PERCEIVED CHALLENGES AND SATISFACTION OF EDUCATION STUDENTS IN ONLINE DISTANCE LEARNING

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Abstract:
The study aimed to determine the perceived challenges and satisfaction levels of Bachelor of Elementary Education in online distance learning. The descriptive-correlational design was used in this study. The investigations were conducted at Notre Dame of Midsayap College on fifty (50) BEED students who are enrolled in online distance learning for School Year 2021-2022 and the majority of them were female students. A researcher-modified survey questionnaire was used in data gathering, Frequency and percentage distribution, mean and standard deviation, t-test and ANOVA, and Pearson-r correlation were used in treating the data. The study revealed that the students have challenges in online distance learning. The study found out that the highest challenges encountered by the students in online distance learning are slow internet connection due to their location and facing many interruptions when learning at home such as household chores and other errands. The students are highly satisfied with how teachers showed interest in helping students to learn and the teacher's accessibility and availability. Moreover, the respondents are least satisfied with how timely teachers give feedback on their performance. The study also revealed that there was a significant difference in the satisfaction level of the students in terms of their sex.

Keywords: perceived challenges, satisfaction, education, online distance learning

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1. Introduction

The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic has changed and altered our educational landscape, forcing schools to tersely shift to online classes instead of the face-to-face classroom set-up. The current situation poses great challenges to educational institutions not only in the Philippines but throughout the world. Rowley (2020) discussed the impact of the pandemic on higher education globally. Education has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic by pushing 1.53 billion students to be out of school and affecting 87.6% of the world's total enrolled learners. He discussed various aspects of educational institutions in this changing environment such as financial viability, mission, academic programs, program delivery, technology, and library and student services. In the study of Cahapay, M. B. (2020) the initial impact of COVID-19 in education in the Philippines was experienced when classes at all levels in Metro Manila were suspended as President Rodrigo Duterte announced on March 9. The increase in COVID-19 cases caused a massive impact on higher educational institutions. All schools were closed and the country immediately opted for different learning modalities. In response to the situation, Notre Dame of Midsayap College (NDMC) used online distance learning using Learning Management systems such as Schoology, Class In, and Zoom to pursue quality education despite the ongoing pandemic. There had been a significant surge in the usage of technology (i.e., virtual tutoring, video conferencing tools, and software) in education. Various online educational initiatives like online classrooms, webinars, digital exams, and so on have been introduced. Traditional face-to-face classes that had been used for a long decade since education started were slowly phased out and eventually were re-adopted in the school system. It is known to us that even in face-to-face classes, students have challenges in achieving quality education. Compared to face-to-face learning, online learning during the pandemic is filled with a multitude of challenges. Also, student satisfaction is important to have meaningful and effective learning. Presently, students of Notre Dame of Midsayap College are still adjusting to online distance learning due to challenges being encountered. Above all the challenges, knowing student satisfaction can pave the way to effective learning. In line with the foregoing situation, the researchers are determined to determine the challenges and satisfaction level of Notre Dame of Midsayap College students in online distance learning, specifically, the Bachelor of Elementary Education students in the College of Education.

2. Literature Review

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), over 800 million learners around the world have been affected, 1 in 5 learners cannot attend school, 1 in 4 cannot attend higher education classes, and over 102 countries have ordered nationwide school closures while 11 have implemented localized school closures (WorldWideMedia Consulting, 2020). In his research, Kumar Das (2021) stated

that the global lockdown of education institutions is going to cause a major (and likely unequal) interruption in students' learning.

