



ASEAN Journal of Educational Research and Technology



Journal homepage: <https://ejournal.bumipublikasinusantara.id/index.php/ajert>

Problems Encountered with Online Class Participation

Rosmalin G. Arzagon*, Melody A. Zaragoza, Sherry V. Mecida

Research Development Office, Notre Dame of Tacurong College, Tacurong, the Philippines

*Correspondence: E-mail: rdo@ndtc.edu.ph

ABSTRACTS

The primary objective of this descriptive study was to find out the problems with online class participation among college students during the academic year, 2020-2021, the onset of the COVID -19 pandemic. It was conducted at Notre Dame of Tacurong College, City of Sultan Kudarat. The respondents of the study were 392 students across courses and year levels representing 77.17% of 508 students who constituted the total number of students who answered the questionnaire. Findings showed that the mean ratings of the seven items range from 2.23 to 2.72 and each was described by the respondents as a Moderate Problem encountered with online class participation. However, Item 2, Finding a quiet place where you could do your class works online, obtained the highest mean of 2.72 (SD = 0.92) and was described as a Moderate Problem. Item 7, Fitting the course with your work schedule, if you work for pay, got the lowest mean rating of 2.23 (SD = 0.98) and was described also as a Moderate Problem to the students.

© 2022 Bumi Publikasi Nusantara

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Submitted/Received 15 Oct 2022

First revised 01 Nov 2022

Accepted 07 Nov 2022

First available online 09 Nov 2022

Publication date 01 Sep 2022

Keyword:

Online class participation,
Student,
Teaching.

1. INTRODUCTION

There are principles designed to assist academics, students, and administrators in their efforts to enhance teaching and learning. "Encourage active learning" is one of these principles (Zayapragassarazan & Kumar, 2012; Martyn, 2007; Ghilay & Ghilay, 2015). This particular principle highlights the active nature of learning. Students are not expected to acquire much knowledge by merely attending classes, memorizing assignments, and reciting responses.

They must be able to verbalize, write, and apply what they are learning. Students must incorporate learning into their lives (University of Tennessee at Chattanooga). Participating in class discussions is a good way to get students interested and involved in the learning process. There are five parts to the teaching process that all work together. These are preparation, participation in discussions, group skills, communication skills, and attendance. Participation in the classroom is when all of the students are involved in the learning process (Dancer & Kamvounias, 2005; Ghalley & Rai, 2019; Abdullah et al., 2012; Black, 2004). Also, many course designs include ways for students to take part in the classroom.

People often think of participation as the same thing as discussion, which usually involves a long conversation with the whole class. But there may also be short conversations between professors and students or between small groups of students.

Students' participation in the classroom can lead to interesting comments and connections, as well as a lot of energy and excitement in the learning environment. But poorly managed participation can also lead to teachers getting angry and students getting confused (Centre for Teaching Excellence, University of Waterloo, n.d.).

Participation in the classroom has always been one of the most important ways for students to learn and improve their skills. Participating in class also gives students the chance to learn new things, show that they understand the lessons, build confidence, and put theory into practice.

Students are told that they will benefit from being involved in class and are encouraged to do so. Still, many of them are afraid to speak up. Even though most students thought engagement was good for their learning and growth, there were still times when students were against it (Bergmark & Westman, 2018).

The COVID-19 pandemic broke out just before the end of the 2019-2020 school year, and the disruption was modest, affecting the final weeks of classrooms and moving graduations online. The following year, educational institutions must adjust to the pandemic's obstacles by moving to online platforms as an alternative learning environment. Others find it difficult to adapt to the digital world, but some argue that online learning is a vital means of compensating for the absence of physical classrooms.

In addition to the use of the Learning Management System (LMS), zoom sessions were one of the most employed methods for delivering lessons to students during the pandemic. The benefit of zoom meetings is that educators may facilitate simultaneous, interactive talks and activities with their students. However, it is difficult to keep zoom classes exciting and encourage student engagement. Although much research was conducted in this field before the worldwide pandemic, there is a shortage of knowledge addressing the challenges students face when participating in online classes during a global pandemic.

Many instructors at Notre Dame of Tacurong College (NDTC) have found that student involvement in their online programs is currently relatively low. In light of the benefits that students may derive from class involvement, it is deemed vital to investigate the obstacles

that limit or impede their active engagement in their online classes during the current global health crisis.

