Assessment on the readiness of students in online education: A case of UM Panabo College

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Abstract

Another major challenge for learners who have poor time management skills and are hardly tailored to online learning is the overload of tasks and deadlines. COVID-19 is a global problem affecting Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). This pandemic led to a strong reason among students who experience struggles in online education. It has been the critical mode to continue schooling. There are online learning sites such as Google, TV broadcasts, guidelines, tools, video lectures, and online channels (UNESCO 2020). This descriptive study assessed the 320 students who maximize the online survey using google forms while 28 students for qualitative interview through email and messenger with a period covered October 2-16, 2020. The findings have shown that among 320 students' participants there were 249 students answered that they have no personal computer/laptop; it is also depicted that 61 students answered they have personal computer/laptop, and ten (10) of the respondents did not indicate whether they have personal computer. Respondents of this study reveals that (45 students) are connected to WIFI, while 16 students are not connected to WIFI (do not have stable internet connection; dependent on data load from telecom companies) which implies an even more significant challenge to educational institutions. The transition of the new normal learning came to several adjustments from its readiness in online education and utilization of LMS platforms. Study aimed to identify and describe the extent of the readiness of students in using Quipper LMS in the teaching and learning process. The quantitative result showed that students had high acceptance on the use of Quipper LMS. It is also supported on the qualitative phase of the study, were it showed positive experiences of students in using Quipper as an online platform. However, sensitivity of the features inside the Quipper LMS is addressed by the systems provider.

Keywords: assessment, readiness, online education, LMS, students, case study

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1. Introduction

Teaching is moving online, on an untested and unprecedented scale. Student assessment on the Readiness of the online education, with a lot of trial and errors, that caused uncertainty for everyone. Many assessments have simply been cancelled. These interruptions will not just be a short-term issue, but can also have long-term consequences for the affected cohorts and are likely to increase in equality (Burgess & Sieversten, 2020). The transition of the new normal learning came to several adjustments from its readiness in online education and utilization of LMS Platforms. Considering the relevance of the above condition, this study aimed to identify the extent of the readiness in using Quipper LMS.

The COVID-19 pandemic is first and foremost a health crisis. Many countries have rightly decided to close schools, colleges and universities. The crisis crystallizes the dilemma policymakers are facing between closing schools, reducing contact and saving lives. Crisis has also made an impact on the context of Philippine Education were classes are postponed due to lockdown and majority of the colleges and universities - faced current challenges in online modality or with virtual learning (Talindong & Toquero, 2020). It has affected people regardless of nationality, level of education, income or gender. But the same has not been true for its consequences, which have hit the most vulnerable hardest. Education is no exception. Students from privileged backgrounds, supported by their parents and eager and able to learn, could find their way past closed school doors to alternative learning opportunities. Those from disadvantaged backgrounds often remained shut out when their schools shut down. This crisis has exposed the many inadequacies and inequities in our education systems – from access to the broadband and computers needed for online education, and the supportive environments needed to focus on learning, up to the misalignment between resources and needs. (Scheler A. 2020).

During the pandemic, online education has been the key mode to continue education. There are online learning sites such as Google, TV broadcast, guidelines, tools, video lectures, and online channels were introduced (UNESCO, 2020). However, implementation would pose challenges faced by students with intermittent internet connectivity, no gadgets, and poor computer/technology skills. According to the Akamai (2017) survey, the Philippines has the lowest internet access in Asia. In addition, those issues would include disparities in equity, students' protection and welfare, impaired academic quality and low evaluation outcomes (Winthrop, 2020). Another major challenge for learners who have poor time management skills and are hardly tailored to online learning is the overload of tasks deadlines. Todorov (2017) underlines that online learning helps bombards students to spend time reading and studying on their own, at their own pace.