Distance learning is an educational process where students receive instruction through online classes, video recordings, video conferencing, or any other audio/visual technology media. It enables people to receive an education without having to be physically present in the classroom. According to Subedi et al., (2020), E-learning tools have played a crucial role during this pandemic, helping schools and universities facilitate student learning during the closure of universities schools. While adapting to the new changes, students' readiness needs to be supported accordingly. According to the systematic review conducted by Ouma, (2021) on the perception of online learning among college students during the COVID-19 pandemic, which included 21 studies from institutions in Asia and Europe, the results of the study found that the students in online classes experienced the following problems: the inability to afford necessary devices to access course materials, unreliable internet connection and learning environment which brought challenges to students such as the high cost of data bundles, unreliable network, and lack of adequate cellphone space to download the materials needed for class. Additional challenges reported include lack of prior experience with online learning, technical difficulties accessing materials online, high volume of assignments, poor communication between learners and educators, and distractions from the home environment. Moreover, Dayagbil et al., (2021) found in their study that technological challenges are usually pinned on low internet connectivity and the inability to afford necessary devices. This goes to show that not all learners have accessibility to capacitate technologies needed for their online learning. One may have acquired a smartphone but could not afford an internet connection. In his study, Estrellado (2021) states that as online distance education sets the norm, the Philippine setting proves to struggle in the transition to the online learning space. This transition to using digital space as a learning landscape means that the educational system will rely on the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) of the country, which, at present, is described as "*not yet fittingly developed, though it is thriving*". In addition, this transition to an online learning space demands the purchase and proficiency of these resources, such as software, hardware, and other teaching resources, which then requires them to get acquainted with these technologies to effectively deliver their roles and for them to physically and adapt to the new learning space. Thus, this learning setup proved to be difficult for teachers; they especially find it difficult to hold their students' attention for long periods. Even instructors were caught unprepared for the paradigm shift. Pastor (2020) found the same findings where key problems mentioned by students were a lack of proper understanding of the lessons, feeling misunderstood by their teachers, and poor or slow internet connectivity.

Furthermore, Mahyoob's (2020) study revealed that the biggest challenge learners faced were technical issues with instrumental support. Basic actions such as accessing course materials and troubleshooting have been difficult for some, while others find it

difficult to join online synchronous classes. Sometimes, learners could not open their exams on their cellular devices. In the study of Means, B., and Neisler, J., with Langer Research Associates (2020) states that some of those challenges include technical difficulties in attending lectures, staying focused during a lecture, insufficient IT literacy, limited opportunities for collaboration which results in a feeling of isolation and the absence of opportunities for the development of practical skills, which some subjects demand student success. Furthermore, the study of Friedman (2020) also highlighted the major technological and online class obstacles that students encountered. Based on her study, major challenges for students were the lack of sufficient time to complete the tasks and the misunderstanding of instructions. In addition to the case of Philippines on the challenges of learners in online learning, the result of the study of Barrot, J. S. et al. (2021) states that the greatest challenge that students experienced was related to the learning environment, particularly on distractions at home, limitations in completing the requirements for certain subjects, and difficulties in selecting the learning areas and study schedule. Other challenges that they experienced related to physical discomfort and financial challenges.

Students' satisfaction is positively correlated with the quality of learning outcomes. An understanding of student satisfaction with online learning can be used as an input to the appropriate design of learning environments, and for the provision of targeted support to students, to positively influence the student online learning experience.

According to the study by Abdul Latip et al. (2020), student satisfaction has become an important component of quality assurance in online distance learning. The study by Cheon et al. (2020) states that measuring student satisfaction in online learning is a significant aspect of successfully promoting educational processes for institutions, faculty, and learners.

The results of the study of Gopal et al. (2021) show that four independent factors used in the study which are the quality of instructor, course design, instructors' prompt feedback, and expectation of students positively impact students' satisfaction. The quality of instructors with high fanaticism for students' learning has a positive impact on their satisfaction. The study of Tran, Q. H., & Nguyen, T. M. (2021) is to identify which of the factors, including course effectiveness, provided technical knowledge and skills, the sense of belonging, the interaction with the instructor, and the utility of available facilities, had the more robust relationship with the student satisfaction.

The study of el Refae et al. (2021) found that there is no significant relationship between satisfaction and perceived challenges in online distance learning. However, the study of Hettiarachchi et al. (2021) revealed that challenges in online distance learning had a significant relationship with student satisfaction. Moreover, Harvey et al. (2017) found that there are no differences between genders and satisfaction in online learning. Similarly, the results of the study of Elshami, et al. (2021) found that gender does not affect student satisfaction, as there was no statistical difference between male and female

students. Whereas, the study by Martin & Bolliger (2018) found that female students were more satisfied with online learning than male students. Another study stressed that there was a significant difference between satisfaction with e-learning and gender (Yekefallah et al, 2021). Satisfaction with e-learning was higher among female students than male students. However, no significant difference was observed between satisfaction with e-learning and variables of age.

3. Methodology

In this study, a descriptive correlational type of research was utilized. It is descriptive since it describes the profile of the respondents in terms of their sex and age, the challenges they encountered and their satisfaction level in online distance e-learning. It is a correlation for it determines the relationship between challenges and Satisfaction level encountered by the respondents in online distance learning. According to Creswell (2019), a descriptive research design is an approach that identifies the attributes of a particular phenomenon based on an observational basis or the exploration of the correlation between two or more phenomena. This approach is appropriate to our study since descriptive design describes the situation accurately and systematically. Thus, this design is more effective in featuring the challenges and satisfaction of students in online distance learning.

