effectively.

## **D. Recommendations to Address the Challenges of Online Education in the Philippines**

The UPOU key informants were asked to give at least three recommendations on how to address the challenges of online education in the Philippines. They are classified into three topics: a) policy-related recommendations; b) improvement in ICT infrastructure and c) capacity development of teachers. It can be surmised that most of the suggestions are policy-related. They are discussed thoroughly below:

1. Policy-related recommendations. The key informants noted that Online Education in the Philippines has many gaps, hence it is important that policies be formulated which will cover the following:
  - a. Policies allowing diversification of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) modality to include Open and Distance e-Learning as mentioned by key informant (OU1). Respondents (OU9) and (OU11) also said that incentives should also be given to institutions interested in offering distance education programs
  - b. Clear national policy on ICT infrastructure and connectivity for education was also suggested by key informant (OU2). This means fewer bureaucratic requirements to enable service providers to improve their infrastructure better and faster.
  - c. Another respondent (OU2) also recommended for the adoption of a national policy on the development and use of Open Educational Resources which will enable the implementation of the UNESCO OER Recommendation as the Philippines is also a signatory to the adoption of the recommendation.
  - d. There is also a need for an amendment to RA10650 or Open and Distance Learning Act to include basic education and provision of funds in support of online education e.g. funds to establish/develop a national platform for MOOCs as in the case of other countries such as Thailand, Korea, France, etc. as mentioned by another key informant (OU2).

- e. Providing funding for HEIs and even basic education to develop quality online courses and programs with credits that can be transferred across universities (as in the case of the Bologna process) was also suggested by a respondent (OU2).
- f. Improve implementation of policies in regulating online education in the Philippines wherein there is a stricter regulation of fly-by-night educational institutions and the establishment of a national ODeL Quality Assurance system as claimed by respondent (OU10).

*3 Recommendations to Improve Online Education:*

- “1. improve online learning infrastructure*
- 2. formulate policies allowing diversification of HEIs modality to include ODeL*
- 3. establish a national ODeL QA system.”*

*-Respondent OU1*

- 2. Improvement in ICT Infrastructure. In order for online education to flourish, there is a need to improve online learning infrastructure. The key informants claimed that the government needs to improve ICT infrastructure not only in the urban areas but nationwide to have a stable, fast and affordable internet connection to enable the use of digital tools, technology, and devices. There is also a need to identify the technical content to be strengthened through technology-based solutions or offer hybrid options for teaching and learning.
- 3. Capacity development of teachers and staff. The key informants also mentioned the need to orient teachers and staff to the pedagogical knowledge needed in open and distance learning. There should be mentoring from well experienced teachers. Consequently, there is also a need to train more people to provide technical support.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, there are new policies that were crafted and instituted by the Philippine government which also addressed the issues and challenges mentioned above. For example, the Republic Act No 11494 also known as Bayanihan (working together) to Recover as One Act was signed into law last September 11, 2020.

The law provided an allocation to the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) to assist state universities and colleges (SUCs) and invests in ICT infrastructure, acquisition of learning management systems and other appropriate equipment to fully implement flexible learning modalities (Official Gazette, 2020).

Further, with CHED's Memorandum Order No. 4 Series of 2020 "Guidelines on the Implementation of Flexible Learning", Higher Education Institutions (HEI) can now implement online, offline or blended learning depending on the level of technology of the institution. This guideline has further recognized online education as a mode of delivery.

The Philippine government also launched its own repository of OERs through the "PHL CHED Connect." As mentioned in the previous chapter, this is a web application that contains higher education course materials in text, media and other digital assets that are useful for teaching, learning and research purposes. The website serves as a space for HEIs to co-create knowledge and collaborate with each other.

It should also be noted that COVID-19 pandemic marked the Philippines' major shift to a digital economy and has a positive impact on the ICT infrastructure. In the advertising firms: We Are Social and Hootsuite's Digital 2021 report, the country was top in social media and internet usage worldwide—for the sixth year in a row.

Of the 110.3 million Philippine population as of January 2021, 73.91 million are internet users and 89 million are onboard social media. There are more Filipinos now who have access to the internet. The average download speed of mobile internet connections and fixed internet connections also increased and are at 22.50 MBPS and 31.44 MBPS, respectively.

In terms of capacity development of teachers, the COVID-19 pandemic also led to several training programs conducted to develop the ICT skills of teachers in remote teaching. The UPOU, for its part, has conducted several online trainings for teachers.

Thus, it can be said that in the Philippines, most of these suggestions have been considered as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, there is still so much to be done. It is also important to note that there is a need to establish an efficient Quality Assurance system to improve the quality of Online Education in the country. This is seen as a huge challenge for the government and UPOU.

## **E. Recommendations to UPOU as an Online education Institution**

The UPOU and MPM key informants were also asked regarding their recommendations to address the challenges in the implementation of online education for capacity development. The following are their recommendations: a) maximize UPOU's position in the RA 10650; b) improve UPOU's resources; c) continuous capacity development of teachers; d) strengthen university-industry relations; e) Efficient utilization of current resources; f) Improve student and alumni relations.

1. Maximize UPOU's position in the RA 10650. The key informants noted that UPOU is recognized as a leader in Online Education or ODeL, hence it should be able to push for the establishment of a MOOCs national platform and motivate other experts/other universities to contribute to this initiative.
2. Improve UPOU's resources. The key informants also suggested that UPOU should lobby with the government for more funds for infrastructure and hire people who can deliver Online Education. It needs to secure additional faculty and staff, request for more job items to beef up teaching and student/instructional support complement, enhance research productivity and incorporate automation in appropriate aspects of daily operations. The UPOU should also diversify modality to address teaching-learning continuity amidst disruption and explore non-internet dependent technologies for its content delivery.
3. Continuous capacity development of teachers. The key informants mentioned that there is a need for UPOU to continuously orient faculty members to constructivist learning, self-directed learning and outcomes-based education to upgrade faculty and students' knowledge and technical expertise in using technology in teaching and learning and encourage mentoring/mentorship to focus on programs that enhances and strengthens quality education. There should be more opportunities for the faculty to meet more often and share online teaching experiences.
4. Strengthen university-industry relations. The research participants also claimed that UPOU should strengthen its collaboration with the industry especially for its degree programs to ensure that they are relevant to the needs of the industry, especially in the context of continuing professional education and lifelong learning. Involving the industry in bridging theory and actual practice leads to more sustainable programs/courses. This will also facilitate the recognition of the certificates obtained through online learning (as in the case of MOOCs). They also suggested for UPOU to conduct regular consultation and dialogue with stakeholders, specifically students and alumni. It should also be more aggressive in encouraging and collaborating



with government and non-government organizations personnel to avail of online programs and courses.

