

INVESTIGATING THE SELF-REGULATED ONLINE LEARNING STRATEGIES OF BACHELOR OF ARTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDENTS

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Abstract

This study titled Investigating the Self-regulated Online Learning Strategies of Bachelor of Arts in English Language Students employed the descriptive research design to look into the lived experiences of students who were enrolled in a state college in Negros Occidental in the Academic Year 2021-2022. The findings reveal the following themes: (a) Time management, and planning, organizing, and goal setting as self-regulated online learning strategies; (b) Productiveness as the benefit gained from the strategies; (c) Poor internet connection and inability to keep pace with lessons as the challenges encountered; (d) Difficulty in carrying on with school tasks and drive to survive as the effects of the challenges; (e) Interaction with teachers, classmates, and friends, and positive attitudes as the coping strategies; and (f) Optimism and favorable attitudes as the insights gained. It is recommended that more studies on self-regulation among college students be carried out.

Keywords: COVID-19 Pandemic, Lived Experience, Self-regulation, Self-regulated, Online Learning, Bachelor of Arts in English, Negros Occidental, Philippines.

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has compelled college students to engage in self-regulated learning since universities have had to move from face-to-face delivery of courses to remote teaching [1]. Furthermore, most schools have utilized digital learning platforms to foster education [2].

The essential skills that constitute self-regulated learning are the fundamental skills that make successful learners leaders in their own learning [3]. Students who have developed self-regulated learning can set goals, govern their efforts to achieve their goals, become aware of their thought processes, manage their time, and control their physical and social environment [4].

Although various studies on self-regulated learning or self-regulation have been conducted, it is highly unlikely that some have specifically addressed online self-regulated learning. Therefore, this study intended to obtain a deeper knowledge of students' self-regulated online learning.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to investigate the self-regulated online learning strategies of First Year Bachelor of Arts in English Language students of one of the State Colleges in Negros Occidental who were enrolled during the Academic Year 2021-2022.

Specifically, this study intended to investigate into the self-regulated learning strategies of the students, the benefits they gained from their self-regulated learning strategies, the challenges they encountered in self-regulated learning, the effects of those challenges on self-regulated learning, the coping strategies they employed, and their deep understanding of their experiences in self-regulated learning.

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Materials and Methods

The research design of this study was framed by a narrative inquiry of the experiences of college students in self-regulated online learning.

The thematic analysis method of Clarke and Braun (2015) [5] was used as the method to discover themes from the participants' responses vis-à-vis their self-regulated online learning strategies and the benefits of such strategies, the challenges they encountered and the effects of such challenges, their coping mechanisms, and the insights they gained into their experiences. In this study, themes within the data gathered (participants' responses) were identified, analyzed, and presented to unravel self-regulated online learning strategies of students and their other experiences related to self-regulated online learning. Since this study aimed to interpret and make sense of the participants' responses to questions that pertained to self-regulated online learning, thematic analysis was deemed appropriate.

The participants of this study were the twelve (12) First Year Bachelor of Arts in English Language students who were enrolled in a state college in Negros Occidental in the Academic Year 2021-2022.

Ensuring the Quality of the Findings

According to [6], the following criteria must be met to establish the rigor of the study.

1. Credibility

All transcripts of the interviews were sent to the participants to determine whether or not such were correct.

2. Transferability

This study provided a rich account of the participants' profiles, of the context and setting of the study, of the inclusion criteria, and of the interview procedure and topics.

3. Dependability

This study utilized the process of analysis to check whether it agreed with the level of quality set by the research design employed.

4. Conformability

The process of interpretation that is connected with the process of analysis was examined to find out whether the interpretations of the data were accurate.

5. Reflexivity

In this study, the researchers conscientiously considered their relationship with the participants and the participants' responses to the questions that they raised about the participants' experiences in self-regulated online learning to check whether

interpretations of their responses were free from biases.

Results & Discussion

The following themes vis-à-vis each research objective are presented.

A. Self-regulated Learning Strategies used for Online Classes

1. Time Management

Of the twelve participants, nine held that time management was the self-regulated online strategy they used for their online classes.

2. Planning, Organizing, and Goal-setting

Five of the twelve participants claimed that planning or setting their study goals helped them make it through online activities and deadlines.

The most prevalent self-regulating strategies that students employed during their online classes were time management and planning, organizing, and goal-setting. This finding implies that the students were aware of the importance of using their time productively and of going through the planning, organizing, and goal-setting processes for academic success to come to fruition.

This finding about time management being given credence by the participants is in congruence with that of [7] who found out that time management can lead to academic achievement. Although their study did not cover online learning, its finding is still germane to this specific finding of this study as time management was their focus. In addition, [8] discovered that time management was the most prevalent self-regulated online learning strategy that the students exhibited. Likewise, [9] held that setting goals and other strategic planning activities were found to support higher student performance. Planning is also a key self-regulatory process and a good predictor of success [10].