The researcher employed a stratified random sampling technique in which BEED students from the first year to third year college in Notre Dame of Midsayap College have an equal probability of being chosen to have an unbiased representation of the total population.

4. Material and Methods

4.1 Research Design
In this study, a descriptive correlational design type of research was utilized. It is descriptive since it describes the profile of the respondents in terms of their sex and age, the challenges they encountered, and their satisfaction level in online distance e-learning. It is correlational for it determines the relationship between challenges and satisfaction levels encountered by the respondents in online distance learning. Creswell (2002) defined correlation as a statistical test to establish patterns for two variables.

4.2 Research Technique
The researcher employed a simple random sampling technique in which BEED students from the first year to third year college in Notre Dame of Midsayap College have an equal probability of being chosen to have an unbiased representation of the total population.

4.3 Research Instrument

The survey questionnaire was used as the main data-gathering instrument. The items of the questionnaire were taken from the readings of related literature. The instrument was divided into three parts representing the information needed for the study. The questionnaire was reviewed and checked. The survey questionnaire was validated by the appropriateness of each item. In the same manner, the data collected on the pre-testing of the instrument underwent reliability testing using Cronbach alpha yielding a result of .867 which indicated that the instrument was reliable.

4.4 Data Analysis Procedure

The responses in the questionnaire were scored, recorded, and tabulated. Frequency and percentage distribution are used to determine the profile of the respondents. Mean and standard deviation was used for problem 2 and 3 which are to identify the challenges and satisfaction levels of the respondents. Problem 4 identifies the significant difference in the satisfaction level of the respondents when grouped according to sex and age t-test and ANOVA were used. Pearson-r correlation is used to identify if there was a significant relationship between the challenges and satisfaction levels encountered by the respondents in online distance learning.

5. Analyses and Results

5.1 Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 shows the Frequency and percentage distribution of the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of sex and age.

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of the demographic profile of the respondents

Characteristics	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age		
18-19	14	28.0
20-21	28	56.0
22 and above	8	16.0
Total	50	100
Sex		
Male	6	12.0
Female	44	88.0
Total	50	100

Table 1 shows the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age and sex. It reveals that out of 50 respondents there was 56 percent were 20 to 21 years old. There were only 28 percent aged 18 to 19, and 16 percent who were 22 years old and above respectively. As to the sex of the respondents, there were 12 percent male respondents, and 88 percent female respondents.

Based on the responses, the majority of the respondents are between 20-21 years old. It implies that most of the students in Bachelor of Elementary Education belong to young adults and are described as the first generation that grew up in the internet age sometimes termed digital natives. As to the sex of the respondents, the majority are females. This means that females are more likely to take courses BEED than males.

5.2 Challenges in Online Distance Learning
The information pertaining to the challenges in online distance learning is supplied in Table 2.

Table 2: Challenges in Online Distance Learning

	Challenges in Online Distance Learning	Mean	Sd	Description
1.	I do not have enough device space to download the materials needed for class.	2.840	0.618	Agree (A)
2.	I cannot complete my Schoology tasks on time due to a lack of access to applications needed (i.e. Microsoft Office, PDF, etc.)	2.740	0.853	Agree (A)
3.	I cannot afford the high cost of data bundles.	3.000	0.606	Agree (A)
4.	I have a slow internet connection due to my location.	3.300	0.814	Agree (A)
5.	I am not able to afford broadband connection and pertinent devices such as computers/laptops or tablets to support my online learning.	2.920	0.829	Agree (A)
6.	I am not motivated to learn online due to heavy workload/high volume of assignments.	2.600	0.782	Agree (A)
7.	I do not have enough time to complete the tasks.	2.460	0.762	Agree (A)
8.	I have difficulties completing my task due to a lack of knowledge of how to use web browsers, search engines, email, PowerPoint and video creation/editing software.	2.420	0.810	Agree (A)
9.	I cannot hear my teacher clearly during synchronous class due to a slow internet connection.	3.060	0.652	Agree (A)
10.	It is hard to participate in online classes during synchronous.	2.740	0.600	Agree (A)
11.	I face many interruptions when learning at homes such as household chores and other errands.	3.080	0.695	Agree (A)
12.	I have limited opportunities for collaboration with teacher and classmates.	2.960	0.605	Agree (A)
	Overall	2.843	0.719	Agree (A)

Scale	Range	Description
1	1.00 to <1.75	Strongly Disagree (SD)
2	1.75 to < 2.50	Disagree (D)
3	2.50 to < 3.25	Agree (A)
4	3.25 to 4.00	Strongly Agree (SA)

Table 2 shows the challenges in online distance learning for Bachelor of Elementary Education students of Notre Dame of Midsayap College. As shown in the table, all of the indicators have been agreed upon by the students with an overall mean of 2.843 and an overall standard deviation of 0.719. The mean scores ranged from 2.420 to 3.080.

