

Live: Online Learning Experiences of Doctor of Education Students of University X

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Abstract: University X, a learning institution in the Philippines that envisions to be a model of learning where relevant knowledge is acquired and skills are developed in response to the needs of the global community initiated e- learning class called the "Live" sessions. This paper examined the experiences of Doctor of Education students on "Live" sessions of University X. It determined the experiences of the participants on these sessions; identified the problems encountered by the participants; and determined the interventions suggested to improve the "Live" sessions. Through purposive sampling, a total of eight (8) Doctor of Education students enrolled under two (2) EdD subjects were identified as participants of this research. Utilizing Quantitative Content Analysis as the research design, written text in the form of feedback gathered thru the FB Messenger were analyzed in the study. The process also considered the steps in Quantitative Content Analysis. Findings of the study revealed that the respondents experienced the "Live" online sessions as convenient, interactive and natural as the normal classroom settings. On the other hand, availability of equipment such as computer and internet remain to be the problem during the "Live" online sessions. Hence, the respondents suggested that University X should establish an e-classroom that can support e-learning activities.

Keywords: e-learning, experiences, Graduate Students, Live Sessions, Quantitative Content Analysis

1. Introduction

Technology has become one of the most important necessities in the world because it affects all areas of human life. Through technological advances, people enjoy more efficient way to do things [1]. In fact, things that seemed impossible in the past become almost possible at present because of technology. In education, technology has made significant impact through computers and the internet. Through these technologies, students are able to learn on a global scale without ever leaving the classrooms [1]. These modern technologies changed present day classrooms as they are slowly becoming wall-less through video conferencing and distance education which breaks down time and distance barriers. The traditional conduct of activities such as examination and grading, and utilization of equipment such as the use of blackboards are now replaced by high resolution video projectors and online conduct of tests and grading. These innovations are found to what they call electronic classrooms or simply e-classroom where computers and multimedia displays are used to support an electronic environment which enable the many processes of classroom education [2]. Using e-classroom is part of the socalled distance learning or e-learning. Distance learning, sometimes called e-learning is defined by Rouse [3] as a formalized teaching and learning system particularly designed to be carried out remotely using electronic communication. It offers opportunities in situations where traditional education has difficulty operating because it is less pricey to support and is not limited by geographic considerations. Students with scheduling or distance problems can benefit, as can employees, because distance education can be more flexible in terms of time and can be delivered virtually anywhere. Over the years, as the internet becomes more available to the general public, e-learning also becomes a major game changer particularly in higher education. Historically, higher education is a campus-based institution but this set-up was changed by e-learning by removing geography as a defining element in the studentinstitution relationship [4] . This benefits not only those in the

undergraduate programs but also those in graduate education. E-learning is proven to be useful to graduate education which has deliberately designed programs for working adults since courses are offered online and it also includes shortterm face-to-face residencies [4]. At present, e-learning has evolved into a global change agent in education, as a result it has become more diverse in its form and applications. Likewise, its engaged intentional design of learning experiences has also evolved to promote the most effective design to serve the learners, their life experiences and the opportunities and limitations of the particular environment. University X, a learning institution in the City of Manila envisions to be a model of learning where relevant knowledge is acquired and skills are developed in response to the needs of the global community, initiated e- learning as a learning delivery modality. Among the students who were involved in the e-learning sessions were those enrolled in the Doctor of Education Program who cannot meet as frequent due to the demands of their work. The e-learning session is called "Live". Holding the "Live" session is a bold step that retorts both the demands of globalization and service which the University X system is committed to render.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Since University X has just implemented the conduct of elearning sessions called the "Live", this paper examined the experiences of Doctor of Education students on "Live" sessions of University X. Specifically this paper sought to answer the following questions:

- 1. What are the experiences of the participants to "Live" online sessions of University X?
- 2. What are the problems encountered by the participants during the "Live "online sessions?
- 3. What interventions can be suggested by the respondents to improve the "Live" online sessions in University X?