5. Efficient utilization of current resources. The key informants also suggested that UPOU needs to engage the active involvement of competent professionals (professors, course writers, instructional designers, etc.) who can contribute to quality education; better facilities, including internet connectivity. It should adopt new modes of learning to adjust to current times; continuously improve its ICT infrastructure because it is the heart of its “openness.” It should also continue the development of course materials to address the university's lack of access to updated resources for which paid access is required.

*3 Recommendations to UPOU:*

*1. Orienting faculty members to constructivist learning, self-directed learning and outcome-based education*

*2. Continuously upgrading faculty and students' knowledge and technical expertise in using technology in teaching and learning*

*3. Involve practice, industry, and business in bridging theory and actual practice and have a more sustainable program/ course/*

*- Respondent OU1*

6. Improve student and alumni relations. The key informants also mentioned that UPOU should be able to track its students, especially those who discontinue with their studies to improve graduation rate. It should also track those who have graduated to monitor their career change, which is also one of the indicators for the Performance Based Monitoring. Students should be invited as speakers in webinars in their areas of interest or expertise. Moreover, to accommodate students with deficient competency, UPOU can offer a "bridge program" for them to be ready for the school year ahead.

With all these recommendations, it can be said that UPOU has initiated some efforts in these areas such as the strengthening of relationships with the industry, partners, and alumni to improve its programs. However, as regards getting more faculty and staff positions for the University, this task is proving to be more difficult for UPOU to achieve due to being a state university wherein faculty and staff positions are limited.

This is also one of the reasons why UPOU is still small as an organization. It does not have the desired faculty and staff complement that is needed.

## **F. Recommendations to Improve the Implementation of the MPM Program**

The MPM key informants, students and alumni were also asked for their recommendations on how to improve the implementation of the MPM program. Thus, this section puts together all their recommendations taking into account their various concerns and issues. They have mentioned the following: a) regular program review and updating of learning resources; b) faculty-related concerns; c) student-related concerns; d) establishment of networks; e) use of better technology; f) MPM Program promotion; and others:

1. Regular program review and updating of learning resources. The research participants suggested that the MPM Program must conduct regular consultation with experts and public sector officials to make the Program more responsive to the needs of the times. They also suggested that the design of the MPM Program should conform with the present situation with the intention of helping public servants “flourish professionally” after graduation while at the same time, contribute productively not only to the growth of their respective organization/unit but also in the community where they live and manage.

They also suggested that other special topics/courses should be included such as: environmental management, anti-corruption, disaster risk reduction and management, financial management, ICT in governance, national defense, pollution control, scientific development policy, private-public partnerships, international organizations, foreign service, among others. The learning materials should also be updated to enrich the course contents. Some students also noted the need to update the modules which were prepared during the early years of the program and there were no open educational resources then. One claimed to take some time going to other sites for OERs, while another said that the MPM Program has provided well the required resources for the students.

2. Faculty-related concerns. The research respondents also suggested that the MPM Program must hire additional faculty and staff with solid education and experience in teaching public management and related courses. They involve not only those purely in the academe, but also those in practice in the

executive, legislative or in the judiciary and those from the voluntary sector management.

The MPM key informants also mentioned the need for regular training for lecturers on topics related to developments in public administration and technology updates on course management. This will enable MPM lecturers to employ more interactive strategies in online teaching and to have more flexible lesson plans.

Another respondent (MPM6) also suggested that the MPM Program should also embark on an online faculty exchange program with other universities both at the local and international levels. Moreover, another respondent (MPM6) said that “it is also important to reiterate that MPM faculty and lecturers must provide quality feedback on the submissions of learners (to contribute to gradual improvement of learners as they go through the course).” Moreover, the alumni also suggested that assistance should also be given to FICs who are not very good at technology.

*3 Recommendations to the MPM Program:*

- 1. Regular review of the curriculum;*
- 2. Regular updating of courses;*
- 3. Regular training for FICs on public administration developments and technology updates on course management.*

*- Respondent MPM14*

3. Student-related concerns. The key informants said that the Program must conduct studies of its graduates and find out how they are really performing in the real world. This is to ensure having a common vision for the people and country. Another respondent (MPM6) also suggested that there must be an effective screening process of learners to ensure that they have the minimum requirements for graduate school (*i.e.* writing ability, commitment to finish the course). One also suggested a student handbook that contains clear policies should also be distributed to learners while another suggested that the Program must allow interactive platforms for students to discuss in real time. They also suggested that there must be an effective feedback mechanism from

learners on the quality of education they received and must be timely produced. The data collected from these must also be used promptly and correctly to effect changes. They also recommended a student support mechanism to assist learners who are new to distance learning, to assist those who need to learn about academic writing in graduate school and to aid with mental health issues among learners.

4. Establishment of networks. The respondents also suggested that the MPM Program must partner with local and international allies and experts. It must also strategize to come up with research and extension outputs. An active alumni network or association should be established where they can volunteer and donate to some MPM program initiatives based on the recommendations above.
5. Use of better technology. The students also recommended the use of more collaborative online activities in class using zoom and video lectures, etc. The COVID-19 pandemic enabled the use of more interactive synchronous tools which some students would like to use. However, some also raised the issue that the country has slow internet connectivity, hence it is difficult to go online. Moreover, another student raised that synchronous communication should have a limit as well. One suggested a more user- friendly interface for the learning management system can be created while another one suggested for a notification regarding assignments so as not to miss submitting them.

For the alumni respondents, they noted that although some respondents mentioned that they had some technical difficulties during their time, they suggested that the Program should be able to utilize other technologies for virtual conferencing and collaboration. They suggested that there should be more interaction and group exercises among students since the program is a good venue for interaction considering the diverse nature of students. It was also suggested that an anti-plagiarism software for all student submissions should be utilized. One noted that real-time class discussions could affect the "flexibility" element for many students. One also suggested more audiobooks (podcasts) to lessen eye strain.

6. MPM Program promotion. The MPM key informants also mentioned the need to advertise the MPM Program. It must be publicized to make it known to more people and recommend that the government agency cover the cost of tuition and incentivize advancement in educational attainment. They also noted the need for the Program to be introduced to various organizations so that more

public servants will know that such a program and learning opportunity exists. Scholarship offerings and partnerships with government agencies and other institutions should be explored to allow for career development of rank-and-file employees.

7. Others. The other suggestions of the key informants include: a) UPOU to put up a digital innovation laboratory for policymakers and scholars for dialogue and innovation; b) publication on the MPM contributions to policymaking at the national and local levels and c) to consider a research track or thesis track for the MPM program.

The above recommendations of the MPM key informants, students and alumni are all valid. The MPM Program needs to be reviewed more frequently to align it with new developments of the field. However, this is hampered by the lack of faculty and staff for the Program. As mentioned earlier, the MPM Program has only one full time faculty who also serves as Program Chair. Recruitment of another faculty complement is a challenge since there is no vacancy for a teaching position for the MPM Program. Moreover, the Program cannot rely solely on lecturers since they have their respective full-time jobs where they also occupy high positions. This leads to less time for capacity development.