The findings show that of the 12 items under challenges in online distance learning indicated in the questionnaire, item number 4, I have slow internet connection due to my location got the highest mean of 3.300 and describe as Agree. This implies that the respondents are living in a far-flung area or they are not able to afford a broadband connection to have a stable internet connection. The highest challenges were followed by item number 11, I face many interruptions when learning at home such as household chores and other errands with a mean of 3.080. This implies that the respondents do not have a conducive learning place at home and they do not utilize school days just for the online class but rather by doing household chores. The finding of this study agrees with the study of Dayagbil et al., (2021) who found that technological challenges are usually pinned on low internet connectivity and the inability to afford necessary devices. This goes to show that not all learners have accessibility to capacitate technologies needed for their online learning. One may have acquired a smartphone but could not afford an internet connection. The findings in item number 11 are supported by Barrot et al. (2021) who state that the greatest challenge that students experienced was related to the learning environment, particularly distractions at home, limitations in completing the requirements for certain subjects, and difficulties in selecting the learning areas and study schedule. On the other hand, the item with the lowest mean is item number 8, I had difficulties completing my task due to a lack of knowledge of how to use web browsers, search engines, email, PowerPoint and video creation/editing software were difficulties complete the task due to lack of knowledge how to use web browsers, search engines, email, PowerPoint and video creation/editing software with a mean of 2.420 and it was followed by item number 7, I do not have enough time to complete the tasks with a mean of 2.460. This implies that BEED students are knowledgeable enough in using technology and have sufficient time to complete the task. This finding is opposed by the study of Ouma (2021) who notes that major challenges include lack of prior experience with online learning, technical difficulties accessing materials online, and a high volume of assignments.

5.3 Satisfaction in Online Distance Learning

The information pertaining to the satisfaction in online distance learning are supplied in Table 3.

Table 3: Satisfaction in Online Distance Learning

Satisfactions in Online Distance Learning	Mean	Sd	Description
1. I am satisfied with online interaction with my instructor.	3.000	0.495	Agree (A)
2. I am satisfied with my teachers' accessibility and availability.	3.180	0.596	Agree (A)
3. I am satisfied with online discussions by my teachers through Schoology or ClassIn.	2.920	0.601	Agree (A)
4. I received feedback on time.	2.680	0.653	Agree (A)
5. I received useful feedback on my performance on tests, papers, etc.	2.760	0.591	Agree (A)
6. I felt a part of the class and belonged to the online session.	3.020	0.515	Agree (A)
7. There was clear communication of class assignments.	2.840	0.650	Agree (A)

8. The presentation of the course topic was clear.	2.980	0.473	Agree (A)
9. The requirements for completion of the course were clearly outlined.	3.020	0.553	Agree (A)
10. Teachers showed interest in helping students to learn.	3.200	0.535	Agree (A)
11. Course materials are relevant to the topic and are explained clearly.	3.160	0.618	Agree (A)
12. Schoology as a learning management system is user-friendly.	3.000	0.700	Agree (A)
Overall	2.980	0.582	Agree (A)

Scale	Range	Description
1	1.00 to <1.75	Strongly Disagree (SD)
2	1.75 to < 2.50	Disagree (D)
3	2.50 to < 3.25	Agree (A)
4	3.25 to 4.00	Strongly Agree (SA)

Table 3 shows the satisfaction in online distance learning of Bachelor of Elementary Education students of Notre Dame of Midsayap College. As shown in the table, all of the indicators have been agreed upon by the students with an overall mean of 2.980 and an overall standard deviation of 0.582. The mean scores ranged from 2.680 to 3.200. The data revealed that of the 12 items indicated in the questionnaire, item number 10, Teachers showed interest in helping students to learn received the highest mean of 3.200 and interpreted as Agree. Followed by item number 2, I am satisfied with my teachers' accessibility and availability with a mean of 3.180. This implies that Notre Dame of Midsayap College faculties showed interest and is available to help students. Meanwhile, in item number 4, I receive feedback on time received the lowest mean of 2.680 and was followed by item number 5, I receive useful feedback on my performance on tests, papers, etc. with a mean of 2.760. This implies that faculties do not give immediate feedback on students' performances as the respondents are hoping for. This finding is supported by the study of Gopal et al. (2021) who noted that the quality of instructors, and instructors' prompt feedback, and expectation of students positively impact students' satisfaction.

