

Asynchronous Online Classes through the Lenses of Students' Experiences: Opportunities, Drawbacks and Proposed Measures

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Abstract

The rise of the pandemic resulted in drastic changes in major industries in the country, one of which is the field of education. Major universities and colleges changed the educational landscape from face-to-face to online to provide continuity of learning lockdowns where the mass gathering is not allowed. To respond to the needs of learners, certain HEIs in the country have implemented proactive policies for continuing education. This abrupt change forced students to adapt to the new platform. This study aimed to gain a deeper understanding of students' real-life experiences with online learning. A purposive sampling was used, to identify twenty Holy Name University college students serving as participants. This research utilized a qualitative research design. Data was gathered through a semi-structured interview guide and were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) Thematic Analysis. Results show that students were confronted with many challenges in carrying out their tasks and activities. Among others, internet connectivity and low-specification devices hinder them from accomplishing tasks on time. They also found it challenging to adapt to the new platform of lesson delivery. Despite this situation, students proved to be flexible enough to use strategies to help address the difficulties they encountered. In addition, results show that teachers' teaching presence is exceptionally significant in the classroom and even more so in online learning classes.

Keywords: students' experiences, online asynchronous classes, drawbacks, opportunities, proposed measures, thematic analysis

1. Introduction

The pandemic spread in 2019 caused significant changes in major industries throughout the country, including education. Major universities and colleges shifted the educational landscape from face-to-face learning to an online platform to provide continuity of learning lockdowns where the mass gathering is not permitted. Certain HEIs in the country have implemented proactive policies for continuing education despite the closure to respond to the needs of learners, particularly the 3.5 million tertiary-level students enrolled in approximately 2,400 HEIs (Higher Education Institutions). These policies include modified forms of online learning designed to help students learn more effectively. Online learning can take the form of synchronous, real-time lectures and time-based outcomes assessments or asynchronous, delayed-time activities such as pre-recorded video lectures and time-independent reviews (Oztok et al., 2013)

Students, technology, and web-based learning are all evolving. When technological advancements in the internet and computer software grow, new progressions for online education are required. The goal is to create a mobile-friendly visual framework that allows for comprehensive viewing in all online environments. Mobile device proliferation may usher in a new era of online education. In this approach, professors and students can

communicate visibly by utilizing collaboration technologies. Collaborative technologies have the potential to make information more accessible, resulting in new online learning methods. Cook et al. (2014)

Furthermore, scholars agree that online education promotes students' critical thinking skills, deep learning, collaborative learning, and problem-solving abilities (Ascough, 2002; Rossie, 2000 & Briggs, 1999). They also argue that this mode requires less investment in curricula and improves learners' marketability in technological skills, as asserted in today's learning environment. However, most Filipinos struggle to connect to the internet, let alone have the technical ability to deal with this educational trend.

Students who study in a positive learning environment are more motivated and engaged and have a higher overall ability to learn. The perspective of the learners and their difficulties in their learning environment plays a vital role in learning, which the research seeks to uncover to improve the current setup. In this light, the researchers wish to delve deeper into the subjective viewpoints of the learners in order to make a substantive contribution to the gap in this current setup by elaborately stating their lived experiences with online asynchronous classes. This study's results may benefit the majority, letting stakeholders such as policymakers, universities, colleges, and professors know their students' learning experiences to improve methodologies and craft policies.

Theoretical Background

This study examines the lived experiences of students in online asynchronous classes. Particular emphasis is placed on course design in open and distance learning contexts and pertinent research on online teaching in asynchronous higher education. Given the thesis's focus, studies on the experience of teaching online from the perspective of university teachers, including studies on conceptions of and approaches to teaching online, design for/in online learning, and practitioner development in teaching online, are of particular interest to this literature review.