For example, although learning visits as a capacity development strategy are organized frequently to update the knowledge and skills of lecturers on the discipline, most of them are not able to make it due to their busy schedule. Even the use of synchronous communication is not effective since most of them are not able to join the meeting due to their other commitments.

As regards student concerns, all the information is provided on the website for the students. The result from this research also enables the Program to determine if graduates of the MPM Program really gained competencies and plan for the Program Review.

For the Program partners, the UPOU is a member of the Board of the Association of Schools of Public Administration in the Philippines (ASPAP) and represented by the Program Chair. Moreover, it has also a partner such as the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and other Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs). It was also able to partner with other schools and institutions in Taiwan through its membership with ASPAP.

The MPM Program also utilizes new technology such as zoom and has also a playlist that is composed of various topics on MPM. They are integrated in the different courses of the MPM.

In terms of Program promotion, the Program gives in to requests to government agencies who seek to have more orientation about the Program. Moreover, its membership with other public administration schools in the country also serves as a Program Promotion. However, it is also important to consider the carrying capacity of the Program. Given that there is only one full time faculty member, it should be conscious of the number of students that it should admit.

## **G. Summary**

This chapter focused on the recommendations of the research participants to address the challenges of online education in the Philippines, to the UPOU as an implementer of Online Education/ODeL and to the MPM Program. The following were raised:

1. For the Philippines, it is important to put in place the necessary enabling environment that could facilitate online education to serve as a guideline on how to implement online education and to ensure quality of online programs and courses. Although some policies are already in place, it is important to improve its implementation and include appropriate resources to support online education. The government should continue to improve its ICT infrastructure to provide electricity and fast internet connectivity not only in the urban areas but in all parts of the country. This will enable online education to be accessible to everyone. Teachers and IT staff should also be provided continuous training on online education.
2. For the UPOU, it should maximize its role in online education and requests for additional faculty and staff complement to be able to do its task more effectively and efficiently. It should also continue to train its teachers/lecturers to improve the programs being offered and partner with various stakeholders including the industries. The UPOU should also be able to track its students, whether they dropped out due to various reasons and whether they are able to apply what they learned from UPOU.
3. For the MPM Program, several recommendations were also provided by the research participants and it involves all the various aspects of the Program. There are several special topics/courses that were suggested, and this can be addressed through a Program Review. The faculty related recommendations include the hiring of new faculty members as well as providing them continuous training and assistance. For student related concerns, there is a need to conduct a study to determine how they are able

to utilize what they learned in the real world. The Program should also utilize available technologies to improve interactivity but keep the program flexible. The MPM Program should also be promoted to enable interested individuals and institutions to learn more about it.

## **Chapter VIII: Conclusions, Implications and Future Research**

### **A. Introduction**

The COVID-19 pandemic is indeed a game changer. It has brought in new challenges, issues and opportunities for the education and training sector. As countries move to the digital economy; it is also important that the education sector is not left

behind. It has nowhere to go but embrace the digitalization of education. This means utilizing computers, mobile devices, internet, and other digital technologies in education. These tools help in developing the necessary 21<sup>st</sup> skills and future skills of educators and learners alike.

The thesis poses the question: Is Online Education an effective tool for capacity development of public servants? Online education has become a familiar term during the pandemic era due to the issues regarding social distancing. Organizations and institutions offering capacity development programs have utilized online strategies. However, the reluctance to utilize online education is also due to the limited studies whether the learning outcomes and learning competencies are really gained by learners, specifically the public servants.

The research provides an in-depth review and analysis of a case study in the context of a developing country – the Philippines. It is important to establish the political, economic, social and cultural context of the Philippines to determine if it facilitates or supports the development and implementation of Online Education. It can also serve as a “working model” on how developing countries implement online education given its enabling environment.

Moreover, it also looks at the capacity of an organization in the context of the University of the Philippines Open University that offers fully online Degrees and Courses. It focuses on the organization’s strengths, challenges and opportunities in implementing Online Education.

Finally, the thesis provides a concrete example of the Master of Public Management Program as a capacity development tool for public servants. The role of public servants is important in the implementation of a country’s development programs. Thus, it is necessary that they have the required competencies for them to perform their tasks efficiently and effectively.

This section provides the synthesis and conclusion of the study. It also discusses the study’s implications to Online Education, Capacity Development and to the Online Education of public servants.

As a final note, it also highlights the contributions of the study including limitations and recommendations for further research.

## **B. Conclusions and Implications**

Based on the results of the study, the following can be concluded:

### **1. Concept of Capacity Development**



Capacity Development means helping individuals grow and enabling them to gain knowledge and skills to confidently do their tasks. The three main levels of capacity development which are interconnected include the enabling environment or the context where the capacity is undertaken; the organizational level; and the individual level.

The approaches to capacity development transformed over time to respond to the changing environment. Recently, it is characterized by the VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous) world brought in by the rapid development in technology. Hence, digitalization as an approach is now one of the innovations adopted in capacity development. Moreover, it also focuses on themes around resiliency, agility, futures thinking, among others.

There is also a need to hasten the implementation of the programs to be able to reach the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and address future concerns. Thus, capacity development is an important aspect of it.

## **2. Online Education and Other Related Terminologies**

There are many terminologies that are related to Online Education. Thus, it is important to be able to define their characteristics. They serve like a menu of the different approaches that can be utilized depending on the capacity and the decision of the organization.

The University of the Philippines Open University has its own brand of Online Education and refers to it as Open and Distance e-Learning (ODeL). It is open since it believes in lifelong learning conducted via distance mode and learners can study at their own pace and time. It is also e-learning since it utilizes technology as a tool for learning.

## **3. Public Servants and their Role in Development**

Public servants play an important role in development. As the term suggests, the public servants are not only involved in decision making but also in the implementation of policies, programs and projects for the interest of the public. The concept is broad since it covers the public, private sector and civil society/non-profit sector/non-governmental organizations and individuals that aim to provide services for development.

They are envisioned to play an important role not only in programs related to Social Agenda 2030 but also in the various challenges of public administration. Thus, capacity development is needed.

#### **4. Online Education as a Capacity Development Tool for Public Servants**

Reviews of existing literature cites online education or e-learning as a tool for capacity development of public servants. However, most of the studies conducted were mostly descriptions on how online learning was designed or conducted. They were not really evaluated if the learning outcomes and the required competencies were achieved by the participants. Moreover, most of the studies also focused on courses offered to public servants and not on Degree Programs.

During the pandemic era, capacity development has shifted to online and in most instances adopted remote learning as a tool wherein the lectures were still conducted through synchronous communication.

Despite the issues regarding ICT infrastructure, internet connectivity, online communication, among others, there is a recognition that there are positive aspects of online education. This includes the increase in the reliance on local expertise as well as lesser expenses on transportation, catering, accommodation, etc.

