# Exploration of student perceptions on the benefits and challenges of face-to-face instruction in a state university

Alfonso, Norman Villanueva ✉

*Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, Philippines (nv.alfonso1860@gmail.com)*

## Abstract

The education system is continually evolving, particularly in response to advancements in technology, a trend underscored by the COVID-19 pandemic. The abrupt shift to new learning modalities, including online and hybrid models, has prompted debate about the role of face-to-face instruction. Despite the rise of these alternatives, face-to-face classroom teaching is often regarded as irreplaceable. This study explores the perceived benefits and challenges of in-person instruction as reported by students at Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology a state university. This study utilized a descriptive qualitative-quantitative survey research design involving the distribution of a questionnaire to 183 students and in-depth interviews with selected students. The findings suggest that face-to-face instruction is valued for fostering interaction and communication, enhancing engagement, and providing a structured environment conducive to hands-on learning and immediate feedback. However, the study also identified several challenges, such as difficulties in concentration, distractions, and limited access to resources, alongside logistical issues like rigid schedules and potential absences due to personal or environmental factors. The study concludes that while face-to-face instruction offers significant advantages, it is not without its drawbacks. These challenges highlight the need for thoughtful adjustments in pedagogical approaches. The findings offer insights that could inform educators and policymakers, particularly within institutions like the NEUST College of Education, on how to enhance classroom instruction for improved learning outcomes.

*Keywords:* face-to-face classroom instruction, social interaction, communication, student engagement, learning engagement

# Exploration of student perceptions on the benefits and challenges of face-to-face instruction in a state university

## 1. Introduction

Every person cherishes the joy of thought of going to school and study. But when the world was struck by the pandemic (COVID-19) it has led to a significant increase in remote learning and cause a halt for face to face classes, schools where closed and all physical activities related to the academe suddenly came to stopped. Schools and universities around the world shifted to online classes. According to Paul and Jefferson (2019), the advent of online education has made it possible for students with busy lives and limited flexibility to obtain education. As opposed to traditional classroom teaching, web-based instruction has made it possible to offer classes worldwide through a single Internet connection.

Although online classes boast several advantages over traditional education, still it has a lot of drawbacks, including limited communal synergies. The World Bank identified that the pandemic has aggravate the dramatic disruption in the delivery of education and health services. It has exacerbated the issue of learning poverty as the closure of schools and disruptions to education have left millions of children unable to access quality education. The enormous challenges in the delivery of distance learning platform students learning losses become so evident and enormous. Scholars called it "*learning poverty*". Learning poverty refers to the percentage of children who are unable to read and understand a simple text by the age of 10.

According to World Bank and UNESCO (2021), it has become clear that many children around the world are not learning to read proficiently. Even though most children are in school, a large proportion are not acquiring fundamental skills. Moreover, World Bank and UNESCO has estimated 260 million children are not even in school. This is the leading edge of a learning crisis that threatens countries' efforts to build human capital and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) many of them suffer a significant learning loss, as well as adverse effects on students' current and future welfare. While online classes have allowed for continued learning, there are many advantages to face-to-face classes that cannot be replicated in a virtual setting. In-person instruction has a long history and is a traditional method of teaching, but it remains the preferred method of learning for many students and teachers. This study explores the advantages of face-to-face classes, highlighting why they are still important in a rapidly changing world.

***Statement of the Problem -*** The researcher's aim in this academic endeavor is to answer the following set of questions:

➢ How does the level of student engagement in face-to-face classes be describe?

➢ How does student satisfaction be described with face-to-face classes?

➢ What are the advantages of face-to-face classes?

➢ What are the common challenges on face-to-face classes?

## 2. Related Literature

### *Advantages of face-to-face learning*

Several studies have highlighted the numerous advantages of face-to-face learning. Alam (2020) emphasizes that one of the key benefits is the opportunity for immediate feedback and clarification from instructors. Similarly, Means et al. (2013) assert that face-to-face learning allows students to address misunderstandings in real-time, thereby fostering a deeper comprehension of the subject matter. This dynamic interaction is less prevalent in online

learning environments, where such immediate engagement and resolution of confusion are often limited. In the realm of social interaction, Bernard et al. (2014) highlight that face-to-face settings enable students to engage with their peers, thereby fostering collaboration, teamwork, and the development of interpersonal skills. This aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) long-established theory that peer interaction enhances learning through group work, discussions, and a social constructivist approach to education. Regarding engagement and motivation, Schmid et al. (2014) argue that physical presence in the classroom often leads to higher levels of student engagement and motivation. Additionally, teachers are better equipped to monitor students' progress and intervene when necessary, which helps to prevent disengagement. Researchers further emphasize the benefits of a structured learning environment, noting that classrooms provide fewer distractions compared to virtual settings, where learners are more susceptible to procrastination and external interruptions.

### Challenges of face-to-face learning

Despite the advantages of face-to-face learning, it also presents its own set of challenges. Research indicates that students may encounter issues related to accessibility and equity due to geographic or financial constraints. Factors such as transportation difficulties, school fees, and familial obligations can hinder regular attendance (Kearns et al., 2020). Additionally, class size and the provision of individualized attention pose significant challenges. According to Niemi and Kousa (2020), larger class sizes in face-to-face settings may impede personalized instruction, as teachers often struggle to address the diverse needs of all students. This issue is particularly detrimental to students with learning difficulties or those requiring additional support. Health and safety concerns further complicate face-to-face learning environments. The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the health risks associated with in-person instruction. Even in the post-pandemic period, overcrowded classrooms and insufficient health protocols in certain regions continue to present significant risks for both students and educators (Tria, 2020).