Phenomenological Theory. Phenomenology offers researchers a theoretical framework for comprehending phenomena at the subjective reality level. This philosophical framework or theory of personal reality is likely to be crucial in understanding the actor or subject concerning a particular event or phenomenon in his or her life. In a phenomenological method of inquiry, the researcher used interviews, observations, and discussions as data collection strategies. Phenomenology has philosophical and methodological stances; to that end, it must be understood historically and philosophically.

Phenomenological approaches are widely used in academic consumer research to develop a deeper understanding of complex issues that are not readily apparent in immediate responses (Cova & Elliot, 2008; Goulding, 2005). These approaches are distinguished by the underlying holistic psychological understanding of human beings as being situated in the social-cultural milieu; which leads to a more nuanced understanding of individuals' experiences, which can then be used to elucidate deeper issues concerning consumer motivations and experiences (Thompson, William, & Howard, 1989). These approaches seek to investigate a specific phenomenon related to consumer situations or experiences by inquiring about the consumers' lifeworld experiences as they exist in a social-cultural space shaped by language, social belief systems, and values. As a result, this theory supports students' experiences in asynchronous online classes.

Self-Determination Theory. "Self-determination theory," developed by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan (2006), answers the question, "Why do people do what they do?" According to this theory, there are two types of motivations, extrinsic and intrinsic. Extrinsic motivation is derived from external sources such as rewards. Intrinsic motivation, on the other hand, comes from within. These motivations may stem from the enjoyment of participating in a particular activity or from any other innate factors. In today's learning environment, motivation is critical to students' learning. Students use a variety of motivations to succeed in their classes, which awakens their innate curiosity and encourages them to learn whenever possible. As a

result, this theory supports the measures proposed by students to overcome their various challenges in asynchronous online classes.

Sanford's Challenge and Support Theory. Many learning experiences combine challenges and support. According to Sanford (1966), college students go through significant personal growth and development, often influenced by the college environment. Sanford believed that a student's growth and development required a balance of challenge and support. As a result, each student needs to be appropriately challenged and supported. In an online setting, students are introduced to novel methodologies, and learning facilitators are no longer physically present but rather via a virtual connection. Indeed, this theory supports students' difficulties in asynchronous online classes.

Transactional Distance Theory. Transactional Distance Theory (TDT) is a distance learning educational theory that defines the fundamental concepts. Distance education is defined as the separation of teachers and students (Moore, 2007). Transactional distance is controlled and managed by three interconnected factors: (1) the program structure; (2) the dialogue between the teacher and the learner; and (3) the learners' autonomy.

Moore (2007) explained that these three factors were derived from an examination of (1) the curriculum of the distance learning program, (2) communication between teachers and learners, and (3) the role of learners in determining what, how, and how much to learn. On the other hand, the inverse relationship between structure and dialogue is Moore's transactional distance theory's most appealing feature. In other words, as the structure expands, so does the transactional distance. Conversely, transactional distance decreases as dialogue increases. This hypothesis has been confirmed by several studies (Saba, 1988; Saba & Shearer, 1994).

A third variable, learner autonomy, further complicates the theory because it is unclear whether it represents learner autonomy or autonomy associated with learning. As a result, this theory can help explain students' experiences and challenges, leading to various proposed measures for taking online classes. It highlights practical ways to carry out lessons in the new learning mode.

This research is also supported by RA 10650 and DepEd Order No. 18 s.2020, also known as the Open Distance Learning Act, which increases access to educational services by institutionalizing and funding open distance learning at the tertiary level. Section 2 declares the policy of the State to expand and further democratize access to quality tertiary education by promoting and implementing open learning as a philosophy of access to educational services, as well as the use of distance education as an appropriate, efficient, and effective system of delivering quality educational services in the country.

Most governments have implemented quarantine protocols and temporarily closed their educational institutions to prevent the spread of COVID-19, which has infected millions of people worldwide and caused deaths. As a result, over a billion students worldwide have been impacted. Over 28 million Filipino students at all academic levels are among those who must remain at home and follow the Philippine government's quarantine measures (UNESCO, 2020).