#### **5. Frameworks for Evaluating Capacity Development**

There are many proposed frameworks for the evaluation of capacity development which are presented by various international organizations. However, there is no special framework focused on online capacity development as a strategy.

For purposes of the study, a framework based on Otoo, et.al (2009) is utilized. The enabling environment refers to the political, economic, social and cultural context of the Philippines. Thus, the study gathered and presented relevant information that could affect capacity development in the Philippines.

The organization refers to the capacity of the University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU) as an implementing organization of Online Education. It included the description of the organization and its capacity as an institution offering Online Education.

The capacity development activity is Online Education or ODeL, specifically the Master of Public Management Program which aims to develop the capacities of public servants by providing them knowledge and skills needed for undertaking their tasks either in public policy, local governance or in managing NGOs/civil society.

Finally, the goal of the MPM Program is determined by the competencies gained by the graduates of the Program.

## **6. On the political, socio-economic and cultural factors affecting Online Education**

The political, socio-economic, cultural and other factors provide the enabling environment in the development and implementation of Online Education. They can either facilitate or hinder it. Governments should be able to institute mechanisms to ensure quality of online education by providing a conducive enabling environment. They can be in the form of policies, plans and programs that could lead to its development.

In the Philippines, the study shows that there exists an enabling environment for Online Education. This is due to the presence of policies and the efforts of the government to improve the ICT infrastructure. For example, the Open and Distance Learning Act is an important policy that encourages higher educational institutions to offer online courses.

The government's support has been more evident during the COVID-19 pandemic when the government had a realization on the possible uses of ICT in education. Being a developing country, putting up the infrastructure is costly and is met with some bureaucratic issues. Although it has made some efforts to improve the ICT infrastructure especially in the rural areas, greater effort should be made so that more learners will be able to have access to online education. This can be improved so that the internet will be faster and more affordable.

Further, the success of Online Education also depends on the presence of a network of institutions that continue to support and facilitate online education in the country. It is also important to have a conscious effort to develop the capacities of teachers and staff on Online Education with the support from the Commission of Higher Education (CHED).

The study also recognizes that there are still some reservations when it comes to online education because of the notion that "face-to-face" learning is much better than online learning. This culture could be addressed with more information dissemination about Online Education and by ensuring quality of online programs and courses.

## **7. On Organizational Capacity to Implement Online Education**

The study also affirms that organizational capacity to deliver Online Education Program is important. Organizational capacity refers to having a clear vision, mission and goal, sound financial management, having the support of stakeholders and being agile. These are the notable qualities of an organization that can develop and implement Online Education.

In the case of UPOU, the study reveals that it has the capacity to deliver capacity development programs, including those for public servants, such as the Master of Public Management Program. It has a clear vision, mission and goals and has the mandate to offer online education. It is also mandated by law to assist other institutions on how to develop and implement online programs and courses. It also achieves its outcomes in the areas of teaching, research, training and public service. The UPOU has the support of its stakeholders and is able to anticipate change as evidenced by its performance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, it is recommended that UPOU has to improve its human resources by hiring more faculty members and staff to respond to the increasing demand in its programs. It has also to improve its partnership with different stakeholders. Having lecturers from different sectors such as government and non-government organizations also provide good inputs to the quality of the Programs.

Having a good branding of quality education is also important for an organization. Organizations offering Online Education should develop their reputation to gain the trust of online learners and stakeholders. This could also address the misconceptions and biases against Online Education.

## **8. Is Online Education an effective Capacity Development Tool for Public Servants?**

Going back to the main question of the thesis, the study concludes that Online Education programs can contribute to capacity development. It is considered to be an effective tool to develop the capacities of public servants. The main reason for learners enrolling in the Online Program is due to its “flexibility.” This means that public servants can study anytime and anywhere which can help them in their career and professional growth.

## **9. Achievement of Learning Outcomes**

In terms of learning outcomes, the research reveals that the MPM Program can develop the relevant knowledge and skills of public servants based on the positive responses of the students on the learning outcomes. Both the students and key informants agree that the MPM Program is able: to a) raise awareness on public management; b) enhanced/New Skills related to the job as public servant; c) improve Teamwork in the office; d) foster Coalition and Networks with other agencies; e) formulate a Policy/Strategy; and f) Implement a Policy/Strategy.

## **10. On the Achievement of Learning Competencies**

Graduates of the MPM program also gained the competencies that are expected from them, making Online Education an effective tool for capacity development. The study utilized the internationally accepted NASPAA Core Competencies of graduates of a Master's Degree in Public Administration for 2019. They include: a) lead and manage in public governance; b) participate in and contribute to the policy process; c) analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions; d) articulate and apply a public service perspective; e) communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry.

## **11. On Career Mobility**

With regard to career mobility, there is also a high recognition of the MPM Program as evidenced by the promotion of the graduates of the Program and also the ability to transfer to a different office. Further, the study also shows that MPM students and graduates can apply what they have learned from Program.

## **12. Additional Skills Learned from the Online Program**

Another important finding from the research reveals that students and graduates have learned other skills such as time management and working with peers. They developed the skills on how to communicate and collaborate online which are necessary skills in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## **13. Recommendations to Address the Challenges of Online Education in the Philippines**

In the Philippines, although some policies related to Online Education are already in place, it is important to improve its implementation and include appropriate resources to support it to ensure that organizations offering Online Education have quality programs and courses.

The government should continue to improve its ICT infrastructure to provide electricity and fast internet connectivity not only in the urban areas but in all parts of the

country. Being an archipelago and a country that is vulnerable to natural and human made disasters, ICT infrastructure is very important. This will also enable Online Education to be accessible to everyone. Teachers and IT staff should also be provided continuous training on online education.

For the UPOU as an ODeL institution, it should maximize its role in online education and requests for additional faculty and staff complement to be able to do its task more effectively and efficiently. It should continue to train its teachers/lecturers to improve the programs being offered and partner with various stakeholders including the industries. The UPOU should also be able to track its students, whether they dropped out due to various reasons and whether they are able to apply what they learned from UPOU.

For the MPM Program, several recommendations were also provided by the research participants and can be addressed through a Program Review. It also included faculty-related recommendations including the hiring of new faculty members as well as providing them continuous training and assistance. For student related concerns, it was suggested that to conduct a study to determine how MPM graduates utilize what they learned in the real world. This is already addressed by this study. The MPM Program should also embark on a Program promotion to enable interested individuals and institutions to learn more about it.

### **C. Implications to Online Education**

Online Education has been continuously evolving due to rapid technological advancements. However, countries especially in low to medium income economies still need to catch up in the adoption of online education. The COVID-19 pandemic has also exposed the challenges for teachers, academic staff and students in the use of ICT in education. Moreover, the ICT infrastructure is limited as well as access to technology was seen to be a challenge since it could also be expensive.

