

Issues and challenges of online learning at the elementary level of basic education department of Northwestern University

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Abstract

The study primarily aimed to identify the Issues and Challenges of Online Learning at the Elementary Level of Basic Education Department of Northwestern University. Specifically, it sought to answer the following: 1) What is the Profile of the Respondents as to: Age; Gender; Grade Level; Device used for Online Learning; Availability of Internet; and Hours of using computer per week. 2) What are the Attitudes of the respondents toward Online Learning? 3) What Issues and Challenges encountered by the pupils in using online learning? This study included Grade IV, Grade V, and Grade VI pupils of Northwestern University. It is a Quantitative-Descriptive research which aimed to determine the issues and challenges of online learning in the elementary grades. The survey questionnaires were used thru google form. We seek permission to the Principal of Elementary Department, accompanied by a letter of request duly signed by the dean of the College of Teacher Education, Northwestern University, Laoag City. We sent to the advisers of the respondents the materials they are going to give to them. The data collected were classified according to frequency and percentage to analyze the profile of the respondents while weighted mean for the remaining problems. Along the first part of the data gathered, profile of the respondents, majority of the respondents came from the Grade V pupils followed by the Grade IV pupils and Grade VI is the least. It also shows that out of 50 respondents, there are 27 males and 23 females. On the attitudes of the pupils towards online learning, majority of the respondents answered agree, slow internet connectivity is a problem of learning. It indicates that the slow internet has become the risks for the pupils in their online learning. Besides, online learning activities are interactive, based from the pupils they are strongly agree with this. And in the issues and challenges in using online learning, having poor connection of internet is the most encountered problems among the issues and challenges of online learning.

Keywords: online learning, internet, attitudes, issues, blended learning

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1. Introduction

Parents and students may have heard about blended learning or online education only during this time of the Covid-19 pandemic, but this type of instruction has been part of the Philippine educational system for many years now. From the standpoint of DepEd, “blended learning” or “hybrid learning” is a fusion of online distant learning and in-person delivery of printed materials to the homes of the learners through the barangays for those who don’t have internet access and interactive facilities in the comforts of their home. In localities where this is not possible, DepEd will use radio and television to broadcast lessons, materials and instructions for the students. (see - <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/07/24/supplements/blended-learning-is-the-new-normal-in-philippine-education/744913/>)

Distance learning is the “traditional” self-study course. Teachers send their learning resources on mail or students may get them online. Students also have to complete the learning tasks based on the assigned schedules. While students and teachers can use the internet as a medium to receive and submit assignments, they do not interact via online lectures or online forums to discuss the learning materials. On the other hand, online learning heavily uses the internet as a tool for education. There is a physical distance between students and teachers, but they can interact during virtual lectures and other online assessments. Classes are often scheduled at a specific time, with students needing to be online to attend the virtual lecture. In this setup, students can also discuss the lecture or ask questions to their teachers in real-time. Additionally, they can interact with fellow students via online platforms (Moneymax, 2022).

At the time of quarantine and viral outbreaks, distance education is the only viable way to continue learning. Distance education is broadly characterized as any form of learning experience where the learner and the instructor are physically separated from each other, not only by place but also by time. Arguably, such a dislocation is “the perfect context for free-flowing thought that lets us move beyond the restricted confines of a familiar social order” (Hooks, 2003). Moreover, this type of education is a way of providing learning opportunities to every learner, whatever their circumstances might be. This means that distance education may extend access to education through distribution and economies of scale (Guri-Rosenblit, 2005; Owusu-Agyeman & Amoakohene, 2020).

The COVID-19 crisis has forced education systems worldwide to find alternatives to face-to-face instruction. As a result, online teaching and learning have been used by teachers and students on an unprecedented scale. Since lockdowns – either massive or localized - may be needed again in the future to respond to new waves of the infection until a vaccine becomes available, it is of utmost importance for governments to identify which policies can maximize the effectiveness of online learning. This policy brief examines the role of students’ attitudes towards learning in maximizing the potential of online schooling when regular face-to-face instruction cannot take place. Since parents and teachers play a fundamental role in supporting students to develop these crucial attitudes, particularly in the current situation, targeted policy interventions should be designed with the aim of reducing the burden on parents and help teachers and schools make the most of digital learning.

The Basic Education Department of Northwestern University is no exemption in implementing the Distance Learning. So, what interest us to conduct this study is we noticed that some of the pupils are having problems towards online learning, like, technical issues, pupils’ perceptions towards online learning, computer knowledge, time management and how they motivate themselves while learning. Hence, this study is an attempt to identify the Issues and Challenges of Online Learning at the Elementary level of the Grades 4 to 6 pupils of Northwestern University.

1.1 Theoretical Underpinning

Connectivist Theory - Siemens proposed “connectivism as a learning theory for the digital age” (Siemens, 2004). In connectivism, knowledge is distributed across networks where connections and connectedness inform learning. Heavily grounded in technology, connectivism is a learning theory based on the acquisition of the knowledge focused on the future, not the past (Siemens, 2012). Through a network, web, or internet, learners can (a) acquire new content that is continually updated, (b) identify credible resources, and (c) draw distinctions between opposing facts and figures. In connectivist theory, one view of learning is knowing where to locate information may be as valuable as the information itself.