5.4 Difference in the Satisfaction Level of the Respondents when Grouped According to Sex
The information pertaining to the difference in the satisfaction level of the respondents in online distance learning when grouped according to sex is supplied in Table 4.

Table 4: Difference in the Satisfaction Level of
the Respondents when Grouped According to Sex

Sex	N	Mean	SD	P-value	Decision
Male	6	3.042	0.181	0.035	S
Female	44	2.816	0.416		

Note: NS = Not significant at .05 level (2– tailed); S = Significant at .05 level (2– tailed)

Based on the result, there is a significant difference in the satisfaction level of the respondents when grouped according to sex. Thus, the null hypothesis which state there is no significant difference in the satisfaction level of the respondents when the group

according to sex is rejected. This implies that the satisfaction level of the respondents in online distance learning varies when grouped according to sex. This finding is parallel to the study of Martin, & Bolliger (2018) who found that female students were more satisfied with online learning than male students. The same with the findings of Yekefallah, L et al. (2021) who stressed that there was a significant difference between satisfaction with e-learning and gender. Satisfaction with e-learning was higher among female students than male students. This finding is opposed by the study of Elshami, et al. (2021) who found that gender does not affect student satisfaction, as there was no statistically significant difference between male and female students.

5.5 Difference in the Satisfaction Level of the Respondents when Grouped According to Age

The information pertaining to the difference in the satisfaction level of the respondents in online distance learning when grouped according to age is supplied in Table 5.

Table 5: Difference in the Satisfaction Level
of the Respondents when Grouped According to Age

Age	N	Mean	SD	P-value	Decision
18 - 19	14	3.042	0.322		
20 - 21	28	2.961	0.377	0.736	NS
22 and above	8	2.938	0.320		

Note: NS = Not significant at .05 level (2– tailed) S = Significant at .05 level (2– tailed)

The result revealed that there is no significant difference in the satisfaction level of the respondents when grouped according to age. This is evident in the P-value of 0.736 which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis which state that there is no significant difference in the satisfaction level of the respondents when grouped according to sex is accepted. The finding shows that the satisfaction level of the respondents in online distance learning does not vary when grouped according to age. This finding is supported by Yekefallah, et al. (2021) who found that no significant difference was observed between satisfaction with e-learning and variables of age.

5.6 Relationship between the Challenges and Satisfaction Level Encountered by the Respondents in Online Distance Learning

Table 6: Relationship between the Challenges and Satisfaction
Level Encountered by the Respondents in Online Distance Learning

Variables	N	Correlation Coefficient	p-value	r-value	Decision
Satisfaction	50	-0.0076	0.9524	-0.009	NS

Note: NS = Not significant at .05 level (2– tailed); S = Significant at .05 level (2– tailed)

The result revealed that there is no significant relationship between the challenges and satisfaction levels encountered by the respondents in online distance learning. This is

evident in the p-value of 0.9524 which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis which state that there is no significant relationship between the challenges and satisfaction level encountered by the respondents in online distance learning is accepted. This implies that the challenges encountered by the respondents in online distance learning do not affect their level of satisfaction. This finding is supported by the study of el Refae et al. (2021) who found that there is no significant relationship between satisfaction and perceived challenges in online distance learning. However, the study of Hettiarachchi et al. (2021) revealed that challenges in online distance learning had a significant relationship with student satisfaction.

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers concluded that students specifically the Bachelor of Elementary Education students of the Notre Dame of Midsayap College are facing challenges in online distance learning. The challenges identified were not on students' knowledge about using technology but rather more on slow internet connection due to location and interruption when learning at home such as doing household chores. The respondents are highly satisfied with how the teachers showed interest in helping them to learn. However, the respondents are least satisfied as on how timely teachers give feedback on their performance. Hence, the respondents learning environment should be free from interruption and have a stable internet connection. In addition, teachers' interest in helping students to learn should be maintained and teachers should give immediate feedback on students' performance to attain meaningful learning in online distance learning. The study also revealed that there was a significant difference in the satisfaction level of the students in terms of their sex. Females are more satisfied with the online learning modality than males.

Conflict of Interest Statement
The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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