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2. Literature Review

Gone are the days when learning has to be one-size-fits-all or confined to the classroom. Hence, the 21st century teacher needs to be ready to provide technology-supported learning opportunities for their learners and must know how technology can support students' learning [5] . It is considered that t to be effective in the 21st century, citizens and workers must be able to create, evaluate, and effectively utilize information, media, and technology [6].

According to Panlilio [5] "the 21st century teacher needs to be prepared to provide technology-supported learning opportunities for their students and must know how technology can support students' learning" (para. 2). Technology supports learning in so many ways and with the help of the teacher it offers motivation, individualized and problem-based learning, cultivation of higher order thinking skills (HOTS), and invites active involvement of the learner which led to a more productive teaching-learning process.

Computers also provide individualized instruction designed to meet students' individual needs. Using CAI or Computer-Assisted Instruction, the teacher is relieved of so many activities in his personal role as classroom tutor. CAI means the use of computers to show programmed instruction in teaching new concepts, engaging learners in creative tasks and problem solving, and assisting the learners with specific learning tasks [7]. With CAI, students can practice basic skills or knowledge through repetitive exercises which reinforce learning [8] .

In line with this, Zarsadias [9] asserted that there has been a transformation in the classroom through technology from one that teaches to the middle to one that adjusts content and pedagogy based on individual student's needs. This notion matches the learning style and multiple intelligences theories. Gardner emphasized that there are multitude of intelligences and that understanding these intelligences is a beginning to understand diversity of students. Hence, teachers must reflect how their students' minds are different from one another and help them use their mind [10]. This supports the idea that technology enhances the multiple intelligences and that teachers are agents in developing these. Teachers, through technology, can develop this intelligence by providing enrichment opportunities in each area of intellect [11].

Meanwhile, the study of Geisert and Dunn [12] emphasized that students differ in learning style as they could either be visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, or tactile. They revealed that a new generation of computer software suited to a student's preferences has been developed and its use in the classroom has yielded dramatic results.

Indeed, education can leverage technology to create an engaging and personalized environment to meet the emerging educational needs of this generation [13]. Salandanan [14] stated that "present day leaders are intensely analyzing and interpreting trends, movements, and directions in the course of time with an end of view of getting ready for changes in the future" (p. 1). Teachers should not be afraid to take risks and should be willing to innovate. Part of that innovation is the integratation of ICT in the classroom since the traditional 20th century practices will no longer provide them with skills needed to teach modern day learners [15].

On the other hand, teachers as instructional leaders should establish conditions in which individual students can actualize their learning abilities [14]. It is important for teachers to integrate technology in their pedagogy because "new levels of learning require the appropriate use of state-of-the-art instruction with the use of ICT and the involvement of computer to pedagogy makes up for good instruction" [8].

Relatedly, Ross and Bailey [16] pointed out that teachers must have the skills to effectively run ICT equipment as well as understanding on how the equipment enhances student learning. This is in line with the UNESCO's vision of a 21st century teacher, which describes that teachers of today must know how to use technology to support their students' learning by providing technology-supported learning opportunities [17].

As a result the 21st Century Curriculum and Instruction encourage the integration of community resources beyond school walls. In terms of professional development, it encourages knowledge sharing among communities of practitioners, using face-to-face (in person), virtual (online) and blended communications. In terms of 21st century classroom, it supports expanded community and international involvement in learning, both face-to-face and online [6].

The 21st century transformed the way learners learn as the teaching-learning processes are not confined only in the four (4) walls of the classroom. Today, students can be found reviewing botany outdoors using their mobile phone as a textbook. They play games and study on a single device—with the two activities often overlapping. They interact with peers in other classrooms—down the hall and halfway around the world. And they study at home, at any time of day, in ways we couldn't have imagined in the pre-Internet world [18].

Technology may be the foundation of the 21st century classroom however; it is the work of innovative school leaders and teachers that is truly transforming teaching and learning. Among these changes include personalized learning, project-based learning and distance learning which redefine how students learn and how their progress is assessed. These trends are also shifting educators' priorities, and providing new ways for them to engage and inspire their students [18].