Furthermore, according to Bagayas (2020), increasing the student workload increases their burden. It contradicts the purpose of the lockdown, which is to assist their families in preparing for and adjusting to the situation at hand. As a result, the lack of conducive learning environments at home and the effectiveness of online lectures are significant factors.

According to experts, as remote learning becomes more prevalent over time, the mental, emotional, and academic consequences will be difficult to manage (Burke, 2020). According to Amy Bintliff (2020), a mismatch between expectation and reality can be difficult for students. Part of this is because essential milestones, such as graduation, are no longer possible. Hence, traditional-age students may struggle with the loss of specific coming-of-age experiences uniquely.

Nonetheless, Berry and Hughes (2020) compared graduate students' online experiences with the qualitative research method to traditional face-to-face teaching. The study evaluated students' online learning experiences in the context of work and life balance. Online learning has emerged as having advantages such as flexibility and autonomy over the limitations of isolation and time lags.

Online education is primarily technological, utilizing information and communication technology (ICT) to enable humans to interact across temporal and spatial boundaries. Because of the nature of online education, educators worldwide have had to learn how to use emerging technology in ways that differ from how we think of using developing technology in the traditional classroom (Oliveira et al., 2019). The growth rate of online learning can be attributed to the majority of higher education institutions' adoption and use of technology as a means of instructional delivery, rising tuition costs, and an evolving workforce seeking lifelong learning opportunities (Allen & Seaman, 2019).

Furthermore, Muir et al. (2019) sought to identify the factors influencing university students' participation in the online learning environment. For one semester, students followed the courses asynchronously. During the study, students provided feedback on their attendance status, and at the end of the study, interviews were conducted with the students. Assessment, weekly workload, the presence of the instructor, work-life balance, the appropriateness of learning tasks, and interaction in the asynchronous online learning environment have all been found to influence student participation. According to the researchers, studies determining the factors influencing students' online learning experiences and course participation will contribute to effective learning outcomes.

To summarize, these theories, legal bases, literature, and other studies that link a connection between existing problems have aided researchers in furthering their current research.

2. Method

2.1. Research Design

This study sought to describe the students' experiences, challenges, and proposed measures in undertaking education through asynchronous online classes in one of the universities in Tagbilaran, Bohol, Philippines. This study is qualitative in nature and employed a phenomenological research design. This research design was chosen to achieve the study's goal of describing students' lived experiences as they continue their educational pursuits via Holy Name University's asynchronous online platform. This method is frequently employed to investigate lived experience, better understand how people think, and broaden a researcher's perspective on a topic. This method interprets the participants' feelings, perceptions, and beliefs to better understand the topic under investigation. When conducting phenomenological research, the researcher must set aside preconceived notions about the experience or event. Data collection via online interviews was extremely beneficial in eliciting more precise data from respondents. The researchers used thematic content analysis to analyze the data.

2.2. Participants

Twenty college students from five different departments were chosen as research participants. The researchers used purposive sampling procedures to identify respondents. Inclusion criteria include the following:

1. The student is currently enrolled at HNU (AY 2021-2022).

2. The student must have participated in online learning during the previous two semesters (AY 2020-2021).
3. The student uses an asynchronous online platform rather than any other learning mode.

The identities of the respondents were strictly protected and kept entirely confidential. Participants who refused to answer the questions were replaced using the mentioned inclusion criteria.