The primary objective of this study was to find out the problems encountered problems with online class participation among college students during the academic year, 2020-2021. Specifically, it attempted to answer this specific question: What is the degree to of students encountered problems with online class participation during the COVID -19 pandemic?

2. METHODS

2.1. Research design

The descriptive method of research was used to describe the problems encountered by college students with class participation in their online classes.

2.2. Locale of the study

The study was conducted at Notre Dame of Tacurong College (NDTC), a Catholic institution located in Tacurong, the Philippines, the lone component city of the Province of Sultan Kudarat. NDTC offers preschool, complete elementary, junior, and senior high schools, and college education.

2.3. Respondents

The respondents of the study were 392 students representing 77.17% of 508 students who constituted the total number of students who answered the questionnaire. Of these 392 respondents, 127 (32.40%) were female and 265 (67.60%) were male. As to age, the greatest portion of the respondents, 305 (77.81%) were 19 to 21 years old. As to year level, Third Year obtained the highest frequency of 165 (42.09%). As to course, BSN got the highest frequency of 120 (30.61%). Other details on the profile of the respondents are shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents (n = 392).

Profile	f	%	Profile	f	%
Sex			Course		
Male	265	67.60	BSED	30	7.65
Female	127	32.42	BEED	39	9.95
Year Level			BSSW	53	13.52
First	22	5.61	BSCrim	51	13.01
Second	102	27.30	AB Pol.Sci	8	2.04
Third	165	42.09	BSCS	4	1.02
Fourth	98	25.00	BSCpE	10	2.55
Age			BSN	120	30.61
16 to 18 years old	14	3.57	BSBA	50	12.76
19 to 21 years old	305	77.81	BSA	27	6.89
22 years and onward	73	18.62	Total	392	100

2.4. Sampling

The target respondents of this study were the total population of 1060 students enrolled in all academic programs of the college department of NDTC. However, only 508 responded as to the designated cut-off time, and after excluding invalid or not completed questionnaires,

only 392 of them were considered valid and had become the source of data to answer the research questions of this study with a margin of error of 3.93%. The sample size was computed using the free software called Raosoft sample size calculator.

2.5. Instrumentation

The researchers adapted a questionnaire taken from the report of Means et al about the severity of various problems with online course participation. Part I of the questionnaire sought information from the respondents as to their sex, age, year level, and course enrollment. Part II is about the student's encountered problems in class participation in their online classes. Seven items required the respondents to indicate the degree of problems encountered using a 4-point Likert scale where 4 means a Serious Problem, 3 is a Moderate Problem, 2 is a Minor Problem, and 1 is Not at All a Problem.

Utilizing online survey questions, the information from the respondents was acquired. Using Cronbach's alpha, the item reliability of the survey was computed to be 0.844.

2.6. Data gathering procedure

The researchers asked permission from the Office of the President to gather data from the respondents through a letter noted by the Researcher Development Officer. Then, the Office of the Information Communication and Technology Services Officer (ICTSO) was requested by the Research and Development Office (RDO) to upload the online survey questionnaire through google forms for the students to answer. The accomplished questionnaires were retrieved after a designated cut-off date. In process of gathering data, health protocols were strictly observed.

2.7. Statistical treatment

Upon gathering the accomplished questionnaires, they were tallied and computed using appropriate statistical tools. For the profile of the respondents, the researchers used frequency and percentage. For the student's degree of problems encountered in participation in their online classes, frequency, percentage distribution, mean and standard deviation were used.

2.8. Data analysis

The data to describe the profile of the respondents, the frequency counts, and the percentage distribution was used. Further, to analyze the findings on the degree of problems encountered in participation in their online classes, only the highest, lowest, and overall frequency, percentage distribution, mean and standard deviation were focused on in the presentation of findings.