Learning theory and internet technologies are some of the components of what is considered an online educational experience. Although the teacher, student, and content generally remain the same, the transmutation of student–teacher–content pedagogical triangle of the cognitive theory to the student–teacher–network–content tetrahedron of the connectivist learning theory invites the network into the educational process (Fiore, 2017). Whether a student is learning in an online program or distance education course, teaching and learning can be improved by the incorporation of connectivist learning theory.

(see - <https://focusedusolutions.com/2018/12/22/connectivism/>)

Behaviorism Theory - Behaviorism as its name implies, behaviorism focuses on how people behave. It evolved from a positivist worldview related to cause and effect. In simple terms, action produces reaction. In education, behaviorism examines how students behave while learning. More specifically, behaviorism focuses on observing how students respond to certain stimuli that, when repeated, can be evaluated, quantified, and eventually controlled for each individual. The emphasis in behaviorism is on that which is observable and not on the mind or cognitive processes. In sum, if you cannot observe it, it cannot be studied. The development of behaviorism is frequently associated with Ivan Pavlov, famous for his experiments with dogs, food, and audible stimuli, such as a bell. In his experiments, dogs learned to associate food or feeding time with the sound of the bell and began to salivate. Pavlov conducted his experiments in the early 1900s and they were replicated by many other researchers throughout the 20th century. John B. Watson, among the first Americans to follow Pavlov’s work, saw it as a branch of natural science. Watson became a major proponent of Pavlov and is generally credited with coining the term behaviorism. He argued that mind and consciousness are unimportant in the learning process and that everything can be studied in terms of stimulus and response. Other major figures associated with behaviorism are B.F. Skinner and Edward Thorndike. Skinner is particularly well known, primarily because he introduced what he referred to as operant conditioning which emphasized the use of both positive and negative reinforcement to help individuals learn new behaviors. This was quite different from Pavlov, who relied on simple reflexive responses to specific stimuli although both Pavlov and Skinner promoted repetitive behavior that leads to habit formation. Skinner had a significant influence on early computer assisted instructional (CAI) models as developed by Pat Suppes and others. A common aspect of early CAI programs was the reliance on encouragement and repetition to promote positive learning activities.

(see - <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1154117.pdf>)

2. Literature Review

The New Normal in Basic Education - As the country continues to confront different issues brought about by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, the Department of Education (DepEd) is addressing the challenges in the basic education for the school year 2020-2021 through its Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) under DepEd Order No. 012, s. 2020. The BE-LCP is consistent with the mandate of Section 1, Article XIV of the 1987 Constitution for the state to protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels, and to take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all. Under Section 6, Chapter 1 of Republic Act No. 9155, or the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001, DepEd is vested with the authority, accountability, and responsibility for ensuring access to, promoting equity in, and improving the quality of basic education. Hence, the BE-LCP aims to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of the learners,

teachers, and personnel in the time of COVID-19, while finding ways for education to continue amidst the crisis. In particular, the BE-LCP has been designed with a legal framework responsive to the “new normal,” keeping in mind the constitutional mandate to uphold the right of all citizens to quality education at all times.

In application, however, the BE-LCP is confronted with different challenges. First, in the implementation of the various learning delivery modalities, the challenge will be in dealing with learners under any of the modes of distance learning or blended learning who are not capable of learning independently, or who are not periodically supported by their parents or guardians. Also critical for the implementation will be the mass production of the needed teachers and learners’ learning materials, as well as the support of media institutions like TV and radio stations. Second, DepEd will need substantial and additional financial resources in order to meet the objectives of the BE-LCP. This is where the support of the respective local government units, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders become indispensable. Third, the holistic development of students will likely be affected. With the BE-LCP in place, the students will have limited opportunities for interaction with their teachers and classmates. Thus, their learning outcomes may be affected, and there may be negative impacts on the students who cannot easily cope with the change. This is where support interventions not only by DepEd but also by the family becomes relevant to mitigate this effect.

Verily, the learning environment amidst the COVID-19 pandemic will be very different. Yet, the DepEd is optimistic that despite the various socio-economic situations of families which affect the provision of learning support in the home, and the peculiar needs of different learners, the BE-LCP could be the key to providing quality basic education which is accessible and responsive in the new normal.

Online Learning: A Panacea in the Time of COVID-19 Crisis - In a study of Dhawan (2020) on the Online Learning: A Panacea in the Time of COVID-19 Crisis, the findings were: technical difficulties can be solved through prerecording video lectures, testing the content, and always keeping Plan B ready so that the teaching-learning process cannot be hampered; Online courses should be made dynamic, interesting, and interactive; teachers should set time limits and reminders for students to make them alert and attentive; communication is the key when it gets difficult to try reaching out to students via texts, various messaging apps, video calls, and so on—content should be such that enable students for practice and also hone their skills; and educators must spend a lot of time in making effective strategies for giving online instructions.