2.3. Research Procedure

This study followed these steps to contact the participants to gather the necessary data. First, the researchers sent letters to the college deans in every department to get permission to conduct the study. Upon approval, the researchers asked permission from the registrar's office to access the prospective participants' names and other pertinent information. The researchers used the inclusion criteria from the list given to identify qualified students to become participants. The participants were recruited online by sending them a copy of the informed consent form. Appointments were set for the interview after getting the participants' consent certificates. The researchers made it clear to the participants that participation in the research is voluntary, their identity is kept private, and the data gathered from them is kept confidential. The interview was also done online due to the strict implementation of health protocols to avoid contracting the dreaded disease, causing the pandemic. The interview was audio/video recorded upon participants' consent for more accuracy. The interview lasted for about 10 minutes for every participant. In some situations where a student refuses to continue answering the interview questions, another student with a similar qualification is chosen as a replacement. The researchers contacted the replacement through their email address or messenger account.

The researchers ensured that all the requirements needed to gather the data were present. The recorded interview is then transcribed, coded, and analyzed. Using the analyzed data, the researchers formulated the implications of the study.

2.4. Procedure for Data Analysis

Thematic analysis is a type of qualitative analysis. It is usually applied to a group of texts, such as interview transcripts, which we used in our research. The researcher carefully examines the data to identify recurring themes-topics, ideas, and meaning patterns. Throughout this process, the following approaches to conducting thematic analysis were used (Braun & Clarke, 2006):

Familiarization. To become acquainted with the collected data, the researchers thoroughly reviewed it. This review included transcribing audio, reading the material, taking preliminary notes, and becoming acquainted with the data.

Coding. Coding is marking areas of our text, typically phrases or sentences, and creating brief labels or "codes" to explain their contents.

Generating themes. During this phase, the researchers examined the created codes, identified patterns, and developed themes. Themes are more general than codes. A theme is created by combining several codes.

Reviewing Themes. In this section, researchers return to the data set and compare the generated themes to it. They check to see if the generated themes are present in the data. During this phase, the researchers divide, combine, discard, or create new themes to make them more valuable and accurate.

Defining and naming themes. The process of defining themes entails defining what each topic entails and determining how it aids in understanding the facts. Giving each theme a short and simple name is what theme naming entails. Themes are defined and named during this phase.

Writing up. A thematic analysis requires an introduction that establishes the research question, aims, and approach; a methodology section that describes how the data was collected and explains how the thematic

analysis was conducted; a results or findings section that addresses each theme; and a conclusion that explains the main takeaways and shows how the analysis answered the research question.

3. Results and Discussion

This study was conducted mainly to describe students' experiences, challenges, and proposed measures in undertaking education through online classes at Holy Name University from five different departments. With the participants' responses to the semi-structured interview, the results and findings of the study are hereby presented and discussed in this section.

3.1. The Opportunities

Table 1. Students' Experiences in Online Learning Classes

Themes	Specific Experiences
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • easy access to materials and videos uploaded (P1) • materials are well-organized (P2) • easy monitoring of scores (P2) • easy to access materials (P14)
Flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can answer work at one's own pace (P3) • can be used anytime in case one misses classes (P14) • more time to finish quizzes and examinations (P10)
Ease of Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can be manipulated by hand in just few clicks (P1) • easy to answer exams quickly (P6) • user-friendly (P9)

Accessibility. Accessibility in the use of Google Classroom means keeping students engaged and informed. This set of tools is intended to be accessible to as many students as possible. Some participants stated that based on their experience with online learning, Google Classroom is accessible. Accordingly, they can easily play materials like videos online. Others also emphasized that the organization and presentation of resources are appropriately sequenced. Another participant also claims that scores of tests are easily monitored and tabulated. These responses imply that some students have an affirmative online learning experience because of Google Classroom's accessibility. In addition, it provides a set of advanced features that make it an ideal tool for students. Moreover, immediate feedback is another advantage for the students as they can quickly know how far their learning is.

Flexibility. Participants stated that because these materials are posted online, they can be accessed whenever and wherever they want, making it very flexible to meet the needs of the students.

Ease of use. Participants stated that Google Classroom is simple to use because of its features and user-friendly graphic user interface.