### Challenges of Face-to face Learning in Philippine Schools During COVID-19

The Philippines was not exempt from facing significant challenges in sustaining face-to-face learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. David et al. (2021) note that many schools in the country lacked the infrastructure and resources necessary to implement effective health protocols, including adequate space for physical distancing, sufficient sanitation supplies, and well-ventilated classrooms. While some schools were able to transition to online learning, rural and under-resourced areas struggled due to poor internet access and a lack of technological devices. This digital divide exacerbated disparities between students with access to technology and those without (Joaquin et al., 2020). The frequent closure of schools due to COVID-19 outbreaks raised further concerns about the safety of returning to classrooms. Even with precautionary measures in place, Tria (2020) observed that the risk of infection remained high, particularly in densely populated areas. These ongoing challenges underscored the difficulties of maintaining in-person education during the pandemic.

### 3. Methodology

For this study, the researcher applied the descriptive qualitative-quantitative method. In the study of Leedy and Ormrod (2001), as cited by Williams (2007), the descriptive research approach is a basic research method that examines the situation, as it exists in its current state. While, qualitative-quantitative method can be described as according to researcher Saul McLeod (2019), as qualitative research is the process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting non-numerical data, such as language. It can be used to understand how an individual subjectively perceives and gives meaning to their social reality. Qualitative data is defined as non-numerical data, such as text, video, photographs or audio recordings. This type of data can be collected using diary accounts or in-depth interviews, and analyzed using grounded theory or thematic analysis. At the same time, the quantitative research involves the process of objectively collecting and analyzing numerical data to describe, predict, or control variables of interest.

Questionnaire and check list was used as the main instrument for data gathering using the Likert scale to

determine with accuracy the advantages and challenges of face-to-face classroom instruction as perceived by the students. In particular, the researcher deals with 183 tertiary students of the 3rd year level as the primary source of data. As suggested by the research statistician the Slovin's Formula was used, that out of 347 3rd year students hence only 183 or 52. 73% of the population serve as the respondents. The questionnaire was presented to some of the faculty members of the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology College of Education whose expertise brought a big help in scrutinizing and evaluating the content. Their suggestions and recommendations were all incorporated to improve the instrument. Moreover, the researcher conducted a pilot test to determine the reliability of the revised research instrument. Selected students participated in the pilot testing, Cronbach's alpha was used to test the internal consistency of the questionnaire. The results indicate that the research instrument has good internal consistence since the values were at least 0.82 in all domains.

To determine the students' responses, the researcher used frequency counts, rank, and percentages. The ranking method was used to determine the advantages and challenges of face-to-face classes. This study was conducted in January 2024 – May 2024.

**Table 1**
*Level of Engagement*

| Mean Score | Verbal Interpretation (VI) | Verbal Description (VD) |
|---|---|---|
| 4.2 – 5.0 | Very highly engaged | The verbal description of very highly engaged is hereby used when the students are extremely fully engaged in their face-to-face classes. |
| 3.4 – 4.1 | Highly engaged | The verbal description of highly engaged is hereby used when the students are fully engaged in their face-to-face classes. |
| 2.6 – 3.3 | Moderately engaged | The verbal description of moderately engaged is hereby used when the students are not always fully engaged in their face-to-face classes. |
| 1.8 – 2.5 | Low engaged | The verbal description of low engaged is hereby used when the students are not actively engaged in their face-to-face classes. |
| 1.0 – 1.79 | Very Low engaged | The verbal description of very low engaged is hereby used when the students are totally disengaged in their face-to-face classes. |

The Likert scale used in the study as shown in Table 1. Includes a verbal interpretation **(VI)** that summarizes the given mean score, as well as a verbal description **(VD)** that explains in detail how the responses might be described as "very highly engaged", "highly engaged", "moderately engaged", "low engaged" and "very low engaged".

## 4. Results and Discussion

**Table 2**
*Student engagement in face-to-face classes*

| Student engagement in face-to-face classes. | Mean | VI |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Attention and class participation | 3.41 | Highly |
| 2. Interest on subject matter | 4.28 | Very Highly |
| 3. Motivation to come to school and learn | 3.58 | Highly |
| 4. Perceived relevance of the material/lesson | 3.33 | Moderately |
| 5. Prior knowledge of the subject matter | 3.02 | Moderately |
| 6. Learning style: Students learning style that is compatible with the teaching style of the instructor | 2.91 | Moderately |
| 7. Classroom environment and management | 3.68 | Highly |
| 8. Instructor-student relationship | 4.32 | Very Highly |
| Total | **3.56** | **Highly Engaged** |

As perceived by the respondents regarding the level of student engagement in face-to-face-classes, items 8 and 2 got the highest mean score of 4.32 and 4.28 with very highly engaged verbal interpretation, next are items 7, 3, and 1 with mean score of 3.68, 3.58, and 3.41 with a verbal interpretation of highly engaged. Lastly, items 4, 5 and 6 got a mean score of 3.33, 3.02, and 2.91 with a verbal interpretation of moderately engaged. The combined results of the data from very highly engaged to moderately engaged indicates that majority of the students are more actively involved or consistently engaged in their learning when it comes to face-to-face or in person classes. This study implies that student engagement in face-to-face classes refers to the degree to which students actively participate in the learning process such as; Instructor-student relationship item 8, according to Glossary Education

Reform Journal (2016) the quality of the relationship between the instructor and the students can influence student engagement. A positive, respectful relationship can create a safe and welcoming learning environment that promotes engagement. In terms of interest on subject matter item 2 students who find the subject matter interesting are more likely to engage with it and participate in discussions.