Considering the relevance of the above condition, this study aimed to assess the readiness of the students in online education. This study focuses on online collaborative learning, the aim is not to replace teacher, but to use the technology primarily to increase and improve communication between teacher and learners, with a particular approach to the development of learning based on knowledge construction assisted and developed through social discourse. The study is anchored in the theory of (Harasim, 2012), that states on social discourse, furthermore is not random in OCL, but managed in such a way as to "scaffold" learning, by assisting with the construction of knowledge in way that are guided by the instructor, that reflect the norms or values of the discipline, and that also respect or take into consideration the prior knowledge within the discipline.

2. Method

Research Design – The researcher used a descriptive study design method among the students of UM Panabo College. According to Williams (2007) descriptive research is a research method that can determine the situation

in current phenomenon. As supported by Nassaji (2015), also states that the goal of descriptive research is drawing and classifying the phenomenon. The researcher conducted the study during the period of October 2 – 16, 2020 (end of the term)*.*

Research Subject – Students' respondents were from the Department of Education, Department of Business Administration Education and Department of Arts & Science Education and determined using the computed sample size. The conduct of the study is through google forms (online platform) for quantitative phase were sent to the students and interview questions and utilize social media. The study involved only those students who had access to the internet. There were 320 students who responded in the online survey and 28 students who responded for qualitative interview question. For purposes of ethical consideration the researcher asked the student participants to voluntarily answered the survey. In order to protect the identity of the respondents, data were analyzed and abide by the provision of the Data Privacy Act of 2012 to protect the privacy of the respondents. Moreover, only the researcher has access to the raw data generated for the study.

Research Instrument – The researchers adapted the questionnaire of Harasim (2012)*.* The instrument was modified to suit in the context of the study. The standardized survey questionnaire consists of the following parts, namely: part one which pertains to the baseline of the profile of respondents, part two relates to the challenges and difficulties by students in online education and the coping styles and strategies of students to address challenges in online education. The researcher distributed the questionnaires through google forms despite the hype and occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. Results or finding

3.1 Baseline Profile

The baseline profile of the respondents by year-level who participated in the survey are the first-year with 44% of the total respondents, followed by second-year with 15%, then third-year with 17%, next is fourth-year with 23% and fifth-year with 1%, with the total of 100%. For the respondents by department, the department of accounting and business administration education has 59%, followed by the department of teachers' education with 37% and the department of arts with 4%, with the total of 100%. The baseline profile of the 320 students who participated in the survey shows that 249 students have no personal computer/laptop at home, 61 students have personal computer/laptop at home and 10 did not indicate whether they have personal computer/laptop at home. Of the 61 students' respondents who have personal computer/laptop at home shows that 45 students are connected to WIFI and 16 students are not connected to WIFI (do not have stable internet connection; dependent on data load). The mode of participation in the survey shows that 198 utilized their personal cellphones and 122 utilized either PC/Laptop/Internet Café.

3.2 Challenges and difficulties by students in online education

The e-survey shows that the challenges and difficulties by the students in online education are no gadget and technology to access LMS, poor internet connection, no signal/internet infrastructure, no load, inability to manipulate LMS, poor internet connection/computer skills. Gadgets play a vital role in the educational field in order to improve their skills and knowledge. It is very important for them since they need to improve their knowledge power to gain success in the future. Gadgets provide a secure, at ease and well-nourished life for billions of human beings. But students who lack internet access affect academic performance. Students with low internet infrastructures cannot attend regularly their classes. Students without internet can't connect with teachers or classmates, do independent researches for the given assignments or get online homework help. For families, not having internet access can mean missing out on information or losing out on a direct line of communication with schools and teachers.

One of the biggest problems faced by students without internet access at home is their inability to complete

homework. Homework has long been a source of hot debate within the education community. Those who say yes argue that homework allows students to continue learning at home and prepares them for the rigors of college. Others claim that homework is unfair—home is not an even playing field, and some students have access to more resources and a better environment for completing homework. There are challenges in the inability to manipulate the LMS where students who don't have internet access at home, they may fall behind, or they might spend hours looking for free Wi-Fi access points. Schools increasingly expect parents to be able to assist their children to monitor and log on, too. Teacher encounter challenges also set strategies reaching out students sending assignment in any means such as: email, messenger, other platforms and the like.