To describe the degree of problems encountered in participation in their online classes, the following ranges of means in a 4-point Likert scale with corresponding description and interpretation were utilized. The description is in the following: (i) 3.25 – 4.00 is the Serious Problem; (ii) 2.50 – 3.24 is the Moderate Problem; (iii) 1.75 – 2.49 is the Minor Problem; and (iv) 1.00 – 1.74 is the Not at All a Problem.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first and only research problem deals with the degree of problems in class participation encountered by students in their online classes. **Table 2** shows the findings. **Table 2** shows that the mean ratings of the seven items range from 2.23 to 2.72 and each was described by

the respondents as having a Moderate Problem with in-class participation in their online classes. However, Item 2, Finding a quiet place where you could do your class works online, obtained the highest mean of 2.72 ($SD = 0.92$) and was described as a Moderate Problem. Looking at the details of the responses of the students out of 392, 350 (89.29%) of them assessed Item 2, Finding a quiet place where they could do their class works online, as a problem related to their participation in their online classes. It is a problem encountered by students in varying degrees. It is a Serious Problem for 84 (21.43%), a Moderate Problem for 154 (39.29%), and a Minor Problem for 112 (28.57%) of them. Only 42 (10.71%) of them consider this item as Not at All a Problem.

This finding implies that the majority of the students are affected by their home environment or in places where they do their classes works. They must have experiences interruptions or distractions coming from family members or people around them. It could be also that they were disturbed by the noises of vehicles passing by or the boisterous noise of children or adults in the neighborhood or at any other study place other than their homes.

This result of finding a quiet place where students could do their class works online as a problem, is similar to one of the findings of the study of [Gonzalez-Ramirez et al. \(2021\)](#) which reported that the top barriers students encountered during the online portion of the semester were connected to Wi-Fi quality, finding a quiet space, and finances. Finding a quiet place for students to complete their coursework online is a problem, according to a recent study.

[Rotas and Cahapay \(2020\)](#) found that poor learning environments are one of the challenges faced by university students in the Philippines who are trying to learn remotely in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis. According to [Barrot et al. \(2021\)](#), during the COVID-19 pandemic, students' main obstacle was related to their home learning environment.

Table 2. Problems encountered by students in class participation in online classes.

Item	Mean	SD	Description
1. Staying motivated to do well in the course	2.52	0.95	Moderate Problem
2. Finding a quiet place where you could do your class works online	2.72	0.92	Moderate Problem
3. Fitting the course in with your home/family responsibilities	2.57	0.95	Moderate Problem
4. Not knowing where to get help when you encounter some difficulties in your online class	2.65	0.91	Moderate Problem
5. Feeling too unwell, physically, to participate	2.55	0.89	Moderate Problem
6. Feeling too unwell, emotionally, to participate	2.62	0.92	Moderate Problem
7. Fitting the course with your work schedule, if you work for pay	2.23	0.98	Moderate Problem
Overall Mean and SD	2.55	0.72	Moderate Problem

On the other hand, **Table 3** presents seven items. Fitting the course with your work schedule, if you work for pay, got the lowest mean rating of 2.23 ($SD = 0.98$) and is described generally as a Moderate Problem to the students. Considering the scores in terms of frequencies and percentages of the student's responses, Item 7 is a Serious Problem for 66 (16.84%), a Moderate Problem for 144 (36.73%), and a Minor Problem for 123 (31.38%) of them. There were 59 (15.05%) of them consider this item as Not at All a Problem.

This issue, fitting the course to students' work schedules, if they work for pay, implies that some are working students. They must have some difficulties matching their study schedule

to their work schedule. This research also shows that some college students must be taught time management skills to reduce or eliminate this problem. This view is confirmed by what Purdue University Global asserted: flexible scheduling is fantastic for online students, but they frequently require it since they have outside obligations, such as employment and family obligations. This can make it difficult to juggle school, employment, and personal duties, and excellent time management skills are essential for success.

The overall result on the degree of problems encountered in class participation of students in their online classes is indicated by the overall mean rating of 2.55 ($SD = 0.72$) described as a Moderate Problem. This overall finding signifies that the majority of them have experienced difficulties that hinder them from participating excellently in their online classes.

Arranged based on the obtained highest to lowest mean rating, the respondents encountered difficulty in Finding a quiet place where they could do their class works online; Not knowing where to get help when they encounter some difficulties in their online class; Feeling too unwell, emotionally, to participate; Fitting the course in with their home/family responsibilities; Feeling too unwell, physically, to participate; Staying motivated to do well in the course; and Fitting the course with their work schedule, if they work for pay.

Table 3. Scoring of frequencies and percentages of the students' responses.