Item 7 Classroom environment and management, it has been proven that factors such as the classroom layout, lighting, noise levels, and temperature can all influence student learning engagement. Classroom management refers to the wide variety of skills and techniques that teachers use to keep students organized, orderly, focused, attentive, on task, and academically productive during a class. Furthermore, according to Lemov (2014) a well-organized classroom can create a positive learning environment that helps to engage students and improve their academic performance.

Items 3 and 1 are closely linked to each other, "motivation to come to school and learn and attention and class participation". Students who are motivated to learn and succeed in the class are more likely to come to school and don't like to be absent. While, attention and class participation; students who are able to focus their attention on the instructor, the lesson, and their peers are more likely to engage with the material and participate in class because of being motivated. Additionally, the Glossary Education Reform Student Engagement (2016) states, that student engagement refers to the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress in their education. Generally speaking, the concept of "student engagement" is predicated on the belief that learning improves when students are inquisitive, interested, or inspired, and the opposite of that is "learning tends to suffer when students are bored, dispassionate, disaffected, or otherwise "disengaged." Stronger student engagement or improved student engagement are commonly based on instructional objectives expressed by educators.

In items 4,5 and 6 perceived relevance; students who perceive the material as relevant to their personal or career goals are more likely to engage with it and participate in discussions. Regarding to prior knowledge, students who have prior knowledge of the subject matter are more likely to engage with it and participate in discussions. While in the learning style, students who have a learning style that is compatible with the teaching style of the instructor are more likely to engage with the material and participate in discussions.

In the recent article produce by Cambridge World of Better Learning (2022) They said that making lessons meaningful for learners is one of the key elements of successful learning, and relevance is a vital contributor to learner engagement. If we feel that what we are learning is relevant to our lives, we become emotionally invested in the lesson and the content, and are more motivated to engage. For learning to be successful, learners need a personal connection to the material, and to perceive its usefulness in the real-world. While regarding the issue concerning student's prior knowledge of the subject matter, students need a personal connection to the material, whether it's through engaging them emotionally or connecting the new information with previously acquired knowledge. Without that, students may not only disengage and quickly forget, but they may also lose the motivation to try.' Willis (2007).

In principle, it is assumed that when students are engaged in face-to-face classes, they are more likely to participate in class discussions, ask questions, and collaborate with their peers. They may also feel a sense of belonging and connection to their classmates and instructors, which can contribute to a positive learning environment. In so doing, engaged students are often more likely to achieve academic success and meet their learning goals. They may also develop a deeper understanding of the subject matter and be better equipped to apply their knowledge to real-world situations. Additionally, the researcher was able to gathered responses thru the use of an in-depth interview with the faculty of the College of Education. The results of the interviews with the faculty supports the findings of the study that the higher the level of student engagement, it gives the student much more benefits in terms of learning, retaining information, develop critical thinking skills, and achieve academic success.

In this study, the researcher examined students' levels of satisfaction across several dimensions, including the quality of teaching, course content, classroom environment, and interactions with both peers and instructors. These findings are presented in the subsequent tables for detailed analysis.

**Table 3**
*Level of Student Satisfaction*

| Quality of Teaching | VI | f | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4.2 – 5.0 | Very highly satisfied | 45 | 24.59 |
| 3.4 – 4.1 | Highly satisfied | 67 | 36.61 |
| 2.6 – 3.3 | Moderately satisfied | 53 | 28.96 |
| 1.8 – 2.5 | Low satisfied | 12 | 6.56 |
| 1.0 – 1.79 | Very Low satisfied | 6 | 3.28 |
| Total | | 183 | 100 |

Table 3 shows that level of student satisfaction in terms of quality of teaching were distributed as follows; 45 respondents out of the 183 indicate very highly satisfied with an equivalent of 24.59% of the total respondent, 67 respondents answered highly satisfied with a 36.61% equivalent, there are 53 respondents who answered moderately satisfied with an equivalent of 28.96%, while 12 and 6 respondents answered low and very low satisfied with 6.56% and 3.28% respectively. It is very interesting to note that the data reflects how the majority of the 183 3rd year students were satisfied on quality of teaching by having face to face classes due to the high score responses. The survey results conform with the study of Gao (2021) as it positively identified the relationship of quality of teaching with student satisfaction. The study shows that quality of teaching is divided into four indicator elements, teaching content, teaching methods, teaching conditions, and teaching management. According to Gao (2021) through correlation and multiple regression analysis, it can be seen that the teaching content, teaching methods, teaching conditions and teaching management have a significant positive correlation with the quality of teaching, which is an important factor affecting student's satisfaction.