E-learning or distance learning promises ways to better inpsire and motivate students. With its features, it brings with it new dimensions in education. Since it is self-paced, it gives students a chance to speed up or slow down as necessary. Being it self-directed, it allows students to choose content and tools appropriate to their differing interests, needs, and skill levels. Thus, it accommodates multiple learning styles using a variety of delivery methods geared to different learners which are more effective for certain learners [19].

E-learning also breaks the geographical restrictions of face-to-face learning. According to WordWideLearn, [19], thru e-learning, geographical barriers are eliminated, hence, travel time and associated costs (parking, fuel, vehicle maintenance) are reduced.

In general, researchers agree that e-learning promotes flexibility, as learning happens whenever and wherever the students want; it supports individual approach, as students can learn on their own pace; it uses new technology and tools, as mobile devices and news from technology and science world that improve learning experience are easier to implement in online education than in traditional learning;



and it highlights accessibility, as it has a potential to make access to education equal and independent from financial or territorial issues [20].

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This study utilized the qualitative research design particularly the Quantitative Content Analysis. According to Rose, Spinks, and Canhoto [21], content analysis can be applied to all kinds of written text such as letters, speeches or articles whether in print or digital, as well as text in the form of pictures, video, film or other visual media. It is used to a wide range of social science topics including gender and race, violence, media reporting and political communication. The advent of the internet also creates opportunities for using analysis techniques to analyze online communication. Meanwhile, in Quantitative Content Analysis, a concept is chosen for examination and the analysis involves quantifying and counting its presence wherein the main goal is to examine the occurrence of selected terms (can be a word, word sense, phrase, sentence, themes) in the data [22].

This study employed Quantitative Content Analysis because the researcher believes that it is the most appropriate research design for the study. Primarily, the paper examined the online learning experiences of the respondents which satisfies the subject (internet/ online communication) wherein the design is used. Second, a written text in the form of messages in the Messenger was utilized to gather responses which was analyzed later in the study. Lastly, the analysis involved quantifying selected terms and frequency counts of these terms which matches the data analysis in Quantitative Content Analysis. All these things satisfy the requirement in using Quantitative Content Analysis, hence, it is used in this paper as the most appropriate research design.

3.2. Roles of the Researcher

The study aimed to examine the experiences of Doctor of Education students on "Live" sessions of University X. As a researcher, it is his task to identify those Doctor of Education students as they would be the participants of the study.

The researcher is also tasked to gather data by analyzing the textual responses (Messenger responses) of the participants regarding their "Live" sessions. It was also his task to formulate the research question, formulate the hypothesis, determine the sampling and unit of analysis, collect data, code, and formulate conclusions of the study.

3.3. Research Participants

A total of eight (8) participants were included in the research. These eight (8) participants were chosen using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling was utilized based on criteria related to the research [23]. For this study, participants should be Doctor of Education students enrolled under Human Resources Management and Development (C427 0ED) and Leadership Theories and Organizational

Design (C425 ED) of University X. They were chosen because they were enrolled in the two (2) EdD subjects that first employed the "Live" sessions in University X. It can be noted that there were only eight (8) participants in this qualitative study who were chosen through purposive sampling. According to the Center for Innovation in Research and Teaching [24] , samples in qualitative study is small, usually with 10 or less participants only. Mason [25] also recommended to have small number of participants usually five (5) to 25 participants for qualitative studies.