2.1 A shift from Classroom to Distance Learning

Advantages and Limitations - Sadeghi (2019) conducted a study on advantages and limitations of distance learning of the Department of English, Tonekabon Branch, Islamic Azad University. Findings of the study were: Communication with students on distance learning programs requires special attention; while distance learning can be at least as effective as conventional classroom learning under certain situations, it hasn’t been claimed that e-learning can replace traditional classroom learning; students find that some teachers do not upload enough learning and testing resources suitable for distance learning; and teachers set deadlines for the preparation of tests, mid-terms, and finals, which do not fit all the students; the quality of the teaching is an important factor influencing student satisfaction; and the future opportunities for distance education are unlimited. Clearly, distance education programs and courses are here to stay and will increase in the future but there are still many uncertain issues to be clarified and investigated.

Effectiveness of an Online Classroom for Flexible Learning - A qualitative study of Francisco and Barcelona (2020) entitled “Effectiveness of an Online Classroom for Flexible Learning” was conducted to (1) to determine the applicability of Eliademy, a web-based classroom, as an alternative learning tool during the time of calamities by presenting students’ perceptions regarding its advantages and disadvantages; (2) to identify the different step-by-step process in creating an online internet classroom using Eliademy as a platform for teaching and learning interactions; and, (3) to present other potential alternative delivery modes in sustaining instructions during calamities. This study was conducted August 2020 at the with five (5) graduate school students who are

enrolled at La Consolacion University Philippines in the City of Malolos, Bulacan. It was found out that Eliademy as a web-based classroom is indeed one of the best possible alternative tools and a good avenue for teaching and learning by which teachers and learners can continue their lessons even in times of calamities. This was evident by the lived experiences of the respondents. The study found out that Eliademy was accessible, can promote time management, promptness and a challenge for the users. Although, it requires strong internet connections and time pressured. There are other web-based classrooms wherein teachers and learners can interact with besides Eliademy. Teachers may choose other tools depending on the needs on the learners because these platforms have their own specialties.

Blended learning effectiveness: the relationship between student characteristics, design features and outcomes - This study tackles blended learning effectiveness which has been investigated in previous studies considering grades, course completion, retention and graduation rates but no studies regarding effectiveness in view of learner characteristics/background, design features and outcomes have been done in the Ugandan university context. No studies have also been done on how the characteristics of learners and design features are predictors of outcomes in the context of a planning evaluation research (Guskey, 2000) to establish the effectiveness of blended learning. Guskey (2000) noted that planning evaluation fits in well since it occurs before the implementation of any innovation as well as allowing planners to determine the needs, considering participant characteristics, analyzing contextual matters and gathering baseline information. This study is done in the context of a plan to undertake innovative pedagogy involving use of a learning management system (Moodle) for the first time in teaching and learning in a Ugandan university. The learner characteristics/backgrounds being investigated for blended learning effectiveness include self-regulation, computer competence, workload management, social and family support, attitude to blended learning, gender and age. We investigate the blended learning design features of learner interactions, face-to-face support, learning management system tools and technology quality while the outcomes considered include satisfaction, performance, intrinsic motivation and knowledge construction. Establishing the significant predictors of outcomes in blended learning will help to inform planners of such learning environments in order to put in place necessary groundwork preparations for designing blended learning as an innovative pedagogical approach.

Kenney and Newcombe (2011) did their comparison to establish effectiveness in view of grades and found that blended learning had higher average score than the non-blended learning environment. Garrison and Kanuka (2004) examined the transformative potential of blended learning and reported an increase in course completion rates, improved retention and increased student satisfaction. Comparisons between blended learning environments have been done to establish the disparity between academic achievement, grade dispersions and gender performance differences and no significant differences were found between the groups (Demirkol & Kazu, 2014). However, blended learning effectiveness may be dependent on many other factors and among them student characteristics, design features and learning outcomes. Research shows that the failure of learners to continue their online education in some cases has been due to family support or increased workload leading to learner dropout (Park & Choi, 2009) as well as little time for study. Additionally, it is dependent on learner interactions with instructors since failure to continue with online learning is attributed to this.

In Greer, Hudson, and Paugh's study as cited in Park and Choi (2009), family and peer support for learners is important for success in online and face-to-face learning. Support is needed for learners from all areas in web-based courses and this may be from family, friends, co-workers as well as peers in class. Greer, Hudson and Paugh further noted that peer encouragement assisted new learners in computer use and applications. The authors also show that learners need time budgeting, appropriate technology tools and support from friends and family in web-based courses. Peer support is required by learners who have no or little knowledge of technology, especially computers, to help them overcome fears. Park and Choi, (2009) showed that organizational support significantly predicts learners' stay and success in online courses because employers at times are willing to reduce learners' workload during study as well as supervisors showing that they are interested in job-related learning for employees to advance and improve their skills.

The study by Kintu and Zhu (2016) investigated the possibility of blended learning in a Ugandan University and examined whether student characteristics (such as self-regulation, attitudes towards blended learning, computer competence) and student background (such as family support, social support and management of workload) were significant factors in learner outcomes (such as motivation, satisfaction, knowledge construction and performance). The characteristics and background factors were studied along with blended learning design features such as technology quality, learner interactions, and Moodle with its tools and resources. The findings from that study indicated that learner attitudes towards blended learning were significant factors to learner satisfaction and motivation while workload management was a significant factor to learner satisfaction and knowledge construction. Among the blended learning design features, only learner interaction was a significant factor to learner satisfaction and knowledge construction.