**Table 4**
*Level of Student Satisfaction in Course Content*

| Course Content | VI | f | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4.2 – 5.0 | Very highly satisfied | 40 | 21.86 |
| 3.4 – 4.1 | Highly satisfied | 63 | 34.43 |
| 2.6 – 3.3 | Moderately satisfied | 60 | 32.79 |
| 1.8 – 2.5 | Low satisfied | 13 | 7.10 |
| 1.0 – 1.79 | Very Low satisfied | 7 | 3.82 |
| Total | | 183 | 100 |

Table 4 shows that the level of student satisfaction in terms of course content was distributed as follows; 40 respondents out of the 183 answered very highly satisfied with an equivalent of 21.86% of the total respondent, 63 respondents highly satisfied with a 34.43% equivalent, there are 60 respondents who indicates moderately satisfied with an equivalent of 32.79%, while 13 and 7 respondents answered low and very low satisfied with 7.10% and 3.82% respectively. It is very noticeable that the data reflects how the majority of the 183 3rd year students were satisfied on course content by having face to face classes. In the study of Eom as cited by Gray and DiLoreto (2016) it concurs with the survey result as Eom investigated the relationships of course structure, learner interaction (with each other and the instructor), and instructor presence by using structural equation modeling to examine the "determinants of students' satisfaction and their perceived learning outcomes", Eom concluded that course structure, instructor feedback, self-motivation, learning style, interaction, and instructor facilitation significantly impacted student satisfaction. Additionally, course design and class environmental structure have been found to be substantial factors in determining student access, engagement and success (Errey & Wood, 2011; Kift, Nelson, & Clarke, 2010). Providing students with the opportunity to interact with peers and instructors were identified as significant factors for student achievement and retention and support the constructs of social constructivism, a component of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1978).

**Table 5**
*Level of Student Satisfaction in Classroom Environment*

| Classroom Environment | VI | f | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4.2 – 5.0 | Very highly satisfied | 49 | 26.78 |
| 3.4 – 4.1 | Highly satisfied | 70 | 38.25 |
| 2.6 – 3.3 | Moderately satisfied | 55 | 30.05 |
| 1.8 – 2.5 | Low satisfied | 6 | 3.28 |
| 1.0 – 1.79 | Very Low satisfied | 3 | 1.64 |
| Total | | 183 | 100 |

In this table 5 it shows that the level of student satisfaction in terms of classroom environment; 49 respondents out of the 183 indicate very highly satisfied with an equivalent of 26.78% of the total respondent, 70 respondents answered highly satisfied with a 38.25% equivalent, there are 55 respondents who answered moderately satisfied with an equivalent of 30.05%, while 6 and 3 respondents answered low and very low satisfied with 3.28% and 1.64% respectively. In terms of classroom environment satisfaction rate. It is evident that the data reflects how the majority of the 183 3rd year students were satisfied on this area during face to face classes. It is also remarkably noticeable that low and very low satisfied column has a very low turn outs of score.

Of those surveyed, 95.08% of the total sample of students, is indicative that classroom environment plays a major role in their level of satisfaction thru learning process. Trowler (2010) state that one of the components of student engagement are often directly related to the design of the classroom itself such as architecture and learning spaces. In support of this, Cotner, Loper, Walker, & Brooks, (2013) state, that classrooms are designed to encourage student interaction and facilitate active or team-based collaborative learning by including features such as round tables, movable chairs, student laptop connections for sharing work on overhead projectors and tableside whiteboards have been cited as innovative and meeting student need. While, Herman Miller Associates, in an effort to increase student engagement and thus improve student performance, has created and marketed classroom arrangements designed to this end. Using concepts such as innovation, collaboration, and mobility as foundations to their work, classroom spaces are designed to enhance opportunities for students to engage in discussion about what they are learning, relate the content to personal experience and apply the new information to their lives (Herman Miller, 2008).

**Table 6**
*Level of Student Satisfaction in Interaction with Peers and Instructors*

| Interaction with Peers and Instructors | VI | f | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4.2 – 5.0 | Very highly satisfied | 47 | 25.68 |
| 3.4 – 4.1 | Highly satisfied | 70 | 38.25 |
| 2.6 – 3.3 | Moderately satisfied | 57 | 31.15 |
| 1.8 – 2.5 | Low satisfied | 6 | 3.28 |
| 1.0 – 1.79 | Very Low satisfied | 3 | 1.64 |
| Total | | 183 | 100 |

Table 6 shows that level of student satisfaction in terms of interaction with peers and instructors are as follows; 47 respondents out of the 183 indicate very highly satisfied with an equivalent of 25.68% of the total respondent, 70 respondents answered highly satisfied with a 38.25% equivalent, there are 57 respondents who answered moderately satisfied with an equivalent of 31.15%, while 6 and 3 respondents answered low and very low satisfied with 3.28% and 1.64% respectively. Again, it is very interesting to note that the data reflects how the majority of the 183 3rd year students were satisfied on their learning experience on interaction with peers and instructors having face to face classes due to the high score responses.

In the research of Young K., Young C., & Beyer A., (2017) it says that they are generally unanimous in agreement that students learn better when they can engage with one another as they learn new concepts. Vygotsky as cited by Shabani (2016) believed that knowledge is culturally constructed through interaction with materials as well as social interaction with peers and instructors. Additionally, Coates (2005) has supported the framework of Vygotsky's work stating that the student engagement is foundational to the assumption of constructivism and the influence of individuals co-constructing knowledge together in activities that are purposeful, active, and

collaborative are indeed vital in constructing learning.

