

Distractions and Coping Mechanisms in Blended Learning of Grade 10 Students in Philippine School Doha, S.Y. 2021-2022

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Abstract: This study focuses on investigating the commonly faced distractions and coping mechanisms in blended learning used by the Grade 10 students in Philippine School Doha S.Y. 2021-2022. Specifically, it describes the (1) forms of distractions the respondents are accustomed to blended learning and (2) the types of coping mechanisms the respondents adopted in blended learning. Using the quantitative descriptive design, a self-made survey questionnaire was made and was validated. There are 149 respondents in the study selected through stratified random sampling. The internal and external types of distractions are given emphasis along with the perceived coping mechanisms such as professional-directed strategies and self-directed strategies. The results of the study showed that the commonly faced form of distractions of the students is internal distractions which is losing of concentration in blended learning due to fatigue, while the coping mechanism respondents used to is setting of achievable goals to meet or accomplish tasks. It is duly recommended that students may recognize the importance of coping mechanisms to face distractions in blended learning, likewise, teachers may use the results and findings of the study to empower students and parents in finding solutions to stay focused and motivated in blended learning.

Keywords: Distraction, Coping mechanism; Blended learning; Internal Distraction; External Distraction; Professional-directed strategies; Self-directed strategies

1. Introduction

Distractions lead to productivity loss, which may result to a lack of engagement and motivation and eventually attrition. The switching back and forth between tasks your brain will produce more cortisol, a stress hormone that often leads to irritability, aggression, and impulse behavior which is considered a manifestation of distraction. There are different coping mechanisms students could do to adjust to stressful events while helping maintain their emotional well-being. It improves an individual's ability to deal with stress and bounce back from adversity. With modern technology in today's generation, distractions are more encountered. The use of technology in class, such as laptops or phones, for noneducational purposes is distracting to almost all students.

According to Christopher (2019), emailing, texting & talking, web surfing, and socializing are four of the most common distractions students face. These distractions clash with the student's ability to learn. Most students face distractions in their everyday learning. Christian (2019), stated that students who take blended courses are exposed to more distractions than in face-to-face classes. A study conducted by researchers at Kent State University confirmed what for many seems obvious, online students multitask more than their peers in classes. This results in poor academic performance. Being aware of the various distractions will help in allowing one to think clearly. With that, students must know the various distractions they face and the different coping mechanisms so that they would know how these would affect their learning ability and academic performance.

As a result of the ever-increasing influence of technology and the ongoing pandemic, this has been forcing students to learn with the use of technology in the comfort of their own homes. Moreover, it has caused the educational environment to change dramatically around the world. The use of blended learning is one such advancement. However, studying in their

respective houses mean more distractions that may hinder one's concentration in blended learning. DeCandia (2021) asserted that the top distractions a student may face are social media, texting, television, and family issues. These distractions may cause the student to not be able to listen and to comprehend the discussion. Despite the fact that numerous researchers have looked into this topic, there is a lack of knowledge about the difficulties students face and the strategies they use to overcome them. As a result, this research aims to fill in the gaps. These digital distractions can damage a student's academic performance and, if unaddressed, can lead to more serious concerns. As a result, in order to uncover a probable relationship between factors, this research will investigate the students' distractions and coping mechanisms in blended learning.

Research Questions

The objective of this study is to determine the various forms of distraction and the coping mechanisms of the Grade 10 students in Philippine School Doha, School Year 2021-2022. Specifically, this research aims to answer the following questions:

1. What forms of distractions the respondents are accustomed to?

1.1 internal; and

1.2 external?

2. What are the coping mechanisms the respondents?

2.1 professional-directed strategies; and

2.2 self-directed strategies?

Null Hypothesis

H0: Distractions have no significant impact on the blended learning concentration of the Grade 10 students.

2. Method

This study utilized a quantitative descriptive research design. Validated questionnaires were used by the researchers to gather the necessary data. The population of the study consists of the Grade 10 students currently enrolled in Philippine School Doha, S.Y 2021-2022. The process in which how the respondents were determined was a simple random sampling method. Frequency, percentage, and weighted mean were utilized to analyze the data in the study.