3.2. The Drawbacks

Participants, on the other hand, identified some challenging experiences they had while using Google Classroom as a learning platform. According to the semi-structured interview, some participants find Google Classroom stressful and challenging because they have poor internet connections, low-spec gadgets, and many bugs that cause them to struggle with the tasks in Google Classroom. They also expressed drawbacks regarding teachers' strategies in the delivery of instruction and the manner of communication. Table 2 summarizes the responses of the participants as well as the themes that emerged from them.

Table 2. Students' Challenging Experiences in Asynchronous Online Learning Classes

Themes	Specific Responses
Problems on Internet Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slow internet connection (P5) (P8); unstable/poor internet connection (P12) (P15)
Dealing with Low Specifications of Devices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mobile phone is running out of space which results in lagging (P19) • lots of bugs (P10)
Struggles in Adapting to the Learning Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lacks experience in using technology • I prefer learning in an actual environment (P8) • this is my first time engaging this new platform of learning (P13) • I would much prefer face to face class than being in an online class (P15) • it is very far from what we used to have in face-to-face learning because we have limitations in the things we do in Google Classroom and a lot of considerations in terms of availability of time and internet connection (P17) • It is very different from face-to-face classes (P18) • I'm living away from the city; I need to go to Tagbilaran (P16)
Unfelt Teaching Presence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teachers only post in the stream, such as PDFs and videos on YouTube, without discussions (P4) • some of our professors will only send PDF files or links on YouTube for us to watch and comprehend by ourselves (P18) • instructors only give us PowerPoint presentations to read and understand by ourselves (P8) • instructors only upload reading materials without attaching a video discussion (P12) • we need real-time discussions with our professors; (P18)
One-way communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • teachers' comments are sometimes cannot be seen or read because there is no notification (P2) (P8) • one-way form of communication; you cannot ask questions after the discussion (P1) • lack of interaction, and we are just left with assignments (P15)

Internet Connectivity Problems. Participants 5, 8, and 15 reported a slow, unstable, and poor internet connection. Furthermore, participant 16 stated that she needed to leave her home and travel to the city for internet access because there was none at their residence. It implies that some students struggle to learn online due to internet connectivity and other technical issues.

The poor internet connection in the Philippines posed a significant challenge to students, particularly those from rural areas. Because the Philippines is still one of Asia's slowest internet countries, internet access is a common issue among teachers and students. WIFI connectivity is another issue, as the country has seen on television or in news reports about teachers and students attempting to capture wireless signals to access the internet from mountains or hilltops (Averia, 2020). Another study found that technological issues were a constant source of concern in the early years of classroom-based distance education. The technology was frequently faulty, resulting in failed connections and damaged media, causing issues with the instructor and student usability (Cavanaugh, Milkovich, & Tang, 2000; Collis, 1995; Webster & Hackley, 1997). Although technological advances have alleviated many early concerns about remote education, as organizations adopt new delivery media (e.g., the Web) and technology-delivered instruction expands beyond the classroom, new technological issues have emerged (Tai, 2007).

Low Specifications of Device. As the pandemic raged worldwide, having a reliable internet connection became increasingly important over the last year, as much of daily life shifted from in-person to online. However, since the beginning of Covid 19, many students have faced technological difficulties, further entrenching existing disparities. The shift to online classes and distance learning has increased the number of technically marginalized groups. Inequities among students have been exacerbated by digital education, resulting in significant accessibility and equality challenges (Girard, 2021).

According to the recorded semi-structured interview, some participants find Google Classroom stressful and difficult to use because they have low-spec gadgets and a lot of bugs that cause them to struggle with the tasks in Google Classroom. Students with low-spec gadgets encountered technical difficulties, such as lags when phone memory became full. "My mobile phone is running out of space, which causes lagging," said participant 19. (P19). It implies that some people have a difficult time learning online due to technical issues caused by low-spec devices.