The literature surrounding this topic has said that student satisfaction in face-to-face classes can be described as the degree to which students feel fulfilled, content, and happy with their learning experience in a traditional classroom setting. To authenticate this truth, the researcher administered this survey in four categories as presented in their respective tables above. To sum it up the researcher made a figure that would show the total percentage of the level of student satisfaction in this four areas being presented.
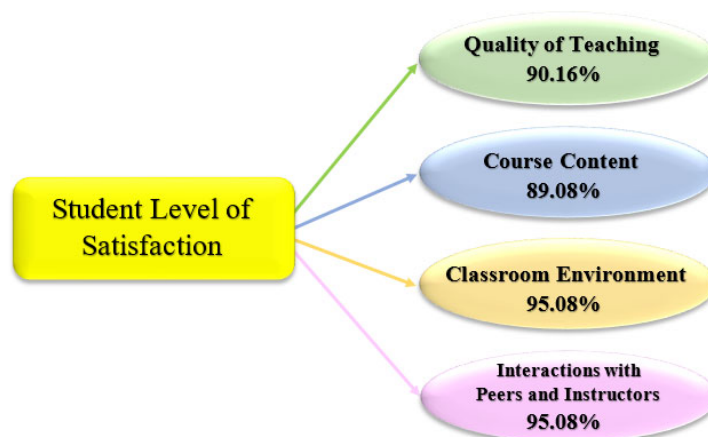


*Figure 1*. Summary of level of Students Satisfaction

As shown in Figure 1 the study assessed the satisfaction levels of students based on various factors, and the results were remarkable. In general, to obtain the total satisfaction score, the researcher used the basic system of addition. Specifically, the researcher added the scores reflected on specific tables and calculated the corresponding percentage to arrive at the final result. Overall, the study shows that students are highly satisfied with the factors evaluated, as indicated by the remarkable results obtained. The high percentage of classroom environment and interactions with peers and instructors, which both had a 95.08% turnout, is very noticeable in this study. These findings, suggest that a substantial proportion of students demonstrate a strong preference for, and desire to engage in, face-to-face interactions with their classmates and peer groups. This underscores the importance of social and collaborative dynamics in the educational experience.

Studies reveals that when students are satisfied with face-to-face classes, they are more likely to feel engaged and motivated in their learning, attend classes regularly, and perform better academically. A positive classroom environment, where students feel supported and encouraged, can enhance the learning experience and contribute to higher satisfaction levels. According to Garcia, (2022) "The level of satisfaction of the recipient is related to how well the expectations, interests, needs, and demands of the recipient are met." It can be noted that this statement conveys that the satisfaction of the student is directly linked to how well the expectations, interests, needs, and demands of the student are met, with respect to various aspects of the learning experience. In this study, the researcher believes that the face-to-face traditional approach of learning, serves as a means of meeting the overall satisfaction level of students. This statement conveys that the researcher believes that a traditional, face-to-face approach of teaching and learning, can be effective in meeting the satisfaction level of students, and even identifies several key aspects of the learning experience that contribute to this area.

In terms of advantages of face-to-face classes, Table 7 shows that items number 9,8,1,6 and 5 got the highest frequency and percentage results and rank accordingly. The result of the survey was almost similar with the findings of the study conducted by Paul and Jefferson (2019). According to Paul and Jefferson face-to-face education is better than online education since it boosts interpersonal interaction between students and their instructors, it encourages students to connect with others and learn how to socialize with different people, and there is less distraction. Regarding interpersonal interaction between students and their instructors they noted that it is very much vital since it helps teachers identify students' weaknesses in different areas and develop ways to

help the learners overcome the challenges. Moreover, creating a good relationship with teachers allows students to have the courage to ask questions in parts where they experience difficulties.

**Table 7**
*Advantages of face-to-face classes*

| Advantages of face-to-face classes | f | % | Rank |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Students were able to concentrate better and gain more understanding of the lesson discussed by the teacher. | 112 | 61.20 | 3 |
| 2. Less distraction is being experience and feel much more comfortable in classroom set up. | 107 | 58.46 | 6 |
| 3. Access more information and have greater chance of completing any given assignment, activities, and projects. | 105 | 57.37 | 7 |
| 4. Gain more understanding easily in a familiar way through teacher and other student's body language, gestures, and voice. | 94 | 51.36 | 10 |
| 5. Have the opportunity to connect with, problem-solve, and network with other students from a wide range of backgrounds. | 109 | 59.56 | 5 |
| 6. More opportunities for students to interact and engage with their instructor and peers, which can lead to better learning outcomes. | 111 | 60.65 | 4 |
| 7.Have more structured schedules and in-person reminders. | 103 | 56.28 | 8 |
| 8. It can easily require students to attend at specific times and locations and to hold students accountable for attendance and participation. | 116 | 63.38 | 2 |
| 9. Face-to-face classes provide more opportunities for social interaction, which can help students build relationships and a sense of community with their peers. | 120 | 65.57 | 1 |
| 10. Tests and assessments can easily be done and designed to ensure academic integrity and provide accurate measures of student learning. | 102 | 55.73 | 9 |

Their study disclosed that teachers can also educate students about other aspects of society and mentor them in dealing with various issues they may encounter in their working fields. For instance, instructors can create a good relationship with students, be their counselors, and educate them about moral behaviors. Thus, interpersonal interaction between students and their instructors is an important issue that is hard to practice in online education.