B. Benefits Gained from Self-regulated Online Learning Strategies

The participants' self-regulated online learning strategies engendered the following benefit:

Self-regulated Online Learning Strategies Leads to Productiveness

All of the twelve participants avowed that the self-regulated online learning strategies they employed allowed them to be productive students. In particular, they were able to manage their tasks, to meet deadlines, and to be responsible enough to handle learning.

This finding suggests that time management and planning, organizing, and goal-setting, which were the self-regulated online learning strategies that all the participants used, enabled them to become productive and responsible learners as they were able to accomplish their learning tasks most of the time.

Self-regulated online learning strategies provide students with opportunities to improve their academic performance [11]. When students employ self-regulated online learning strategies, they gain independence and power over how, when, and where to study [12].

C. Challenges Encountered in Self-regulated Online Learning

1. Poor Internet Connection

Five of the twelve participants considered poor internet connection as one of the challenges they had to contend with during their online classes.

2. Inability to Keep Pace with Lessons

Seven participants found it difficult to understand their lessons through self-learning for a short period of time.

The challenges that confronted the participants were poor internet connection and inability to accomplish learning tasks within a short period of time through self-learning. This finding implies that it was not easy for the participants to study by themselves and to gain access to their online classes.

This finding agrees with those of [13] who found out that the major obstacle in online learning of students was slow internet connection and of [14] who investigated the challenges Indonesian students faced while switching from physical to internet-based classrooms. They discovered that unstable internet connection was the most common barrier to online learning.

[15] divulged that some students had difficulty keeping up with their lessons and were not prepared for online learning due to a lack of self-directed learning.

C. Effects of the Challenges on Self-regulated Learning

1. Difficulty in Carrying on with School Tasks

Seven of the participants asseverated that the challenges they ran into during their online classes had an impact on how they managed their studies.

2. Drive to Survive

Three participants believed that every challenge has a silver lining.

Keeping up with school tasks and being motivated to press on were the effects of the challenges of online classes. The findings reveal that the new educational system had a substantial impact and introduced new challenges, forcing students to employ coping mechanisms.

The findings about students having difficulties with school tasks align with those of [13] who found that college students faced major challenges in the online environment, such as concentration difficulties because they were unfamiliar with some online tools, and of [17] who observed that in addition to technical and monetary challenges, students expressed a few additional issues such as a lack of engagement with the teacher, of reaction time, and of typical classroom socializing.

The finding about participants having the drive to survive is consistent with those of [14] that revealed that enough and high-quality information is critical for boosting the intention to utilize online learning.

D. Coping Strategies Employed to Overcome Challenges

All the twelve participants were convinced that challenges could be brought under control using coping strategies.

1. Interaction with Teachers, Classmates, and Friends

Four participants faced up to the challenges of online classes.

2. Positive Attitudes

Eight participants approached the challenges of online classes with the expectation that things would go well.

The participants believed that establishing communication with their teachers, classmates, and friends and keeping positive attitudes emboldened them to contend with the challenges of online classes. This finding indicates that these coping strategies play a vital role in a student's life to succeed in online learning during a pandemic.

[18] stated that to cope with the challenges in online learning, students interacted and sought help from their teachers, relatives, and friends. [19] found that having a positive attitude affects success across multiple life domains, including work and school performance, and social relationships.

E. Insights Gained into the Experiences of Students in Online Classes

The participants avowed that the challenges they encountered and the coping strategies they employed brought about realizations.

1. Optimism

Four participants learned to be hopeful amidst their experiences.

2. Favorable Attitudes

Nine participants believed that their experiences engendered engaging perspectives.

The participants gained insights into the challenges they dealt with and into their coping strategies, to wit, being optimistic and maintaining positive attitudes.

[20] stated that optimism is a positive attitude toward a problem and is a way of looking at things from a positive perspective in the hopes of attaining the best possible results. [21] found that strong and positive attitudes towards learning can lead to effective employment of learning strategies.

Conclusion

The students believed that time management, planning, organizing, and goal setting helped them make it through their online classes. Specifically, they acknowledged that controlling their time in deciding on the tasks that should be accomplished would enable them to gain academic success.

They also felt sure that their self-regulated online strategies could make their educational goals come to fruition.

However, the students found poor internet connection and inability to keep pace with their lessons as hindrances to their being productive learners.

Although the students faced challenges, they still found hope amidst the issues brought about by online learning classes.

By bridging the gap, the students found peer learning, interaction with other people, and having positive attitudes effective in confronting challenges. Guidance and support from teachers and friends motivated students to actively engage in their classes.

Taking everything into account, this study enabled the students to learn to cope by having a positive outlook on life, which may result in academic success.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest between the authors in this manuscript.

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