The study recognizes that governments can facilitate the use of Online Education. The political, socio-economic and cultural context should be taken into consideration. The presence of sound policies related to Online education are important since they provide the guidelines and regulations on how to implement it efficiently and effectively.

It is also important to determine the state of digitalization of its higher educational institutions so that the country is able to identify the interventions needed such as resources and guidelines. A mechanism to ensure the quality of Online Programs and courses should also be instituted.

The future of education includes the development and implementation of microlearning courses for reskilling and up-skilling and the use of immersive technologies. Thus, governments should be able to anticipate and provide guidelines for the recognition of these courses and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

The study further reiterates the need for a reliable and affordable access ICT infrastructure. The quality of online learning materials and online activities rely on the availability of good internet connectivity. Moreover, the government should also recognize the advantages in using ICT in education to lessen negative impressions.

The study also highlights the importance of organizational capacity in developing and implementing online programs and courses. It is important to engage the partners and develop partnerships with several organizations. Moreover, it should have efficient financial management and must be able to respond immediately to challenges such as the calamities, disasters and pandemic.

## **D. Implications to Capacity Development**

Online Education contributes to Capacity Development and is a very important approach and strategy to achieve development outcomes. Although several studies have been conducted on capacity development, very little studies have been done to discuss Online Education as a capacity development tool.

This study provides an in-depth study on the contributions of Online Education as a capacity development strategy. It also provides evidence that given an enabling environment and organizational capacity, Online Education can become the new normal for capacity development. Individual capacities and competencies are developed and applied in the real world; providing flexibility to learners wherein they can study at their own pace and time.

Thus, it is also important to continuously develop the capacity of educators or teachers to enable them to implement Online Education effectively.

## **E. Implications to Online Education for Public Servants**

The research provides an in-depth study on the use of Online Education as a capacity development tool for public servants. Although several studies have been done on capacity development for public servants, they focused mostly on certain courses and a description on how it was designed and implemented.

This study supports the effectiveness of Online Education, and it can be used for capacity development of public servants. They play an important role in implementing policies, programs, and projects in the country. They are considered as frontliners in the achievement of sustainable development goals (SDGs). However, continuous training and education should be available to them given the nature of their work.

The findings of the study will enable organizations to develop and implement more online capacity development programs for public servants to enable them to perform their jobs efficiently and effectively.

## **F. Contributions of the Study**

The study contributes to the literature on Online Education, Capacity Development, and competencies of public servants. Moreover, it also provides a framework on how capacities of institutions involved in Online Education can be assessed and how to determine if competencies of public servants are developed.

One of the apprehensions in using Online Education as a capacity development tool is the lack of evidence presented of their effectiveness. There is no comprehensive study about outcomes-based learning as well as competencies-based learning using Online Education for public servants. Thus, the traditional mode of doing on-site training has always been considered as the effective mode of Capacity Development. This study, therefore, provides a definite answer that Online Education is effective.

It presents a comprehensive study of Capacity Development for public servants and the framework can be utilized for any Program or course that caters to the sector. The learners are able to utilize what they learn from the Program and at the same time gain the relevant competencies in doing their jobs.

Moreover, this study can also be used to provide rationale in developing Online Programs and courses for public servants. It also serves as an input to the Technical Panel of Public Administration in the Philippines in drafting the Roadmap to Public Administration and Governance education in the Philippines.

At the level of the Program, the results are an important document in doing the Program Review. It is also useful as a basis in developing and offering microlearning courses and Massive Open Online Courses.

## **G. Limitations and recommendations for further research**



The scope of the study is limited to the Philippines which is a middle-income country. Hence, its context is different in terms of ICT infrastructure, political and socio-economic and cultural aspects.

The interview of key informants and surveys for MPM students and alumni were also conducted during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Hence, this could have affected the number of respondents that completed the surveys. The study did not also attempt to gather information on the reason for dropping out from the Program simply because it focused on the achievement of learning outcomes and competencies gained by the students.

Moreover, the University of the Philippines Open University is a state-funded and premier University in the Philippines, hence it has an established reputation or brand of providing quality education. It does not rely on profits to operate. It is part of a bigger system that follows certain procedures which makes it accountable but also inflexible in some aspects. Thus, its context is also different compared to other state funded and private universities.

The MPM Program which is the focus of the study is also limited to graduate students who are already working and can apply what they are learning immediately. In the Philippines, the MPM is the only Program that is offered fully online in the entire country. It is often referred to as a “working model” of online public administration and governance education due to its nature. Hence, a comparative study is not yet possible.

However, a similar study should also be done in organizations offering similar programs at the residential mode.

Finally, this study just delved into a Degree Program. It would also be interesting to do similar studies on short online courses, MOOCs and other blended learning programs to strengthen further the argument on the effectiveness of Online Education for Public Servants.

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# Annexes

## Annex A: Interview Guide for Key Informants

Dear Colleagues:

Good Day!

I am currently doing my thesis entitled: “Capacity Development for Public Servants through Online Education: The Case of the MPM Program of the UPOU” at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC) in Barcelona, Spain. One of the objectives of the research is to find out the effectiveness of online education for capacity development. As such, the study will look into the case of the UP Open University as an institution delivering online courses for capacity development for public servants.

In this connection, I would like to know your perceptions regarding this topic. I hope that your answers will be able to contribute to the discipline of Open and Distance e-Learning (ODeL), capacity development and public administration and governance/education.

Any information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality. I hope you will also allow me to send you a follow-up clarification regarding your answers.

If you have any further questions, please contact me: [juvylizette.gervacio@upou.edu.ph](mailto:juvylizette.gervacio@upou.edu.ph).

Thank you.

### I. Profile

1. Name (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_
2. Position: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Sex: Male\_\_ Female \_\_
4. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
5. No. of Years in the current position: \_\_\_\_\_
6. No. of years with UPOU: \_\_\_\_\_
7. No. of years of experience in Open and Distance e-Learning: \_\_\_\_\_

### II. Perceptions on the effectiveness of UPOU as an ODeL provider

8. Otoo, et. al. (2009) proposes the Capacity Development Results Framework to assess the effectiveness of organizations to implement capacity developing programs. The following statements indicate the various aspects of an organization. Please rate your perception on the following statements and explain your rating.

1 – strongly disagree; 2 – disagree, 3 – undecided; 4 – agree; 5 – strongly agree.