In item number 5 the findings of Paul and Jefferson in their study is in parallel with the outcome of the survey that face-to-face education encourages students to connect with others and learn how to socialize with different people. The world is diverse, and people have different beliefs and values. Therefore, the method allows learners to meet people of different backgrounds and learn about various cultures. Learning different cultures enables individuals to interact with numerous people in organizations and the community easily. Additionally, it helps a person value and appreciate other people's origins. Religion is another issue that has led to conflicts in the community. Thus, face-to-face education is vital because students can socialize with their peers from other faiths and learn the importance of respecting all faiths. People can also note that face-to-face education does not only involve academic performance but includes other issues that people experience in the community, such as cultural differences.

In relation to items number 1,2, and 4, added discussion was employed, the researcher believes that distractions can lead to poor performance of students due to the lack of concentration. Therefore, face-to-face education is essential since its setting limits interferences that individuals in online learning can experience. For instance, people studying at home are likely to be abstracted by noisy neighbors. Such as, the loud noise produces by the karaoke, the different noise created by transportation vehicles, and the unavoidable community celebrations. Moreover, social media has become common in the modern world, and many students have joined various platforms. Thus, social media texts that pop up during lessons can confuse learners. Family members can also engage in conversations that can pull one's attention away from the class activities in online learning. Therefore, face-to-face education is vital since it provides a suitable environment for learners, whereby silence and fewer activities that can disturb individuals are minimized.

While, it can have noted that concentration is a critical factor in learning. Concentration refers to the ability to focus one's attention on a specific task or activity, without being distracted by irrelevant stimuli or thoughts. Remember, in concentration, it is able to process information more effectively and retain it in memory for longer periods of time. One of the primary reasons why concentration is important for learning is that it allows to facilitate

full attention to the material being presented. Loosing concentration or being distracted or not fully engaged, the possibility of missing important details or fail to fully comprehend the material is very likely to happen. This can lead to confusion or misunderstandings, which can make it difficult to retain the information in the long term.

Additionally, psychologist do believe that concentration plays a critical role in the process of memory consolidation. In learning new information, it is initially encoded in man's short-term memory. However, in order for this information to be transferred to long-term memory, concentration on it and actively engage with it over time is needed. This process of consolidation is essential for effective learning and retention. Finally, concentration also helps to promote a state of "flow" or "deep learning" in the materials being studied and experience a sense of enjoyment and satisfaction from the learning process. This can help to foster a positive attitude towards learning, which can in turn enhance motivation and engagement. Overall, concentration is essential for effective learning as it allows us to fully engage with the material, promote memory consolidation, and foster a positive learning experience.

Educators are one to say that body language can play an important role in facilitating learning between teachers and students. It involves the use of nonverbal cues such as facial expressions, gestures, posture, and eye contact, which can convey important messages to students and help to establish a positive and productive learning environment. When a teacher uses positive body language, such as smiling, making eye contact, and using open and welcoming gestures, it can help to create a relaxed and comfortable learning environment. This can help to reduce students' anxiety and improve their ability to focus and learn. Conversely, body language, such as frowning, crossing arms, or avoiding eye contact, can convey negative signal to students that the teacher is disinterested or disapproving, which can inhibit learning.

Same is true with, students' body language it can also contribute to the learning process. For example, sitting up straight and maintaining eye contact with the teacher can signal attentiveness and engagement, while slouching or looking down may suggest disinterest or distraction. Additionally, students can use gestures or other nonverbal cues to signal their understanding or confusion, which can help the teacher to adjust their teaching approach to better meet students' needs. Comprehensively, the use of positive body language by both teachers and students can help to create a positive and productive learning environment, which can enhance students' motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes.

In items 3,7, and 10 having access to more information can be beneficial for students as it can improve their understanding of the topic, provide them with additional resources to utilize in their work, and ultimately increase their chances of successfully completing their academic assignments, activities, and projects. By having access to more information and utilizing it effectively, students can enhance their learning experience and achieve better outcomes in their academic pursuits. As in item 7 one of the advantages of face-to-face classes is by "having more structured schedules and in-person reminders" in this students can benefit from having a clear and organized plan for their academic activities, as well as reminders that are delivered in-person. This can help students stay focused and on track with their academic responsibilities, as well as reduce the likelihood of forgetting important deadlines or tasks. Having a structured schedule can also help students prioritize their work effectively, allowing them to allocate their time and resources in a way that maximizes their productivity and learning outcomes. While in item 10 tests and assessments can easily be done and designed to ensure academic integrity and provide accurate measures of student learning" is that face-to-face learning can offer certain advantages when it comes to testing and assessing student knowledge. By leveraging technology, instructors can design assessments that are more interactive, engaging, and personalized to the needs of each student. Moreover, face-to-face assessments can be structured to ensure academic integrity, that can help to ensure that students are evaluated based on their own work and prevent cheating.

Table 8 shows the list of common challenges encountered on face-to-face classes ranked in order of importance based on the frequency of their mention by the respondents in the study or survey. Each factor is assigned a number, a brief description, a frequency score (f), and a percentage score (%). The rank of each factor is also provided,

indicating how frequently it was mentioned compared to the other factors. The table lists ten common challenges in total, and they cover a range of issues related to the classroom environment, teaching methods, student needs, and resources.