The focus of the present study is on examining the effectiveness of blended learning taking into consideration learner characteristics/background, blended learning design elements and learning outcomes and how the former are significant predictors of blended learning effectiveness. Studies like that of Morris and Lim (2009) have investigated learner and instructional factors influencing learning outcomes in blended learning. They however do not deal with such variables in the contexts of blended learning design as an aspect of innovative pedagogy involving the use of technology in education. Apart from the learner variables such as gender, age, experience, study time as tackled before, this study considers social and background aspects of the learners such as family and social support, self-regulation, attitudes towards blended learning and management of workload to find out their relationship to blended learning effectiveness. Identifying the various types of learner variables with regard to their relationship to blended learning effectiveness is important in this study as we embark on innovative pedagogy with technology in teaching and learning.

Home Learning Challenges - Home learning is a concept that has never had to carry as much weight as it does today. With the COVID-19 pandemic confining people around the world to their homes, school districts have embraced remote classes and distance learning en masse. Unsurprisingly, considering how new learning at home is to many families, there have been some distinct challenges to overcome. If your kids are learning at home, you've likely already encountered some of these issues, or will soon. Fortunately, none of the difficulties associated with distance learning are insurmountable. With the right combination of technology, focus and attitude, your family can make it through this crisis without the kids missing out on key parts of their education.

The following are three of the common issues that students, parents and teachers across Australia have had to grapple with through the first few months of mass home learning. By taking a few sensible steps, you can minimize the impact of these trends and turn your family's schooling experience into a success.

Home learning and work from home go together. If you had whole days' worth of free time to supervise your kids in their studies, home learning would be a much easier process. There is a chance, however, that all the adults in the home may be working at their jobs, contributing remotely. Parents sharing their experiences with ABC News reported mixed results matching their kids' schedules with their own. In some school districts, there is a need for supervision, which has caused the parents' work schedules to shift – this has led to the unpleasant experience of working until 2 a.m. or on weekends. The challenges are greatest among parents of primary school-aged children, with many respondents telling ABC they have students under the age of 10 who require constant supervision or would be too disruptive of their parents' work to allow both to occur side by side. The challenges and stress associated with keeping these young ones on task can be relieved or compounded by communication. When communication is lax or overbearing, the result may be greater worries.

For parents trying to work from home while their kids are present and learning, collaboration with schools is one of the main ways to improve conditions. As ABC News explained, since kids are not truly being home schooled, parents are within their rights to communicate with teachers about difficulties. Parents who are only able to perform their own work when their children aren't learning can ensure their home offices are stocked with efficiency-building technology and their time-management strategies enable them to get a good night's

sleep.

Time management is tough. There are unique difficulties in cases when kids have flexible schedules and can hand in assignments when they're ready instead of at the exact end of a school day. While this level of scheduling freedom helps families avoid the struggles of clashing work and school time, keeping students motivated in the absence of classrooms and teachers is a new challenge, one that may become worse over time. Queensland University of Technology afternoons can be especially challenging professor Rebecca English told *The Guardian*, with students sometimes losing steam and focus after lunchtime. Amanda Dawkins, principal of Five Dock public school added that parents should be realistic in what they expect kids to accomplish at a sitting. Adults have to remember that students are not likely to sit down for six consecutive hours working. Getting them to do smaller blocks of work can suffice, and parents should not criticize themselves too harshly if their children become restless and have to stop. One of the keys to time management is not being too harsh, English told *The Guardian*. When parents and their kids join together to work on the schedule for the day, the students get a sense of agency. Just having hard limits laid out for them could cause kids to become restless. Parents demonstrate trust in their young ones when they work with them rather than against them on a home learning schedule, and the results may be accordingly better.

Technology is necessary. One of the major issues associated with distance learning is that it is managed digitally. If families don't have all the technology tools they need, and if schools are unable to provide them, it can be hard to meet requirements. A Victoria parent told *The Age* her family is having tech-related distance learning problems because they are presently staying in a temporary apartment, with little room and no printer. It's important for A home office well-stocked with affordable technology tools such as multi-function printers and scanners can help students keep handing in their work without missing a beat. Easy connectivity between these devices and computers or tablets is an important feature, because being slowed down by tough-to-use tech is not a good way for either children or parents to spend their days at home. The current situation, with distance learning *en masse* and in-person courses for kids who cannot stay at home, is a compromise to deal with an unprecedented situation. You and your family can make it through this time, as there are ways to address all of the issues rising to the surface through the first few months of social distancing. With the right attitude toward setting a schedule, support from the schools and access to effective technology, you can combine a work-from-home model with the new educational needs of your family. Until restrictions are relaxed, becoming familiar with distance learning is essential.