3. Results

The prominent findings of the study are

Table 1.
The Forms of Distractions of the respondents in Blended Learning

Statements	WM	VI
I cannot comprehend the lesson being taught if I am hungry.	2.60	Sometimes
I lose my concentration if I am fatigued.	3.28	Always
I consciously think about my personal issues during study time or class.	2.87	Sometimes
I worry about my future tasks during study time or class.	3.09	Sometimes
I am unable to control my emotions during class. (e.g. frustration)	2.34	Rarely
I cannot focus in a noisy environment.	3.02	Sometimes
I shift my focus to talking with my friends during class.	2.66	Sometimes
I scroll through various social media platforms during my study time.	2.87	Sometimes
I cannot refuse when I am invited to play games even when I am in the middle of studying	2.23	Rarely
I find it difficult to work in a cluttered learning area.	3.00	Sometimes
Total	2.80	Sometimes

Legend:

WM - Weighted Mean ; VI - Verbal Interpretation

1-1.75 (Never) 1.76-2.50 (Rarely) 2.51-3.25 (Sometimes) 3.26-4.00 (Always)

Table 1 shows the forms of distraction commonly experienced by the respondents in a blending learning environment. The statement '*I lose my concentration if I am fatigued.*' got the highest weighted mean of 3.28 that is verbally interpreted as *always*. It is followed by the statement '*I worry about my future tasks during study time or class.*' which got a weighted mean of 3.09, and verbally interpreted as *sometimes*. The statement '*I cannot focus in a noisy environment.*' got the third highest weighted mean with 3.02, and is verbally interpreted as *sometimes*. Subsequently, the statement '*I find it difficult to work in a cluttered learning area.*', a statement which got a weighted mean of 3.00 and is verbally interpreted as *sometimes*. Next to it, the statements '*I consciously think about my personal issues during study time or class.*' and '*I scroll through various social media platforms during my study time.*' both got the same weighted mean of 2.87 and is verbally interpreted as *sometimes*. In addition, the statement '*I shift my focus to talking with my friends during class.*' got a weighted mean of 2.66, a weighted mean which is verbally interpreted as *sometimes*; the statement '*I cannot comprehend the lesson being taught if I am hungry.*' got a weighted mean of 2.60 with verbal interpretation of *sometimes*; the statement '*I am unable to control my emotions during class.*' got a weighted mean of 2.34 that is verbally interpreted as *rarely*; lastly, the

statement 'I cannot refuse when I am invited to play games even when I am in the middle of studying' got the lowest weighted mean of just 2.23, verbally interpreted as *rarely*.

The overall weighted mean of Table 1, a table that focuses solely on the forms of distraction respondents face on a blended learning environment, is 2.80 and is verbally interpreted as *sometimes*. The statement '*I lose my concentration if I am fatigued*' got the highest weighted mean, which means that concentration in a blended learning modality is greatly affected by how a student feels internally. Losing concentration affects their performance inflicted by internal stressors. Proving that self-inflicted distractions is the most common form of distraction faced by the respondents on a blended learning.

This is similar to Kojic's (2021) work, which stated that thinking about personal problems, concerns, and issues during school hours makes it a whole lot harder for students to concentrate solely on what they are doing academically. This often results in a lack of engagement, satisfaction, and motivation to excel in their studies.

Table 2.
The Coping Mechanisms of the Respondents in Blended Learning

Statements	WM	VI
I consult the school guidance counselor to cope with the distractions I face in school.	1.52	Never
I read online articles written by psychologists to manage the distractions I face when studying.	2.01	Rarely
I seek advice from my educators in order to mitigate the distractions I experience in daily learning.	1.93	Rarely
I seek help from a medical professional (e.g. therapist) to overcome the distractions I encounter when learning.	1.44	Never
I watch educational videos on handling distractions made by competent professionals.	2.41	Rarely
I use internet-blocking sites to limit distractions.	2.07	Rarely
I prevent myself from engaging in irrelevant talks during class discussions.	2.66	Sometimes
I limit myself from unnecessary use of technology during my scheduled learning.	2.52	Sometimes
I create a study environment that is free from auditory distractions.	2.79	Sometimes
I set achievable goals to stay on task.	3.20	Sometimes
Total	2.26	Rarely

Legend: WM - Weighted Mean; VI - Verbal Interpretation, 1-1.75 (Never) 1.76-2.50 (Rarely) 2.51-3.25 (Sometimes) 3.26-4.00 (Always)