Struggles in Adapting to the New Environment. Some participants stated that they were less familiar with technology and preferred in-person classes over online classes. "I prefer learning in a real-world setting," said participants 8 and 15. It suggests that they prefer face-to-face instruction. Online learning, according to some participants, is not the same as traditional learning. "It's very different from face-to-face classes," said participants 17 and 18. These participants receive elementary and secondary education in person, and most

college students receive their primary and secondary education in person, so online coursework may pose an adaptation challenge for many (Xu & Jaggars, 2013).

Unfelt Teaching Presence. Some participants expressed concerns about their instructors' ability to manage their classes in Google Classroom. Rather than presenting video lectures, some instructors post PDFs and YouTube videos. "Instructors only upload reading materials without a video discussion," participant 12 explained. According to participant 18, "some of our professors will only give us PDF files or YouTube links to watch," and "instructors only give us PowerPoint presentations to read and understand on our own," according to participant 8. It implies that students struggle to comprehend the lessons without the assistance of their professors' discussions. Evidently, teaching presence is not felt by the students.

A teacher's presence in an online learning environment has been linked to enhanced emotion and motivation (Baker, 2009; Russo & Benson, 2005; Wise et al., 2004). Many studies indicate that having a teacher present in an online class is critical for fostering a sense of community in the classroom (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000; Shea et al., 2006). Notably, numerous studies have linked teachers' presence to successful student learning, which is the ultimate goal of education (Anderson et al., 2001; Baker, 2009; Richardson & Swan, 2003; Shea et al., 2003). These findings suggest that learners must perceive a teaching presence in the online community and that this is an issue that educational institutions must address.

One-Way Communication. Excellent and effective communication skills can assist a well-trained teacher in developing positive relationships with students (Richmond, 1990). As a result, the rapport between teachers and students has improved (Baruch, HersHKovitz, & P. Ang, 2015). Teachers' unavailability and poor communication are two major factors that have led to students dropping out at some point (Dinu, 2015). According to Khan et al. (2017), student achievement is directly related to the teacher's ability to communicate effectively. According to Liberante (2012), the relationship between students and teachers has an infinite impact on learning. To assist students in learning, teachers must first understand them.

According to the participants, they experience poor means of communication in online learning using Google Classroom. They claim that communication is only one-way and that they cannot communicate with one another. "There is a one-way form of communication; you cannot ask questions after the discussion," participant 1 stated (P1). Another participant agreed, saying, "there is a lack of interaction, and we are just left with assignments" (P15). Another issue is that they could not receive notifications, preventing them from completing tasks. "I am not receiving notifications from our classes," participants 2 and 8 stated. It suggests that students are having difficulty communicating with instructors in Google Classroom.

Effective learning communication transforms messages in the form of science and technology from educators to students, where students can understand the purpose of the message by following predetermined

objectives, resulting in increased science and technology insight and positive behavior change. Teachers are primarily responsible for maintaining effective communication in the classroom; thus, lecturers must be excellent communicators to facilitate a successful learning experience (Subandi et al.).

3.3 Proposed Measures

Participants identified some proposed measures for the challenges they encountered while using Google Classroom as a venue for completing these specific online tasks. Table 3 summarizes the responses of the participants.

Table 3. Proposed Measures for the Challenging Experiences in Accomplishing Asynchronous Online Tasks

Challenges	Proposed Measures
Problems with Internet Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Find a location with stable internet access (P12)
Dealing with Low Specifications of Devices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deleting unnecessary files (P 14) Borrowing of gadgets (P19)
Struggles in Adapting to the Learning Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time Management (P 1, 4, 5, and 9) Doing work ahead of time (P 2, 3,4)
Unfelt Teaching Presence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request for a pre-recorded video discussion from teachers (P6, 7, 12, and 13) Looking for other materials/ resources (P12 and 19)
One-Way Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building Communication among teachers and students (P 12 and 15) Create group chats for alternative venue of communication (P11) Student-teacher consultations

Fazed by the problem of internet connectivity, participants have to find a way to address it. Participant 12 said, "find a place with a strong internet connection." This response indicates that the participant looks for a place with a strong internet connection before taking the quiz or exam to finish it without experiencing technical issues such as repeating answers, being unable to click the choices, or having trouble loading the google forms. In this case, participants are focused on answering questions without causing any disruptions.