2.2 Online learning

Over the past years, internet revolution has made online learning become popular tools for learning as an alternative to face-to-face learning. The internet has become a medium of delivery for online teaching. To date, online learning has received considerable attention as a means of providing alternatives to traditional face-to-face, instructor-led education (Douglas & Van Der Vyver, 2004). Online teaching offers vast opportunity to expand the learning environment for diverse student's populations (Keengwe & Kidd, 2010). Pituch and Lee (2006) argue that students will get various instructional aid and communication method from online learning. This is because there are a wide set of technology engage in online learning including computer based learning, web based learning, virtual classroom and digital collaborations (Urdan and Weggen,2000). Further, online learning allowed students to participate regardless of geographic location, independent of time and place (Richardson & Swan, 2003).

Online learning is used interchangeably with e-learning. Govindasamy (2002) states that elearning includes instruction delivered via all electronic media such as the internet, intranets, extranets, and hypertext/hypermedia documents. Although there is some debate about an exact definition of eLearning, or electronic learning, but is generally accepted that learning content can be offered in different formats, such as text or video images, and electronically delivered via the internet, personal computer, personal digital assistant (PDA) or CD-ROM (Sandars & Langlois, 2005). As noted by Liaw, Huan and Chen (2007), e-learning had the following benefits.

First, it lowers costs. Second, its content is more timely and dependable. Third, it is a just in time learning approach. Fourth, it builds universal communities. And finally, it provides an increasingly valuable learner service (Rosenberg, 2001).

Govindasamy (2002) reported that e-learning is means for solving authentic learning and performance problem. Furthermore, e-learning also creates benefits such as reduced costs, regulatory compliance, meeting business needs, retraining employees, low recurring costs, and customer support costs (Barron, 2002; Gordon, 2003; Harun, 2002; Ismail, 2002). Sandars and Langlois (2005) through their recent survey found out that the most commonly stated advantages of elearning were the availability of up-to-date information, the speed and ease of access to a wide range of resources, and the opportunity for the learner to work at their own pace. Cantoni, Cellario and Porta (2004) asserted that e-learning is less expensive to deliver, it is self-paced (e-learning courses can be taken when they are necessary), it is faster (learners can skip material they already know), it provides consistent content (while traditional learning different teachers may teach different material about the same subject), it works from anywhere and anytime (e-learners can take training sessions when they want), it can be updated easily and quickly (online e-learning sessions are especially easy to keep up to date because the updated materials are simply uploaded to a server), it can lead to an increased retention and a stronger grasp on the subject (because many elements that are combined in e-learning to reinforce the message such as video, audio, quizzes, interaction) and can be easily managed for large groups of students. Internet learning environment have change the way people learn. Learning, discussion, knowledge sharing that usually happen in face-to-face learning is treated differently in online learning. Yang and Lin (2010) mentioned that learner may perceive the internet differently when they use it. As a result, this raises an issue of learner attitude to e-learning usage.

2.3 Learner Attitude

In order to understand what make learner engage in online learning, the present research believed that learner attitude play a significant role. This is because online learning environment allow students to arrange their own learning. Students are required to take more active role in their learning as online learning environment is not a teacher centered. Students may engage in online learning, control the learning time and procedures by themselves (Liaw, Huang, & Chen, 2007). Ho and Kuo (2010) argue that learner's computer attitudes play a significant role in the usability of online learning. Prior studies have shown that attitude and self-efficacy have been identified as important factors that affect learner's motivation, interest and performance i n internet based learning environments (Peng, Tsai and Wu, 2006).

Sun et al. (2008) cited Piccoli et al. (2001) finding stated that when learner is not afraid of complexity in information technology (positive attitude), learner will become more satisfied and effective in online learning. Their review also finds that attitude influences learning interest (Hanaffin & Cole, 1983). Learner attitude toward online learning also depend on system characteristic. Pituch and Lee (2006) from their empirical studies indicate that learner have greater intention to use the system if the system is user friendly. Their research also shows that system that enable learner to interact effectively and offer access to course content at the time influencing student to use the system for their learning. As noted by Selim (2007), learner attitude to engage in online learning is also related to student's previous knowledge in using computer. In addition, learner attitude toward internet is also important to determine learner's motivation, interest and performance in online learning environment (Yang & Lin, 2010). Following research from Liaw et al. (2007), there are three aspects of learner attitude that link to online learning environment. First; online learning as self-paced learning environment as learner can control their learning time and procedures. Second; online learning environment provides learners with various assisted function such as teacher-made online instruction. This function offers opportunities for teacher to be assisted tutor. Third; online learning provides multimedia instruction environment because it uses multimedia to support online teaching.

2.4 Online Learning Challenges & How to Overcome These Problems

Online Learning Challenges – Adaptability - Students find it difficult to adapt to an online learning environment immediately after traditional classroom learning. Due to the sudden change, they are not able to adapt to the commuter based learning. Students who have been always studying in the traditional classroom mindset are not able to focus on online platforms. It is important for them to accept the new learning environment with an open mind. How to overcome the challenge? Nowadays adaptive learning is using Artificial intelligence to adjust the content according to individual needs. It helps in providing personalized courses to identify their weaknesses and strengths for better learning outcomes.

Online Learning Challenges – Technical Issues - Many students are not well equipped with a high internet connection that is required for online learning. Due to this, they face problems in going live for virtual learning and other platforms that require internet connection. They face technical issues as they are not much aware of technology and computer applications. A slow and high internet connection can play an important role in how quickly you can attend the class and do not miss any live sessions. There is a possibility of poor connectivity if you find difficulty in downloading some information related to the subject, blurred videos, etc. You just need to find a high-speed internet connection at your home. And know where you can get technical support for your connection and other technical issues related to software and tools for effective learning.