Table 2 shows the forms of coping mechanisms commonly experienced by the respondents in a blended learning environment. The statement '*I set achievable goals to stay on task.*' got the highest weighted mean of 3.20 that is verbally interpreted as *sometimes*. It is followed by the statement '*I create a study environment that is free from auditory distractions.*' which got a weighted mean of 2.79, and verbally interpreted as *sometimes*. The statement '*I prevent myself from engaging in irrelevant talks during class discussions.*' got the third highest weighted mean with 2.66, and is verbally interpreted as *sometimes*. Then, the statement '*I limit myself from unnecessary use of technology during my scheduled learning.*' got a weighted mean of 2.52, which is verbally interpreted as *sometimes*. It is followed by the statement '*I watch educational videos on handling distractions made by competent professionals.*' which got a weighted mean of 2.41, which is verbally interpreted as *rarely*. In addition, the statement '*I use internet-blocking sites to limit distractions.*' got a weighted mean of 2.07, a weighted mean which is verbally interpreted as *rarely*; the statement '*I read online articles written by psychologists to manage the distractions I face when studying.*' got a weighted mean of 2.01 with a verbal interpretation of *rarely*; the statement '*I seek advice from my educators in order to mitigate the distractions I experience in daily learning.*' got a weighted mean of 1.93 with a verbal interpretation of *rarely*; the statement '*I consult the school guidance counselor to cope with the distractions I face at school.*' got a weighted mean of 1.52 with a verbal interpretation of *never*; the statement '*I seek help from a medical profession (e.g. therapist) to overcome the distractions I encounter when learning.*' got a weighted mean of 1.44 with a verbal interpretation of *never*.

The overall weighted mean of Table 5, a table that focuses solely on the forms of coping mechanisms respondents face in a blended learning environment, is 2.26 and is verbally interpreted as *rarely*. The statement '*I set achievable goals to stay on task.*' got the highest weighted mean, which showed that students made personal remedies or solutions by setting their goals rather than following or consulting professionals' help. This was perceived that despite the distractions faced by the students externally and internally they are able to bounce back and strategize by setting personal goals to meet and accomplish tasks.

This is in line with Army & Navy Academy (2017) which emphasized that students should have a goal setting mindset for it is a key part to achieving long-term success. Goals help students to focus upon the journey to a collection of set achievements, meaning they allocate their resources and time more efficiently and can access motivation during times when they may feel like giving up.

Null Hypothesis

Based on the results of the study, the data gathered shows that there are significant effects of distractions to the blended learning concentration of the Grade 10 students in Philippine School Doha. The computed weighted mean of the findings serves as the determining factor on what form of distraction the respondents are accustomed to during blended learning in respect to the indicated forms mainly internal, and external.

4. Discussion

The findings based on the statistical analysis of data revealed that students lose their concentration on their studies if they feel tired, fatigued, hungry, emotional, and anxious about the tasks they need to accomplish ahead. It is concluded that internal distractions are the form of distraction the respondents are most accustomed to and the one that affects them the most during blended learning. This simply means that self-inflicted distractions are more prevalent to distract a student than those distractions coming from a source that the student cannot control.

The findings of Part II of the questionnaire showed that question 2, which is a statement under internal distractions, was the only statement that had an interpretation of 'Always' with the weighted mean of 3.28. The statement '*I lose my concentration if I am fatigued.*' is the most common internal distraction of students, based on the findings. This is due to

the fact that when a student is fatigued, the student's brain is likely to perform worse affecting the ability of students to focus on one thing, specifically their academics. The form of coping mechanism the respondents are accustomed to is self-directed strategies. The findings of Part III of the questionnaire showed that questions 7,8,9 and 10 are statements under self-directed strategies, were the statements that had an interpretation of 'Sometimes', with a weighted mean of 2.66, 2.52, 2.79, and 3.20 respectively. Based on the data gathered, the null hypothesis stating that the occurrence of distractions has no impact on the blended learning concentration of the Grade 10 students in Philippine School Doha, is rejected because the questionnaire shows that the occurrence of distractions truly impacts the focus of students on blended learning.

Distractions have been shown to negatively impact performance. It leads to a lack of productivity and efficiency. This is why it is important to adapt to coping mechanisms to help overcome and avoid distractions. This study investigated the distractions and coping mechanisms in blended learning of Grade 10 students in Philippine School Doha S.Y. 2021-2022. Specifically, this study sought answers to the forms of distractions and the coping mechanisms the respondents are accustomed.

Based on the findings of the study, the following are recommended; students may learn about the different forms of distraction and their coping mechanisms, preferably internal distractions since it is the most common and the type of distraction the students can control themselves. They should be knowledgeable about the different forms of distraction they face during blended learning for them to find the proper coping mechanism that would effectively help in overcoming the distractions, may it be internal or external. Through knowing the forms of distraction and their coping mechanisms, students would be able to focus better and concentrate on their studies. Parents should invigorate their children to be open to learning more about the concept of the different forms of distractions for their children to know what may cause their loss of focus and find a way to cope with it during blended learning. Teachers may learn about the different forms of distraction to be able to understand why students lose focus and attention in blended learning. In addition, the findings of the study will help them to craft meaningful and engaging activities that will help the students cope with the distractions easily and apply coping mechanisms effectively. Future Researchers may use the findings of the study to delve on other related topics which involved distractions and concentration on blended learning.

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