**Table 8**
*Common Challenges Encountered on Face-to-Face Classes*

| Common Challenges Encountered on Face-to-Face Classes | f | % | Rank |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1.Attendance: ensuring that students attend class regularly which can affect their academic performance. | 98 | 53.55 | 6 |
| 2.Classroom distraction: such as noise from outside the classroom, or other students talking or fidgeting, and technology distractions. | 102 | 55.73 | 5 |
| 3.Different learning styles: some students may need more visual aids, while others may require more hands-on activities. | 87 | 47.54 | 9 |
| 4.Limited interaction: students may not have many opportunities to interact with their peers or the teacher. | 93 | 50.81 | 7 |
| 5.Classroom management: Teachers need to make sure that all students are engaged, focused, and participating in class activities. | 82 | 44.80 | 10 |
| 6.Technology and Equipment: source of frustration if the equipment is not working properly. Technical glitches, slow internet, or incompatible devices can disrupt the flow of the class and negatively impact learning. | 107 | 58.46 | 4 |
| 7.Lack of engagement: students may become disengaged and lose focus during class, especially if the material is not presented in an engaging manner. | 112 | 61.20 | 3 |
| 8.Learning pace: some students may find the pace too fast or too slow for their learning needs. | 90 | 49.18 | 8 |
| 9. Financial Limitations, Distance, and Commuting: in some cases, students may have to travel long distances to attend face-to-face classes. | 116 | 63.38 | 2 |
| 10.Health Safety Protocols wearing of facemask, social distancing, and everyday check-up of body temperature etc. | 121 | 66.12 | 1 |

Topping the list among the common challenges are: Health safety protocols. This factor received the highest frequency score (121) and the highest percentage score (66.12%). It refers to the hassle-dazzle and irritability of wearing facemask, observing social distancing and the time spent due to body temperature check. The feeling of uneasiness, worried, and fear that the student may acquire the virus.

Financial limitations and distance: This factor received the second-highest frequency score (116) and the second-highest percentage score (63.38%). It relates to the limitations of finances and geographical location or the distance that students have to travel to attend face-to-face classes.

Lack of engagement: This factor received a frequency score of 112 and a percentage score of 61.20%. It refers to the disengagement of students during class, particularly if the material is not presented in an engaging manner.

Technology and Equipment: This factor received a frequency score of 107 and a percentage score of 58.46%. It relates to the frustration caused by technical glitches, slow internet, or incompatible devices, which can disrupt the flow of the class and negatively impact learning.

Classroom distraction: This factor received a frequency score of 102 and a percentage score of 55.73%. It refers to distractions in the classroom, such as noise from outside, other students talking or fidgeting, and technology distractions.

Attendance: This factor received a frequency score of 98 and a percentage score of 53.55%. It relates to the importance of students attending class regularly, which can affect their academic performance.

Limited interaction: This factor received a frequency score of 93 and a percentage score of 50.81%. It refers to the lack of opportunities for students to interact with their peers or the teacher.

Learning pace: This factor received a frequency score of 90 and a percentage score of 49.18%. It relates to the pace of learning, which some students may find too fast or too slow for their needs.

Different learning styles: This factor received a frequency score of 87 and a percentage score of 47.54%. It

refers to the fact that some students may require different teaching methods, such as more visual aids or hands-on activities.

Classroom management: This factor received a frequency score of 82 and a percentage score of 44.80%. It relates to the importance of teachers ensuring that all students are engaged, focused, and participating in class activities.

## 5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were arrived.

➢ The level of student engagement in face -to-face classes can be described as highly engaged that the student engagement in face-to face classes brings a much significant effect in terms of student learning experience and learning outcomes. In this study it has proven that face-to-face classes typically provide more opportunities to help increase the level of student engagement. The presence of opportunities for interaction between students and instructor, together with the interaction between student to student are very much alive and active in face-to-face classes. Which can enhance learning by allowing for immediate feedback, clarification, and discussion and bring about higher level of student engagement.

➢ Student satisfaction can be described as highly satisfied. The findings of this study reveals that when students are satisfied by having face-to-face classes, they are more likely to feel engaged and motivated in their learning, attend classes regularly, and perform better academically. In this study, the researcher posits that a face-to-face, traditional approach to learning is an effective means of meeting the overall satisfaction level of students. This statement suggests that the researcher believes that key aspects of the learning experience contribute to this area and that a traditional, face-to-face approach to teaching and learning can be successful in meeting the satisfaction level of students. Furthermore, the researcher identifies several key aspects of the learning experience that contribute to this area.

➢ Based on the findings of the study, it is evident that there exist numerous advantages in conducting face-to-face classes or in-person instruction, particularly in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which is proving to be difficult to replicate in the online education setting. The researcher adhere that advantages identified in this study can lead to better learning experiences and outcomes of the students. Primarily, the advantages derived from increased opportunities for social interaction, the ability to seek and obtain prompt feedback, and the potential to establish personal connections with both instructors and peers represent the most significant benefits of face-to-face instruction. These benefits aid in the cultivation of relationships and a sense of community among students, ultimately equipping them with essential life skills applicable to real-world scenarios.

➢ In this study a set of common challenges have been identified, all of which can be deemed significant and have a detrimental effect on students' learning experience and outcomes. These challenges pose a threat to the ability of learners to learn, and require special attention in order to be addressed and resolved. It is therefore imperative that ways and means be discovered and applied to help remove these obstacles and overcome these challenges in the context of learning.