3.4. Data Collection

In the "Live" sessions, the Subject Professor would conduct classes using the Facebook Messenger under the EdD subjects Human Resources Management and Development (C427 0ED) and Leadership Theories and Organizational Design (C425 ED) of University X. She would ask openended questions related to the topic to assess the understanding of the students. By the end of the "Live" sessions, the Subject Professor would then ask evaluative questions for feedback and to determine how the students think of the "Live" sessions as well as the conduct of the class as a whole. In data collection, feedback/ responses of the participants were studied. This feedback was taken from the sessions held on July 9 and July 30 via Facebook Messenger. Only those feedback/ responses during the "Live" sessions on the given dates were collected and analyzed in this study. According to Agrawal and Alvi [26] the internet has become a more popular medium of sharing the opinions or feedback (can be numerical ratings or text) about particular topics. These feedback in textual data should be processed in order to recall more specific opinions that will be helpful in making more appropriate decision. It can be recalled that Quantitative Content Analysis is applicable to all kinds of written texts including the written feedback. Relatedly, one of the aims of this design is to predict the outcome or effect of the messages being analyzed; to measure relevant features of the message; and to predict audience or receiver reaction. Analyzing the feedback allows the researcher to examine the experiences and determine the reactions of the research participants towards "Live" Sessions of University X. To ensure validity of the responses/ feedback, only those answers for the evaluative questions given by the Subject Professor in the two (2) subjects on July 9 and 30 were included in this research. To ensure that conduct of research adheres to ethical standards, the researcher sought for the permission of the Subject Professor and the participants to use the responses/ feedback for the purposes of this study. The participants were also ensured that ethical considerations were properly observed by applying the key principles of ethical issues that should be considered in any research study. These principles are reverence for people, magnanimity, fairness, harmony, reverence for groups and privacy [23].



3.5. Analysis of Data

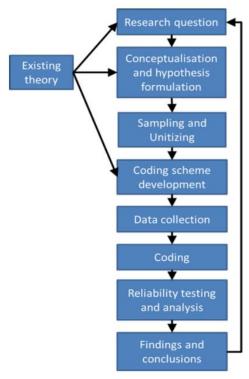


Figure 1: Steps in Quantitative Content Analysis

In data analysis, the researcher used the steps in quantitative content analysis as presented by Rose et.al., (2015). According to Rose et. al., [21] Quantitative Content Analysis design begins with the identification of relevant concepts, and formulation of hypothesis (when appropriate) in response to the research question. In this step, decision regarding the number of concepts to code for and the development of pre-defined or interactive set of categories [22] is determined. Existing theory and prior research also play an important role in developing conceptual basis of the research as this will form the basis of the coding scheme [21]. In the current research, relevant concepts about elearning were identified and discussed. Research questions were also determined to serve as guide in answering the inquiry. E- learning related theories were also presented to assist in the development of the conceptual basis of the research. Topics and concepts that were identified include the Framework for 21st Century Learning, Individualized Instruction, Multiple Intelligences, Learning Styles, and remote learning. The step under sampling and unitizing involve identifying and selecting material to analyze. At this point, the researcher need to choose between including all eligible materials or selecting a sample. Collection of sample involves obtaining the material in an analyzable format [21]. In this research, materials to analyze were the feedback responses during the "Live" sessions. These feedback responses were taken from the FB Messenger on July 9 and 30 under the EdD subjects Human Resources Management and Development (C427 0ED) and Leadership Theories and Organizational Design (C425 ED) of University X. For coding scheme and development and data collection, the researcher needs to decide on the unit of text that would be classified during the coding process. These coding units can be words, phrases, sentences, images, paragraphs or whole documents [21]. Also, in this

step, the researcher can begin developing rules for translation of text into codes. This will keep the coding process organized and consistent [22]. This stage also requires a code book, wherein the researcher needs to prepare a coding form or coding schedule [21]. For this paper, the coding unit for analysis is words. The coding scheme involves the counting of the occurrence of words from the feedback of the participants. Everytime that a word is mentioned in the feedback, a numerical code '1' is assigned. These feedback were collected from the FB Messenger (Messenger Group) in subjects Human Resources Management and Development (C427 0ED) and Leadership Theories and Organizational Design (C425 ED) of University X on July 9 and July 30 "Live" sessions. Tables were utilized in the presentation of the responses which also served as the coding form of the research paper. The next stage in Quantitative Content Analysis are reliability testing and analysis. In this stage, piloting is essential to identify problems with the coding scheme or the coders' ability to apply it. Any such problems need to be addressed before the study proceeds [21]. For this paper, the researcher asked the ideas and opinions of the research participants regarding the coding scheme to check if the researcher interpreted correctly the responses of the participants. Doing such helped the researcher address concerns and at the same time allowing to test the reliability of the coding scheme. Identifying the findings and conclusions is the last step in Quantitative Content Analysis. In this step descriptive statistics, such as frequency counts, can be used to summarize findings from the sample [21]. Drawing conclusions and generalizations is also expected in this step. Typically, general trends and patterns are identified in this phase [22]. This stage is applied in this paper by analyzing the responses using the word frequency count. Responses were counted and presented on a table.