To address the problem regarding technical issues due to gadgets with low specifications, participant 14 said, "I deleted some unnecessary files so that it would free up the space on my phone or laptop." This statement shows that the participant finds alternative ways to solve the issues on their phones or other gadgets so that they can do their tasks without having problems that could interrupt them from learning. In addition, participant 19 said, "If my phone is running out of space or lagging, I borrow my sister's phone." This proposed measure indicates that participants look for ways how they can manage the problems they encounter with their digital devices used in online learning to accomplish their task on time through phone sharing which is not unique to teens or families in the developing world.

Some of the participants' responses emphasized the importance of time management. This emphasis can be seen in the responses of Participant 1 when he/she said, "time management because, as I said, there are external factors that could distract us from online learning." Participants 4 and 9 said, "you need to manage your time even if you have loads of subjects." Participant 5 also said, "time management because there are times that our teachers would give us loads of assignments and performance especially when major exams are coming." It indicates that time management is one of the participant's methods for dealing with the task's difficulty. Group activities are also scheduled at a common time to see to it that all members have the chance to participate. Participants 2, 3, and 4 proposed to do the tasks ahead of time as they said: "Do your work ahead of time" (P1); "do your assignments immediately even if it is not yet the deadline or far from the due date," (P2); and "when the deadline is far from the due date, do your tasks right away" (P4). By doing their work ahead of time, they can complete their task quickly without worrying too much, brought about by the struggle to adapt to the online environment.

"Teachers should make pre-recorded video lectures," said participants 7 and 13, and "I would suggest that teachers give pre-recorded video lectures," said participants 6 and 12. These responses indicate that participants want more discussion from the subject teacher rather than just posting links and reading materials. In this instance, they recommend that teachers provide pre-recorded video lectures or discussions about the topic so that students may fully comprehend it. While the other proposed measure is doable by the students themselves, this proposed measure is beyond the students' control. This would serve somehow as a message for teachers that they need to feel their teachers' presence in the online environment and this longing should not be disregarded.

To address the difficulty in participating in discussions, participant 12 said, "I would look for more resources regarding the topic given"; participant 19 also said, "for teachers, they should provide students with enough learning resources." It indicates that if the teachers do not provide enough materials to facilitate their learning, the participant's way of dealing with the challenge is to find other sources to supplement the lack of materials.

Based on the semi-structured interview participant 12 said, "ask the instructors if there are any questions regarding the group activity."; participant 15 added, "I understand that we are not just the only person that he/she handles but whenever they have free or vacant time, maybe consultations." It shows that to manage their concerns with their instructors, they build communication among them. In this regard, the participants formulate strategies to communicate with their teachers for their questions to be addressed.

4. Conclusion

Data revealed that all students use cellular phones to access Google Classroom more frequently than other devices. While it would be preferable to access online classes via laptops or tablets, the participants do not have this luxury because these devices are unavailable for various reasons. The lack of appropriate gadgets may make it difficult to reap the full benefits of online learning.

Participants also shared their positive and negative experiences with online classes in Google Classroom. Despite the lack of suitable devices for attending online classes, their positive experiences demonstrated that learning occurs in the virtual world. However, their difficult experiences limit the full benefits of online learning, and this can be used as bases to improve online services and provide them with strategies to help accommodate their needs.

This study also demonstrates that the students are adaptable enough to employ some strategies to address the difficulties they encounter. While most of the measures are for them to implement on their own, students suggest that teachers create pre-recorded videos to help them better understand the lessons. This result demonstrates that teachers' teaching presence is indeed significant in the classroom and even more so in the online learning modality.

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