The researcher was able to draw some practical implication both for teachers and learners based from this study. Teachers can incorporate blended learning by integrating digital tools alongside face-to-face instruction to combine the benefits of both methods. Cultivate personalized support as educators should identify struggling students early on and provide tailored support, especially in larger classrooms where individual attention may be limited. Help promote safe classroom environments. Teachers need to be vigilant in enforcing health protocols and maintaining clean, well-ventilated spaces. Regular communication about health safety is essential to reassure both students and parents. On the part of the students they should take full advantage of the real-time feedback available in face-to-face settings by actively engaging in discussions and asking questions. Develop and utilize support

systems. In cases where students face challenges, either academically or personally, they should seek support from teachers, peers, or school counseling services. In terms of adaptability, learners should develop flexibility and digital literacy skills to navigate both environments effectively.

## 6. References

Alam, A. (2020). The advantages and challenges of face-to-face learning. Educational Research and Reviews.

Bali, S., & Liu, M. C. (2018). Students' perceptions toward online learning and face-to-face learning courses. Journal of Physics: Conference Series, 1108(1), 012094.

Bernard, R. M., Borokhovski, E., Schmid, R. F., Tamim, R. M., & Abrami, P. C. (2014). A meta-analysis of blended learning and technology use in higher education: From the general to the applied. Journal of Computing in Higher Education.

Coates, H. (2005). The value of student engagement for higher education quality assurance. Quality in Higher Education, 11(1), 25–36.

Cotner, S., Loper, J., Walker, J. D., & Brooks, D. C. (2013). Research and teaching: "It's not you, it's the room"--Are the high-tech, active learning classrooms worth it? Journal of College Science Teaching, 042(06). https://doi.org/10.2505/4/jcst13_042_06_82

David, C. C., San Pascual, M. R., & Torres, M. C. (2021). Education in time of a pandemic: The Philippine context. International Journal of Educational Development.

Driscoll, A., Jicha, K., Hunt, A., Tichavsky, L., & Thompson, G. (2012). Can online courses deliver in-class results? A comparison of student performance and satisfaction in an online versus a face-to-face introductory sociology course. Teaching Sociology, 40, 312–331.

Errey, R., & Wood, G. (2011). Lessons from a student engagement pilot study. Australian Universities Review.

Gray, J. A., & DiLoreto, M. (2016). The effects of student engagement, student satisfaction, and perceived learning in online learning environments. International Journal of Education Leadership Preparation, 11(n1).

Gray, J., & DiLoreto, M. (2016, August). Student satisfaction and perceived learning in online learning environments: The mediating effect of student engagement. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Council of Professors of Educational Leadership, Washington, D.C.

Joaquin, J. J. B., Biana, H. T., & Dacela, M. A. (2020). The Philippine higher education sector in the time of COVID-19. Frontiers in Education.

Kearns, M., Andrada, M., & Baker, E. (2020). Accessibility challenges in face-to-face education: Equity, inclusion, and support. Educational Researcher.

Kurucay, M., & Inan, F. A. (2017). Examining the effects of learner-learner interactions on satisfaction and learning in an online undergraduate course. Computers & Education, 115, 20–37. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2017.06.010

Means, B., Toyama, Y., Murphy, R., Bakia, M., & Jones, K. (2013). The effectiveness of online and blended learning: A meta-analysis of the empirical literature. Teachers College Record.

Miller, H. (2018). Learning spaces: Bring space and instruction into alignment. Retrieved from https://www.hermanmiller.com/solutions/education/applications/learning-spaces

Niemi, H., & Kousa, P. (2020). A case study of students' and teachers' perceptions in a blended learning environment. Education and Information Technologies.

Paul, J., & Jefferson, F. (2019). A comparative analysis of student performance in an online vs. face-to-face environmental science course from 2009 to 2016. Frontiers in Computer Science, 1, 1–9.

Schmid, R. F., Bernard, R. M., & Borokhovski, E. (2014). Technology's effect on student achievement in mathematics: A meta-analysis. Computers & Education.

Shabani, K. (2016). Applications of Vygotsky's sociocultural approach for teachers' professional development. Cogent Education, 3, 1-10. https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2016.1252177

Shehzadi, S., Nisar, Q., Hussain, M., Basheer, M., Hameed, W., & Chaudhry, N. (2021). The role of digital learning toward students' satisfaction and university brand image at educational institutes of Pakistan: A

post-effect of COVID-19. Asian Education and Development Studies, 10, 276–294.

Summers, J., Waigandt, A., & Whittaker, T. (2005). A comparison of student achievement and satisfaction in an online versus a traditional face-to-face statistics class. Innovative Higher Education, 29, 233–250.

Tria, J. Z. (2020). The COVID-19 pandemic through the lens of education in the Philippines: The new normal. International Journal of Pedagogical Development and Lifelong Learning.

Trowler, V. (2010). Student engagement literature review. The Higher Education Academy. Retrieved from https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/studentengagementliteraturereview_1.pdf.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes.

Werhner, M. J. (2010). A comparison of the performance of online versus traditional on-campus earth science students on identical exams. Journal of Geoscience Education, 58, 310–312.

Willis, J. (2007). Teachable moments build relational memories. Kappa Delta Pi Record, 43(3).

Yen, S. C., Lo, Y., Lee, A., & Enriquez, J. (2018). Learning online, offline, and in-between: Comparing student academic outcomes and course satisfaction in face-to-face, online, and blended teaching modalities. Education and Information Technologies, 23, 2141–2153.

Young, K., Young, C., & Beyer, A. (2017). Does the classroom matter? How the physical space affects learning in introductory undergraduate science courses? Journal of College Science Teaching, 46(6),  80-87.