Online Learning Challenges – Computer Knowledge - Lack of computer education is a major concern in today's world. There are many students who still cannot operate basic computers with MS word and PowerPoint. And whenever some technical issues emerge, they find it difficult to solve the problem in such a scenario. They face difficulties with live classes, usage of appropriate icons, MS office, communication-related apps and websites, browsing study materials, etc. Sometimes they do not know technology proficiency like login, live classes, creating and submitting work, communicating with teachers and friends. Students should be provided access to support devices that can help them solve technical problems via call, email or live chat. You should pay attention to your instructor during the process of solving the issues.

Online Learning Challenges – Time Management - In many cases students find difficulty in managing their time with online learning. Online learning is completely new for them and requires intensive work. They need a scheduled planner to manage their time in an effective manner. Online learning provides flexible time unlike traditional classrooms. But some face difficulties in adjusting to the time required for online learning. Time management is the most important factor in online learning. It needs time and effort for better learning outcomes. You should know the factors that can affect your timings during the learning process such as *Avoid Distractions* – Try to avoid distractions that can affect your learning. There are many platforms that can engage you for entertainment and communication. But make sure that you set time for breaks and focus on learning as scheduled to avoid missing live classes or sessions. *Create To-Do List* – You can prepare a list of activities on an everyday basis. Try to break down large activities into smaller ones for better learning outcomes. Use this list to tackle each task. Make sure that you adhere to the list and establish the routine that can make time management practices easy. *Seek Help* – To manage time during online learning seek help from your parents, friends and families. So that you will not miss out on learning and at the same time work will be done. *Avoid Multitasking* – Do not try to take up multiple tasks at the same time. Complete one task at a time as it can make your work less effective and productive.

Online Learning Challenges – Self Motivation - Students start losing hope once they find difficulty in online learning. It requires motivation to complete tasks and engage students with their learning. Lack of motivation is a common challenge for all students. *Involve Yourself* – You should show up for all the activities and learning during the sessions. Make sure that you log in every day, check for the status and appear in all the sessions and discussions. Connect with your friends and teachers for asking and sharing information. *Schedule Time for Learning* – You have to stick to a study plan for effective learning. Take a break and resume back to learning with the same interest and enthusiasm. *Stay Positive* – Make sure that you are positive towards online

learning. Make use of the time in the best way and gain knowledge for better learning outcomes.

Online Learning Challenges – Distraction - Learning from home is an amazing experience. You might expect things around you to be like a school campus. But at home things are different for example, you might want a massive classroom, parks, playgrounds, canteens, friends, teachers around you to guide and learn. But with online learning, you have to manage everything in one room with parents around you. You can be easily distracted by small things at home. You should inform your parents and friends about the time of online learning so that there will be no distractions from their side. Restrict the study area for others to come during live sessions and video calls. Make sure you relax in the breaks set in the time table. In this way, you will concentrate on learning and spend quality time with your friends and family.

Online Learning Challenges – Learning Styles - Most of the students have learned in the physical classroom. Online learning can make you adapt to different styles of learning. There are some students who can adapt to these styles quickly but what about the students who need time? In such cases, they lack concentration, inability to understand the live classes, difficulty in creating projects and assignments using technology. To get better learning outcomes, it is important to understand the learning styles. You can learn through interaction, visual presentations, audio classes or written notes. Follow your own learning style that helps in enhancing your learning experience.

Online Learning Challenges – Communication - Students lack effective communication skills during online learning. Teachers give assignments for improving reading and writing skills but there is a possibility that they might not be able to write so convincingly that educators understand the concept behind their assignments. There are some students who feel shy to communicate with their teachers and friends due to the new model of learning. It might happen due to lack of interest, poor technological skills with apps and video calls or unable to express themselves via live chats, emails or text messages. You should become aware of the importance of communication for better learning. Online learning enhances your learning experience. It provides a platform for communication and interaction with others. In this way, you are able to learn from them and improve their knowledge and skills. If you have any issues in communication, then seek help from teachers and friends. Ask them tools that can help you improve your communication skills. You read, write and interact for better communication.

Online Learning Challenges – Virtual Engagement - Online classes help teachers to provide reading material, assignments, communication via email, live chats or messages and delivering content by live sessions, presentations, recorded videos, or lectures for the students. In spite of all these activities, still some students do not find engaging compared to a traditional one. Students find it difficult to communicate in person who struggles with understanding concepts. Many times, these students do not even approach teachers to clear their doubts. You can communicate with your teachers in private to clear doubts either through virtual learning platforms or calls. Your teachers might be able to help you out more clearly. And they can help you with some of the easy reading materials that are simple to understand. You can also take extra time with your teachers and friends after the online classes for a better understanding of the subject.