<b>Indicators of Organizational Effectiveness</b>	<b>Rating</b>
<p>a. Clarity of mission, vision and goals The UPOU has a clear vision, mission and goals aligned to what it wants to achieve; and its mandate is recognized by relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>Please explain your rating:</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>
<p>b. Achievement of outcomes The UPOU achieves its functions in teaching, research, extension and public service. It develops educational resources, delivers quality teaching and learning programs, conducts research, public service and provides faculty/staff and student support.</p> <p>Please explain your rating:</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>
<p>c. Financial viability The UPOU secures its finances to operate and has sound financial management.</p> <p>Please explain your rating:</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>
<p>d. Support of stakeholders The UPOU seeks the support of stakeholders and conducts regular consultations with them.</p> <p>Please explain your rating:</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>
<p>e. Adaptability in anticipating change The UPOU monitors the internal and external environment to encourage innovation, manage knowledge and adapt to new technologies.</p> <p>Please explain your rating:</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>

### III. Factors Affecting Online education

9. What do you think are the external factors (political-socio-economic and cultural factors) that facilitate or hinder the effectiveness of online education for capacity development in the Philippines?

Facilitating Factors (e.g. presence of policies, access to internet, etc.):

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Hindering Factors (e.g. lack of IT infrastructure, internet is costly, etc.):

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#### **IV. Benefits and challenges of Online Education in the Philippines**

10. What do you think are the benefits and challenges of online education in the Philippines? (e.g. can study at own pace and time, poor internet connection, etc.)

Benefits: \_\_\_\_\_

Challenges: \_\_\_\_\_

11. As an administrator, what do you think are the strengths and challenges of UPOU as an OdeL institution offering capacity development programs (e.g. finance, infrastructure, human resources, etc.)?

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_

Challenges: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **V. Recommendations**

12. Please give three recommendations that will address the challenges of online education in the Philippines?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

13. Please give three recommendations for UPOU to address the challenges in the implementation of online education for capacity development?

1. \_\_\_\_\_



2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

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## **Annex B: Interview Guide for the MPM Program Stakeholders**

Dear Colleagues:

Good Day!

I am currently doing my thesis entitled: “Capacity Development for Public Servants through Online Education: The Case of the MPM Program of the UPOU” at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC) in Barcelona, Spain. One of the objectives of the research is to find out the effectiveness of online education for capacity development. As such, the study will look into the case of the UP Open University as an institution delivering online courses for capacity development for public servants.

In this connection, I would like to know your perceptions regarding this topic. I hope that your answers will be able to contribute to the discipline of Open and Distance e-Learning (OdeL), capacity development and public administration and governance/education.

Any information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality. I hope you will also allow me to send you a follow-up clarification regarding your answers.

If you have any further questions, please contact me: [juvylizette.gervacio@upou.edu.ph](mailto:juvylizette.gervacio@upou.edu.ph).

Thank you.

**I. Profile**

1. Name (optional): \_\_\_\_\_
2. MPM Program Involvement:  
 As Faculty-in-charge  As course writer  Others (specify, e.g, as Program Chair)
3. Sex: Male  Female
4. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Office:  Academe  Government  Non-government Organization  Others(pls specify)
6. Position in the current Office: \_\_\_\_\_
7. No. of Years with UPOU: \_\_\_\_\_
8. No. of year years of experience in Open and Distance e-learning: \_\_\_\_\_

**II. Perceptions on the effectiveness of the UPOU and MPM Program in implementing Open and Distance e-Learning (ODeL)**

9. Otoo, et. al. (2009) proposes the Capacity Development Results Framework to assess the effectiveness of organizations to implement capacity developing programs. The following statements indicate the various aspects of an organization. Please rate your perception on the following statements and explain your answer.

The following statements are based on Otoo, et. al.'s indicators of organizational effectiveness. Please rate your perception on the following statements and explain your rating.

1 – strongly disagree; 2 – disagree, 3 – undecided; 4 – agree; 5 – strongly agree.

Indicators of Organizational Effectiveness	Rating
<p>a. Clarity of mission, mission and goals                      The UPOU and the MPM Program have a clear mission, vision and goals and are recognized by the stakeholders.</p> <p>Please explain your rating:</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>
<p>b. Achievement of outcomes                      The UPOU and the MPM Program achieve its outcomes in the areas of teaching, research, extension and public service. It also develops its educational resources and orients its faculty members.</p> <p>Please explain your rating:</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>
<p>c. Financial viability                      The UPOU and the MPM Program are able to utilize the budget from the University.</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>

Please explain your rating:	
<p>d. Support of stakeholders</p> <p>The UPOU and the MPM Program have the support of stakeholders and collaborate with them.</p> <p>Please explain your rating:</p>	1 2 3 4 5
<p>e. Adaptability in anticipating change</p> <p>The UPOU and the MPM Program monitor the internal and external environment to encourage innovation, manage knowledge and adapt to new technologies</p> <p>Please explain your rating:</p>	1 2 3 4 5

### III. Learning Outcomes of the MPM Program

10. The following items are based on Otoo, et. al.'s indicators of learning outcomes of capacity development programs. Please rate your perception on the following learning outcomes of the MPM Program and explain your rating .

1 – strongly disagree; 2 – disagree, 3 – undecided; 4 – agree; 5 – strongly agree.

<b>Learning Outcomes of the MPM Program</b>	<b>Rating</b>
<p>A. Raised awareness on public management</p> <p>Please explain your rating:</p>	1 2 3 4 5
<p>B. Enhanced skills related to public management</p> <p>Please explain your rating:</p>	1 2 3 4 5
<p>C. Improved consensus and teamwork</p> <p>Please explain your rating:</p>	1 2 3 4 5
<p>D. Fostered networks</p>	1 2 3 4 5

Please explain your rating:	
E. Formulated policy/strategy	1 2 3 4 5
Please explain your rating:	
F. Implemented strategy/plan	1 2 3 4 5
Additional comments on my answers:	
Please explain your rating:	

#### IV. Competencies Gained from the MPM Program

11. The following items are indicators of competencies for the MPM Program based on the National Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration and Brittany Haupt, Naim Kapucu & Qian Hu (2017). Please rate your perception on the competencies below and explain your rating.

1 – strongly disagree; 2 – disagree, 3 – undecided; 4 – agree; 5 – strongly agree.

Competencies of MPM Graduates	Rating
a. Lead and manage in public governance	1 2 3 4 5
Please explain your rating:	
b. Participate in and contribute to the policy process	1 2 3 4 5
Please explain your rating:	
c. Analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions	1 2 3 4 5
Please explain your rating:	
d. Articulate and apply a public service perspective	1 2 3 4 5

Please explain your rating:	
e. Communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry	1 2 3 4 5
Please explain your rating:	

**V. Factors Affecting Online education in the Philippines**

12. What do you think are the external factors (political-socio-economic and cultural factors) that facilitate or hinder the effectiveness of UPOU's MPM program in the Philippines?

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Facilitating Factors (e.g. presence of policies, access to internet, etc.):

---

Hindering Factors (e.g. lack of IT infrastructure, internet is costly, etc.):

---

**VI. Strengths/Challenges of UPOU as an ODeL Institution**

13. As a Faculty-in-Charge (FIC) /course writer, what do you think are the strengths and challenges of UPOU as an ODeL institution offering capacity development programs for public servants?