4. Results and Discussion

Table 1: Experiences of the respondents to "Live" online sessions of University X

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Perceptions of the Respondents to	Frequency	Rank	
Convenient, there is no need to travel	4	1	
Interactive, it encourages us to	3	2.5	
Challenging, difficult to type using	1	5	
Natural, just like the natural	3	2.5	
Effective	1	5	
Fascinating	1	5	

It can be gleaned from the data that the respondents have positive experiences toward "Live" online sessions of University X. They find the online sessions convenient since they can do it anywhere; they also think that it is interactive because it encourages them to be more participative in class; they also believe that the online sessions are comparable to the natural classroom settings. These findings were in accordance with other studies which found flexibility; self-control and convenience as area of strength in online learning. Murphy and Collins as cited by Eldeeb [27] reported that students participated in discussions in online courses at their most convenient time, complete assignments



and tasks at anytime and mostly accessed the teaching/learning material from their homes at ease and convenience e.g weekends, early morning or even late evening. This was agreed Barclay [28] , he enumerated the common benefits of e-learning which include flexibility and convenience to instructors and learners, opportunities for the educational institution to extend its course offerings and move beyond geographical borders. However, he contended that factor critical to successful implementation of e-learning systems is student acceptance of the system.

Table 2: Problems encountered by the respondents during "Live" online sessions

Dive onnie sessions		
Problems encountered by the	Frequency	Rank
Internet connectivity	3	1
Availability of computers	1	3
Misunderstanding due to	1	3
Typing speed	1	3

Table 2 shows the problems encountered by the respondents during their "Live" online sessions. It can be noted that availability of equipment is among the common problems encountered during an online session as internet connectivity ranks first. This was followed by computer availability; misunderstanding due to typographical errors; and typing speed. According to Eldeeb [27] a successful and enjoyable e-learning experience should be accompanied by strategies to improve the access to the internet, computer and improve the broadband width. This is in accordance with other studies that reported the technical problems as a major challenge for the use of technology in learning. Similar problems were traced by a study conducted in Egypt. The study enumerated reasons why students doubt e-learning which are attributed to the lack of normal college environment, asynchronous interaction and feedback between learners and instructors, and technological infrastructure problems such as Internet speed and bandwidth besides the familiarity of the structure routine of traditional on-campus education [29].

Table 3: Interventions to improve the "Live" online sessions

Interventions to improve "Live"	Frequency	Rank
Find a place with good internet	2	1
Connect in Facebook to continue	1	2

Table 3 displays the interventions to improve the "Live" online sessions of University X. It further shows that finding good internet connections and sufficient computers are the most common interventions to improve the "Live" online sessions in the university. Designing a distance-learning classroom is far more complex than putting together one of the chalk-and-talk classroom. When designing the room, it should be able to accommodate all e-learning activities. There must be a station with a linked PC that allows for application sharing and teamwork. Wired hubs where students can simultaneously listen to lectures, watch video, and communicate with colleagues in a number of locations [30] should also be present.

5. Conclusions

The data presented in this part is the manifestation of the results of the information gathered from the respondents assessing the "Live" online session experiences of Doctor of Education students of University X. Participants have

positive experiences towards "Live" online sessions of University X. They see the experience to be convenient, interactive and natural as the normal classroom settings. This positive reaction may spring from the beauty of the "Live" that allows the participants, even though they are working professionals, to attend class without experiencing the difficulty of commuting and still allows them to participate the class just like the normal classroom set-up. Availability of equipment such as computer and internet remain to be the problem faced by the participants during the "Live" online sessions in University X. This finding means that there is still a need to improve the computer equipment to support the different e-learning activities of the participants. University X should establish an e-classroom that can support e-learning activities. This e-classroom must be set-up to maximize the learning opportunities available not just for the Doctor of Education students of University X but of the entire student body of the university.

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