Online Learning Challenges – Feedback - Every student needs feedback for their performance during the learning process so that they can improve their learning abilities. They are not only observed during the tests or exams but also for each assignment and project. Research reveals that the students hardly visit their assignments to check their suggestions and comments. The feedback model with respect to online will be difficult for them to understand and implement. You can approach your teachers for feedback related to your performance. Teachers can give your personalized guidance for improvement and identify your weaknesses and strengths. You can improve your learning pattern based on the feedback. Unless you receive feedback from teachers, there are chances of less improvement in your learning.

2.5 Objectives of the study

The purpose of this study is to identify the Issues and Challenges of Online Learning specifically on online learning at the Elementary level of Northwestern University. Specifically, the study sought answers to the following questions: (1) What is the Profile of the Respondents as to Age, Gender, Grade level, Device used for Online Learning, Availability of Internet, and Hours of using computer per week? (2) What are the Attitudes of the respondents toward Online Learning? (3) What Issues and Challenges encountered by the pupils in using online learning?

2.6 Research Paradigm

The main goal of this study is to identify the Issues and Challenges of Online Learning of the Elementary Pupils of Northwestern University. It involves the Profile of the Pupils, the Attitudes Toward Online Learning, and the Issues and Challenges encountered by the pupils in using online learning.

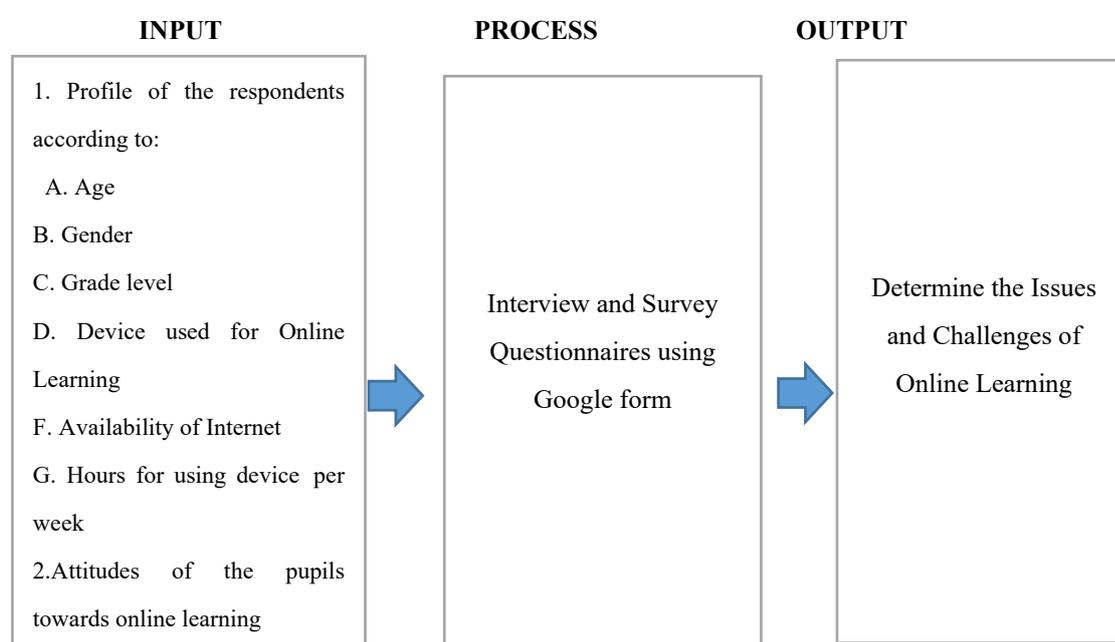


Figure 1. Research Paradigm of the Study

3. Methodology

Research Design - The present study uses Quantitative-Descriptive design to determine the Issues and Challenges of Online Learning of the Elementary Pupils. Quantitative-Descriptive research design gathers numerical data which can be ranked, measured or categorized through statistical analysis (Creswell, 2013). Statistics is applied effectively to organize, evaluate and analyze the research data in order to come up with meaningful information that serves to answer the research problems (Almeida et al., 2016).

Participants - The population of this study was the Elementary Pupils of Northwestern University specifically the Grade 4 to Grade 6 Pupils. Total enumeration was used with a total of fifty-four (54) Elementary pupils: sixteen (16) Grade 4 pupils, twenty-three (25) Grade 5 pupils, and fifteen (15) Grade 6 pupils.

Research Instruments - The research instruments consist of three parts. Part I is about the profile of the respondents. It determines the age, gender, grade level/section, device used for online learning, availability of internet, and number of hours in using device per week. Part II determines the Attitudes of the pupils towards Online Learning, Part III consists of the Issues and Challenges encountered by the pupils in using online learning. Items on each part of the questionnaire were taken from the articles read by the researchers.

4. Results

Table 1 presents the profile of the respondents as to age, sex, grade level, and device used for online learning. Majority of the respondents came from the Grade V pupils with the frequency of 25 (50%) followed by the Grade IV pupils with 15 frequency (30%) and Grade VI with the frequency of 10 (20%). It also shows that out of 50 respondents, there are 27 males (54%) and 23 females (46%). Moreover, the table presents that the age 11 has the highest frequency with 22 (44%) followed by the age of 10 with 16 frequency (32%) followed by the age of 9 and below with the frequency of 9 (18%) the age 12 obtained the lowest frequency with 3 (16%) and there are no respondents in ages 13 and above. The table presents also the device used for online learning, there are 24 (48%) who are using mobile phone followed by laptop with the frequency of 16 (32%) followed by tablet with 6 frequency (12%) and there are 4 pupils (8%) who are using desktop. Lastly, the availability of internet, there are 34 (68%) who are using Wifi, and 16 (32%) who are using Data.