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_

Challenges: \_\_\_\_\_

14. What do you think are the benefits and challenges of UPOU's MPM Online Program for public servants in the Philippines? (e.g. can study at their own pace and time, poor internet connection, etc.)

Benefits: \_\_\_\_\_

Challenges: \_\_\_\_\_

## **VII. Recommendations**

15. Please give three recommendations for UPOU to address the challenges in the implementation of online education?

---

16. Please give three recommendations to improve the implementation of the MPM program?

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Thank you very much for your cooperation!

# Annex C: Online Survey for Master of Public Management Students

Dear survey validations experts,

This is the file version of the survey designed for the participants. It is also available here:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe6wKH5f2JZtNR1HlItm3kKYOZ33dUD36Otj\\_W\\_f2fvaXsJ9-Q/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe6wKH5f2JZtNR1HlItm3kKYOZ33dUD36Otj_W_f2fvaXsJ9-Q/viewform)

Dear all,

I hope you and your family are safe.

I am Juvy Lizette M. Gervacio, your MPM Program Chair. Currently, I am doing my thesis entitled: "Capacity Development for Public Servants through Online Education: The Case of the MPM Program of the UPOU" at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC) in Barcelona, Spain. One of the objectives of the research is to determine if the learning outcomes of the MPM Program as an online tool for capacity development is being achieved.

In this connection, I would like to know your perceptions regarding this topic. I hope that your answers will be able to contribute to the discipline of Open and Distance e-Learning (OdeL), capacity development and public administration and governance/education.

Any information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality. If you have any further questions, please contact me: [juvylizette.gervacio@upou.edu.ph](mailto:juvylizette.gervacio@upou.edu.ph).

The results of the study will also be shared to everyone who is interested.

Thank you.

## I. Profile

1. Name: (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

2. Number of semesters with the MPM Program

- 1 – 2
- 3 – 4
- 5 – 6
- Preparing for the comprehensive exam
- Others (on Leave of absence, etc.)

3. Age:

- 21-30

- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60
- 61 and above

4. Sex:

- M
- F

5. Civil Status:

- Married
- Single
- Widowed/Widower/Separated

6. Current Position at Work:

- Managerial
- Technical
- Administrative/Clerical
- Front-liners
- Others (please specify:) \_\_\_\_\_

7. Agency/Office:

- National Government
- Local Government Unit
- Government Owned and Controlled Corporations (e.g.HIGC, GSIS, NAPOCOR)
- Non-Government Organizations
- Private/Business
- Others (pls. specify. Academe, International Organizations, Overseas Filipino Worker, etc.)

8. Address/location of Office:

- Metro Manila
- Luzon
- Visayas
- Mindanao
- Overseas (please specify \_ Asia, Africa, Europe, US, Middle East, etc.)

**II. Program Information**

9. Where did you get the information about UPOU's MPM Program? Please check all that apply.



- Website
- Brochure
- Social media
- Co-workers
- Friends
- Others: pls. specify \_\_\_\_\_

10. Why did you decide to enroll in UPOU's Online MPM Program? Please check all that apply.

- Accessibility
- Flexibility
- Personal reasons and/or nature of work
- Affordability
- For personal growth/advancement
- Others (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

### III. Learning Outcomes

11. The following statements are based on Otoo, et. al.'s indicators of learning outcomes of a capacity development program which refers to the MPM. Please rate your perception on the following learning outcomes and explain your answer.

1 – strongly disagree; 2 – disagree, 3 – undecided; 4 – agree; 5 – strongly agree.

Learning Outcomes	Rating
<p>A. Raised awareness</p> <p>1. I have a better understanding of public management.</p> <p>2. I have a more positive attitude as a public servant.</p> <p>3. I am more confident about my job as a public servant.</p> <p>4. I am more motivated as a public servant.</p> <p>Please explain your rating:</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p>
<p>B. Enhanced skills</p> <p>1. I have acquired new skills/knowledge related to public management.</p> <p>2. I have used the new skills/knowledge in my work.</p> <p>Please explain your rating:</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p>
<p>C. Improved consensus and teamwork</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>

<p>1. I have initiated/expanded a participatory process in my work as a public servant.</p> <p>2. I have increased/improved my collaboration activities in my work.</p> <p>Please explain your rating:</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>
<p>D. Fostered networks</p> <p>1. I have initiated/created Informal Networks and Formal partnerships/coalitions with other sectors.</p> <p>Please explain your rating:</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p>
<p>E. Formulated policy/strategy</p> <p>1. I am involved in the civil society/private sector in the policy/strategy formulation.</p> <p>2. I designed a monitoring and evaluation plan.</p> <p>3. I contributed in policy/reform/strategy to decision makers.</p> <p>Please explain your rating:</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p>
<p>F. Implemented strategy/plan</p> <p>1. I have implemented a strategy or a plan.</p> <p>2. I have improved my implementation know-how.</p> <p>Please explain your rating:</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p>

12. Aside from these learning outcomes, what skills have you learned by studying Online? (e.g. better time management, use of the internet, etc.)

---

13. As a MPM student, are you able to apply what you are learning in your current job?

Yes  No

13. a.If yes, in what way? \_\_\_\_\_

13.b. If no, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

**IV. Benefits and Challenges of Online Education for Public Servants**

14. As an online learner, what do you think are the benefits and challenges of online education for public servants? Please rate your perception on the following statements and explain your answer.

1 – strongly disagree; 2 – disagree, 3 – undecided; 4 – agree; 5 – strongly agree.

<b>A. Benefits</b>	<b>Rating</b>
1. I can learn anytime and anywhere.	1 2 3 4 5
2. I learn how to manage my time.	1 2 3 4 5
3. I learn the value of self-discipline.	1 2 3 4 5
4. My computer and internet skills are enhanced.	1 2 3 4 5
5. I learn how to communicate online.	1 2 3 4 5
6. I learn how to collaborate online.	1 2 3 4 5
7. Others (ps. specify)	1 2 3 4 5
Comments on the benefits of online education for public servants.	
<b>B. Challenges</b>	1 2 3 4 5
1. The absence of a reliable electrical connection.	1 2 3 4 5
2. There is no computer or gadget for online education.	1 2 3 4 5
3. There is a lack of access to the internet.	1 2 3 4 5
4. The cost of internet connection is high.	1 2 3 4 5
5. The enrollment fee is high.	1 2 3 4 5
6. The quality of online course materials is poor.	1 2 3 4 5
7. The quality of online teaching and learning is poor.	1 2 3 4 5
8. The quality of student support is poor.	1 2 3 4 5
9. Others (PIs specify)	1 2 3 4 5
Comments on the challenges of online education for public servants.	

**V. Recommendations on the MPM Program**

15. What are your recommendations to improve the MPM Program?

\_\_\_\_\_

16. Would you recommend the online MPM Program to other people?

Yes  No

Why: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your cooperation!