Item	4 - Serious Problem	3 - Moderate Problem	2 - Minor Problem	Total	1 - Not at All a Problem
1	65 (16.58%)	135 (34.44%)	131 (33.42%)	331 (84.44%)	61 (15.57%)
2	84 (21.43%)	154 (39.29%)	112 (28.57%)	350 (89.29%)	42 (10.71%)
3	67 (17.09%)	151 (38.52%)	112 (28.57%)	330 (84.18%)	62 (15.82%)
4	74 (18.88%)	153 (39.03%)	120 (30.61%)	347 (88.52%)	45 (11.48%)
5	59 (15.05%)	147 (37.50%)	138 (35.20%)	334 (87.76%)	48 (12.24%)
6	73 (18.62%)	143 (36.48%)	131 (33.42%)	347 (88.52%)	45 (11.48%)
7	66 (16.84%)	144 (36.73%)	123 (31.38%)	333 (84.95%)	59 (15.05%)

The overall result of the current study is in one or another related to the general finding of the study of [Ahmad \(2021\)](#) which reported that the causes of NDTC students' reluctance to participate in classroom discussions are moderately prevalent.

4. CONCLUSION

The students of Notre Dame of Tacurong College are like other students in many parts of the world adopting online learning as an alternative to face-to-face classes amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, to encounter problems or difficulties in their studies. Class participation is seen to be benefiting students in many aspects of their development as they journey to attain their professional goals in life.

Problems encountered hindering students' active participation in their class activities should be addressed by proper school authorities. The school administrators may coordinate with parents or guardians so students can be provided with a quiet place for study by their children or wards. Pieces of furniture, sufficient lighting, and ventilation can be looked into to have a more conducive learning environment at home. Teachers should encourage students to contact them for any assistance that they may give to students. Teachers or the Guidance Counselor may facilitate an activity so students can be coached on how to manage their fears, insecurities, anxieties, and other negative feelings they may experience during this pandemic.

5. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to Notre Dame of Tacurong College for its kind sponsorship of our research work and Engr. Louie Angelo G. Villegas for his assistance in preparing and disseminating the survey questionnaire using Google Forms.

6. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

7. REFERENCES

- Ahmad, C. V. (2021). Causes of students' reluctance to participate in classroom discussions. *ASEAN Journal of Science and Engineering Education*, 1(1), 47-62.
- Barrot, J. S., Llenares, I. I., and Del Rosario, L. S. (2021). Students' online learning challenges during the pandemic and how they cope with them: The case of the Philippines. *Education and Information Technologies*, 26(6), 7321-7338.
- Bergmark, U., and Westman, S. (2018). Student participation within teacher education: emphasising democratic values, engagement and learning for a future profession. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 37(7), 1352-1365.
- Dancer, D., and Kamvounias, P. (2005). Student involvement in assessment: A project designed to assess class participation fairly and reliably. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 30(4), 445-454.
- Gonzalez-Ramirez, J., Mulqueen, K., Zealand, R., Silverstein, S., Reina, C., BuShell, S., and Ladda, S. (2021). Emergency online learning: College students' perceptions during the COVID-19 crisis. *College Student Journal*, 55(1), 29-46.
- Rotas, E., and Cahapay, M. (2020). Difficulties in remote learning: Voices of Philippine university students in the wake of COVID-19 crisis. *Asian Journal of Distance Education*, 15(2), 147-158.
- Ghalley, L. R., and Rai, B. M. (2019). Factors influencing classroom participation: A case study of Bhutanese higher secondary student. *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies*, 4(3), 1-14.
- Abdullah, M. Y., Bakar, N. R. A., and Mahbob, M. H. (2012). Student's participation in classroom: What motivates them to speak up?. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 51, 516-522.
- Black, L. (2004). Differential participation in whole-class discussions and the construction of marginalised identities. *The Journal of Educational Enquiry*, 5(1), 34-54.
- Zayapragassarazan, Z., and Kumar, S. (2012). Active learning methods. *Online Submission*, 19(1), 3-5.
- Martyn, M. (2007). Clickers in the classroom: An active learning approach. *Educause Quarterly*, 30(2), 71.

Ghilay, Y., and Ghilay, R. (2015). TBAL: Technology-based active learning in higher education. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 4(4), 10-18.