Table 1
Profile of the Respondents (n=50)

Age	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
9 and below	9	18%
10	16	32%
11	22	44%
12	3	6%
Gender	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Male	27	54%
Female	23	46%
Grade Level	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Grade IV	15	30%
Grade V	25	50%
Grade VI	10	20%
Devices used for online learning	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Mobile phone	24	48%
Laptop	16	32%
Tablet	6	12%
Desktop	4	8%
Availability of Internet	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Wifi	34	68%
Data	16	32%

Table 2
Attitudes of the pupils towards online learning

STATEMENT	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
ATTITUDES OF THE PUPILS		
Online activities are interactive	3.20	Strongly Agree
Online learning is cooperative	3.14	Agree
Online learning is useful and interesting	3.10	Agree
Online learning gives me enough time to do my tasks	2.96	Agree
Slow internet connectivity is a problem for online learning	3.54	Strongly Agree
Online Learning is frustrating to use	2.36	Disagree
I find online learning more convenient than face-to-face learning	2.18	Disagree
Online Learning allows me to use different computer programs.	2.72	Agree
Online Learning has motivated me to perform better	2.76	Agree
Online Learning can lead students to cheating and to other unethical practices.	2.90	Disagree
Overall Mean	2.89	Agree

Table 2 presents the data of the attitudes of the pupils towards online learning. Based on our findings, majority of the respondents answered strongly agree, slow internet connectivity is a problem of online learning (3.54), online learning are interactive (3.2), online learning is cooperative (3.14), online learning are useful and interesting (3.1), online learning gives enough time to do tasks (2.96), online learning can lead pupils to cheating and to other unethical practices (2.9), online learning has motivated me to perform better (2.76), online learning allows to use different computer programs (2.72), online learning is frustrating to use (2.36), and lastly they find online learning more convenient than face to face learning (2.18). Furthermore, it indicates that the slow internet has become the risks for the pupils in their online learning. Besides, online learning activities are interactive, based on the pupils they are strongly agree with this.

On the attitudes of the pupils towards online learning, majority of the respondents answered agree, slow internet connectivity is a problem of learning which obtained a weighted mean of (3.54). It indicates that the slow internet has become the risks for the pupils in their online learning. Besides, online learning activities are interactive, based on the pupils they are strongly agree with this. In the issues and challenges in using online learning, having poor connection of internet is the most encountered problems among the issues and challenges of online learning which obtained a weighted mean of 3.1.

Table 3
Issues and challenges encountered by the pupils using online learning

STATEMENT	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation
ISSUES AND CHALLENGES		
Poor connection of Internet	3.1	Serious
Instruction/ Methodology	2.72	Serious
Limited Teacher's Assistance	2.68	Serious
Lack of Resources materials/references	2.5	Slightly Serious
No guidance from parents	2.56	Serious
Peaceful Environment	2.62	Serious
Stressful	2.7	Serious
Adaptability	2.54	Serious
Time Management	2.84	Serious
Technical Issues	2.86	Serious
Distractions	2.66	Serious
Self-Motivated	2.52	Serious
Interactions with classmates	2.1	Slightly Serious
Overall Mean	2.65	Serious

Legend: 3.26 – 4.00=Very Serious; 2.51 – 3.25=Serious; 1.76 – 2.50=Slightly Serious; 1.00 – 1.75= Not Serious

Table 3 The table displays the data of the issues and challenges encountered by the pupils using online learning. The respondents are serious about poor connection (3.1), Instruction/Methodology (2.72), Limited Teacher's Assistance (2.68), No guidance from parents (2.56), Peaceful Environment (2.62), Stressful (2.7), Adaptability (2.54), Time Management (2.84), Technical Issues (2.86), Distractions (2.66), and self-motivated (2.52). Some respondents answered slightly serious in the lack of resources materials/references (2.5), and interactions with classmates (2.1). The composite mean is (2.65) which means the Grade 4, Grade 5 and Grade 6 are serious in the issues and challenges towards online learning. This enables that the pupils are having a hard time to survive in their online learning. Based on findings, the greatest challenge that the pupils experienced was related to poor connection of internet. It is, however, found that the least challenge was on the lack of interactions with classmates since there is limited collaboration of the pupils.

5. Conclusion

In the light of the findings of the study, the following were concluded: On the attitudes of the pupils towards online learning, the high rate among the issues and challenges of online learning is the slow internet connectivity. Basic as it is, it should have the lowest rate committed since mostly the availability of internet they are using is Wifi. But based in the result, we found out that online learning is more convenient than face-to-face learning. On the issues and challenges of the pupils in using online learning, as well as in the attitudes of the pupils, the most

problematic is having a poor internet connection. It is, however, found that the least challenge was on the lack of interactions with classmates since there is limited collaboration of the pupils.

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