## **Annex D: Online Survey for MPM Alumni**

Dear all,

Good day!

It has been some time since you graduated from UPOU and I would like to request for your cooperation by participating in this survey and at the same time reflect on your experiences in the MPM Program.

I am Juvy Lizette M. Gervacio, the MPM Program Chair. I am currently doing my thesis entitled: “Capacity Development for Public Servants through Online Education: The Case of the MPM Program of the UPOU” at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC) in Barcelona, Spain. One of the objectives on my research is to establish the competencies that were achieved by the graduates of the online MPM Program

In this connection, I would like to know your perceptions regarding this topic. I hope that your answers will be able to contribute to the discipline of Open and Distance e-Learning (OdeL), capacity development and public administration and governance/education.

Any information provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality. If you have any further questions, please contact me: [juvylizette.gervacio@upou.edu.ph](mailto:juvylizette.gervacio@upou.edu.ph).

The results of the study will also be shared to everyone who is interested.

Thank you.

### **I. Profile**

1. Name: (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_
2. Year Graduated from the MPM Program: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Area of Specialization:  Public Policy and Program Administration  
 Local Government and Regional Administration  
 Voluntary Sector Management
4. Age:

- 21-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60
- 61 and above

4. Sex:

- M
- F

5. Civil Status:

- Married
- Single
- Widow/Separated

6. Current Position in the Office: \_\_\_\_\_

- Managerial
- Technical
- Administrative/Clerical
- Front-liners

7. Agency/Office: \_\_\_\_\_

- National Government
- Local Government Units
- Government Owned and Controlled Corporations (HGC, GSIS, NAPOCOR)
- Non-Government Organizations
- Private/Business
- Others (Academe, International Organizations)

8. Address/location of Office:

- Metro Manila
- Luzon
- Visayas
- Mindanao
- Overseas (please specify \_ Asia, Africa, Europe, US, Middle East, etc. \_\_\_\_\_)

9. Were you promoted after finishing the MPM Program?

\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

10. Did you transfer to another Office after you finished the MPM Program?

Yes  No

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Are you able to apply what you have learned from the MPM Program in your current job?

Yes  No

If Yes, in what way? \_\_\_\_\_

If no, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

## II. Program Information

12. Where did you get the information about UPOU's MPM Program? Please check all that apply.

- Website
- Brochure
- Social media
- Co-workers
- Friends
- Others: pls. specify \_\_\_\_\_

13. Why did you decide to enroll in UPOU's MPM Program? Please check all that apply.

- Accessibility
- Flexibility
- Personal reasons and/or nature of work
- Affordability
- For personal growth/advancement
- Others (please specify)

## III. Competencies Gained from the MPM Program

14. The following statements are based on the National Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration and Brittany Haupt, Naim Kapucu & Qian Hu (2017) indicators of competencies for the MPM Program. Please rate your perception on the following statements and explain your answer.

1 – strongly disagree; 2 – disagree, 3 – undecided; 4 – agree; 5 – strongly agree.

Core Competencies	Sub-Competencies	Rating
-------------------	------------------	--------

<p>a. Lead and manage in public governance</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I am an expert in public management.</li> <li>2. I am able to lead and manage within multiple networks of stakeholders.</li> <li>3. I reinforce democratic principles and practices.</li> <li>4. I produce consensus or consent among diverse stakeholders.</li> <li>5. I have the skills and power of leadership and utilize principles of public management.</li> </ol> <p>Please explain your rating:</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p>
<p>b. Participate in and contribute to the policy process</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I have the capacity to analyze political theory, policy process, and implementation.</li> <li>2. I analyze policy issues/problems using different methodologies.</li> <li>3. I know how to identify, evaluate, and communicate evidence-based policy.</li> <li>4. I know how to design policy-implementation methodology and actively engage.</li> </ol> <p>Please explain your rating:</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p>
<p>c. Analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, and make decisions</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I have expertise in techniques used in managing government operations.</li> <li>2. I know how to appraise the concepts of social science research methods, statistical analysis/techniques; apply the skills.</li> <li>3. I can network/collaborate on a solution to complex problems.</li> <li>4. I know how to identify, evaluate, and model best practices.</li> <li>5. I have professional capacity in basic skills.</li> </ol> <p>Please explain your rating:</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p>
<p>d. Articulate and apply a public service perspective</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I respect and demonstrate methods for authentic interaction.</li> <li>2. I value and demonstrate commitment to professionalism and integrity in serving the public.</li> <li>3. I communicate public interest based on ethical reasoning and democratic participation.</li> <li>4. I critique instrumental reasoning in order to promote social and economic equity and justice.</li> <li>5. I incorporate and value principles of democracy,</li> </ol>	<p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>1 2 3 4 5</p>

	public transparency, and consensus building. Please explain your rating:	1 2 3 4 5
e. Communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry	1. I incorporate various communication tools and strategies in the management of public organizations. 2. I incorporate major concepts, skills, processes, and policies in public service management. 3. I have cultural competency and appreciation of diversity for collaborating. 4. I know how to negotiate interest-based resolutions with stakeholders experiencing conflict/ 5. I critique existing partnerships and promote engagement and interaction with citizens, nonprofit organizations, and other entities. Please explain your rating:	1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5 1 2 3 4 5

15. Aside from these core competencies, what else have you learned from studying through Online Education (e.g. time management, use of the internet, etc.)

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#### IV. Benefits and Challenges of Online Education for Public Servants

16. Having been an online learner, what do you think are the benefits and challenges of online education for public servants? Please rate your perception on the following statements and explain your answer.

1 – strongly disagree; 2 – disagree; 3 – undecided; 4 – agree; 5 – strongly agree.

Benefits	Rating
1. I can learn anytime and anywhere.	1 2 3 4 5
2. I learn how to manage my time.	1 2 3 4 5
3. I learn the value of self-discipline.	1 2 3 4 5
4. My computer and internet skills are enhanced.	1 2 3 4 5
5. I learn how to communicate online.	1 2 3 4 5
6. I learn how to collaborate online.	1 2 3 4 5



7. Others (ps. specify)	1	2	3	4	5
Comments on the benefits of online education for public servants.					
<b>Challenges</b>	1	2	3	4	5
1. The absence of a reliable electrical connection.	1	2	3	4	5
2. There is no computer or gadget for online education.	1	2	3	4	5
3. There is a lack of access to the internet.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The cost of internet connection is high.	1	2	3	4	5
5. The enrolment fee is high.	1	2	3	4	5
6. The quality of online course materials is poor.	1	2	3	4	5
7. The quality of online teaching and learning is poor.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The quality of student support is poor.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Others (Pls specify)	1	2	3	4	5
Comments on the challenges of online education for public servants.					

#### V. Recommendations on the MPM Program

17. What are your recommendations to improve the MPM Program?

---

18. Would you recommend the online MPM Program to other people?

Yes  No

Why: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your cooperation!

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