3.3 Coping styles and strategies of students to address challenges in online education

Based on the e-survey, the coping styles and strategies of students to address challenges in online education are first, the students need to pre-download all activities, materials and SIM for advanced reading and compliance they need to save the study guides in their personal computer or gadgets. Second, the students go to the nearest internet café for a strong internet connection. Those students who are located in far flung barangays pays in the peso net and print the assignments and readings, with this they can have a home reading report using the printed materials. Third, students who have internet connections notify those who have none whenever a new task is uploaded or if synchronous classes are scheduled so they can make themselves available, they created a group chats and send downloadable reading materials to their classmates. Lastly, the student's requests' apart from uploading them online the access problems.

In short, education must be relevant to us right now and find solutions to the problems we face (Cruz, 2020). For faculty teaching in the online classroom, this reality underscores the importance of having activities that build student engagement and help create a sense of community among their geographically dispersed students. Unlike a physical classroom, students online are in different places, living different lives. Encourage them to share those distinct experiences and help them tap such experiences for their coursework. For those of you venturing into online education for the first time, we should share one more secret: the distinct engagement and bonds we build online don't just enhance the student experience. They breathe a whole new life into the teaching experience, as well.

Folkman and Moskowitz (2004) define online coping as thoughts and behaviors facilitated by the Internet that people use to manage stressful situations. Studies of support provided through online support groups have a relatively long history (Rains & Young, 2009; Wright & Bell, 2003). Moreover, there has recently been a rise in studies examining the role of social network sites (SNS, mostly Facebook) in providing support (Damian & Van Ingen, 2014; Frison & Eggermont, 2015; Oh, Ozkaya, & LaRose, 2014). Websites and online support groups provide information on virtually any topic, from health to work and relational problems. Younger and highly educated people are especially likely to turn to the Internet first before taking additional action, for example, when faced with a health issue (Koch-Weser et al., 2010). After gathering information online, individuals are better able to understand their problem and take appropriate action (Barak, Boniel-Nissim, & Suler, 2008).

Coping strategies to reduce stress is a necessary condition for preventing the harmful effects of prolonged stress (William et al., 2010). Coping strategies refer to the specific efforts that people use to master, reduce or minimize stressful event. Coping is multi-dimensional and involves various strategies of which some are functional than others (Gnilka, Chang, & Dew, 2012). A study by Sideridis (2008) reveals five most frequently used coping strategies by students; browsing the internet, sleeping and resting, watching TV shows or movies, and instant messaging.

4. Conclusion

Due to the pandemic, classes for School Year 2020-2021 will be conducted through distance learning modalities such as online learning, modules, television and radio. (Rubio, 2020). Online learning has become a

critical lifeline for education, as institutions seek to minimize the potential for community transmission. Technology can enable teachers and students to access specialized materials well beyond textbooks, in multiple formats and in ways that can bridge time and space. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many schools across the world began conducting classes via video-telephony software such as Zoom, google classroom and/or Google Meet and especially Quipper. Online classes have included some more interactive elements, such as an online annotation tool that allows classmates to see one another's comments on documents. It is more challenging aspects of online classes and feeling as if they include more work than in-person classes, and keeping a balance between the different online platforms that are utilized for a virtual class.

4.1 Implications of study result

- ➢ Implement blended approach where students can choose from depending on their capacity, availability and accessibility (pure modular, pure online or hybrid)

- ➢ Since most students use cellphones, the school should provide an application which can easily access by students

- ➢ Fix the schedule for synchronous and a synchronous class session for students to manage their time and prepare their internet connections

- ➢ Provide flexible time for students to comply academic requirements especially if there are volumes

- ➢ Upload pre-recorded discussion which can be downloaded and viewed offline

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