

Benefits and Challenges of E-Reporting to Tertiary Students of General Education Courses in A State University in the Philippines

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Abstract

COVID-19 pandemic brought a lot of changes in many sectors. The field of education was one of the most affected fields due to the pandemic. Teachers were tasked to innovate and think of solution on how to conduct classes with the use of technology to make distance or online education effective and accessible to all learners. This study delves into e-reporting's role as a teaching tool in the new normal among tertiary students at a state university in the Philippines, examining its benefits and challenges. It employs a survey methodology to gauge students' perceptions and experiences. With the aid of a self-made survey questionnaire, the researcher was able to gather the needed data. The said tool underwent series of validations, try-out, and reliability testing with the use of Cronbach Alpha. 144 tertiary students were the respondents of the study. They are the students of the researchers who used e-reporting during their General Education courses handled by the researcher. The research aims to showcase e-reporting's advantages, such as increased accessibility, self-paced learning, and technological literacy, while also noting challenges like technical issues and limited interaction. The findings suggest that e-reporting is promising but requires improvements like better internet infrastructure, technical support, and interactive features for effective implementation. These findings were used to enhance and improve the conduct of online classes during the pandemic when distance education was imposed in the Philippines due to the COVID-19 pandemic specifically in Catanduanes State University at Catanduanes Island, Luzon, Philippines.

Keywords: E-Reporting, New Normal, Education, Teaching Tool, Benefits and Challenges, Distance Education, Online Learning

Background of the Study

The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic precipitated transformative shifts within the realm of education worldwide. One of the most profound impacts was witnessed in the rapid evolution of instructional modalities, necessitating a departure from traditional face-to-face teaching towards a diverse range of remote learning approaches. These adaptations, including asynchronous and synchronous learning, blended learning models, and fully online classes, were swiftly embraced by educational institutions globally in response to the pandemic's challenges. Consequently, the educational landscape saw a significant reliance on digital technologies, particularly internet connectivity and mobile devices, marking a paradigm shift often termed as the "new normal" in education.

In the Philippines, this paradigm shift towards flexible learning modalities was duly recognized and implemented by educational governing bodies such as the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) and

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the Department of Education (DepEd). The issuance of CHed Memorandum Order No. 04, Series of 2020, titled “Guidelines in the Implementation of Flexible Learning,” underscores the strategic response aimed at accommodating the diverse technological access levels among students within the country’s educational framework. This strategic categorization, comprising high, medium, and low-level technology classifications, was designed to assist educators in tailoring instructional strategies that align with students’ technological capabilities and resources.

At Catanduanes State University, situated within this evolving educational landscape, a proposal emerges to evaluate the efficacy of e-reporting as a pedagogical tool specifically geared towards General Education courses. This proposal stems from a recognition of the dynamic interplay between technological advancements, instructional methodologies, and student learning outcomes within the context of flexible learning environments. Informal surveys conducted among students at the university reveal varying degrees of technological access, with mobile phones being ubiquitous but internet connectivity exhibiting disparities in speed and reliability. Consequently, educators have employed a range of instructional methods, including self-made modules, virtual discussions through messenger platforms, closed Facebook groups, and academic vlogs, to cater to these diverse technological contexts and optimize learning experiences.

In light of these developments, the proposed study seeks to delve into the impact of e-reporting within the context of General Education courses at Catanduanes State University. Additionally, the study aims to gather valuable insights and recommendations from both educators and students, thereby contributing to the ongoing discourse on enhancing instructional practices and content delivery within the realm of flexible learning paradigms.

Research Objectives

The primary aim of this study is to evaluate the influence of electronic reporting on students enrolled in General Education Subjects at Catanduanes State University. More specifically, it seeks to address three key questions: 1. What benefits do students get from e-reporting? 2. What are the challenges do students face when engaging with e-reports? This research endeavors to provide valuable insights into the effectiveness and challenges of electronic reporting in an educational setting.

Methodology

This quantitative research employs tools like the Likert Scale and weighted mean to gather data. A survey questionnaire was formulated and given to selected respondents. The study focuses on students who took General Education courses during the School Year 2021-2022, specifically “The Life and Works of Rizal,” “Kontekstuwalisadong Komunikasyon sa Filipino,” and “Panitikan ng Pilipinas.” A total of 144 students participated in this study. There was no sampling procedure done in choosing the respondents because all students who engaged in e-reporting participated as respondents in the study.

The researcher utilized total enumeration, including all students in the proponent’s General Education courses, as respondents. A questionnaire addressing the research questions was created and validated by five jurors, experts in their respective fields with master’s degrees. After incorporating their suggestions, the tool was tested on 15 students who were not part of the researcher’s class but engaged in e-reporting. The questionnaire’s reliability was assessed using Cronbach’s Alpha formula, yielding an internal consistency rating of 0.89, signifying “Good” internal consistency. The questionnaires were distributed via Google Forms for data collection.

Results and Discussions

Benefits of E-Reports to the Students

During flexible learning, educators had the freedom to employ diverse online and offline methods to ensure effective student learning. Modular and online approaches were particularly utilized to prevent learning gaps across all education levels. To facilitate learning, students were tasked with creating e-reports, which were then shared and processed using platforms like group messages, Facebook groups, and Google Meet. Table 1 outlines the benefits of e-reports as perceived by students who utilized them. The majority of respondents strongly agreed that e-reports enhance learning, improve layout and editing skills, enable personalized learning at students' own pace, and offer additional resources as pre-recorded and downloadable materials. These indicators ranked highly with computed average means ranging from 4.67 to 4.33, showcasing the perceived efficacy of e-reports in enhancing student learning experiences.

Table 1 Benefits of E-Reports to Students

Benefits	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. E-reports enhances students learning of the lessons	4.80	Strongly Agree
2. E-reports help students understand important concepts	4.02	Agree
3. E-reports enhances the communication skills of students	3.82	Agree
4. E-reports help in improving student's cooperation and collaboration in the new normal	3.91	Agree
5. E-reports give additional learning opportunities and tools to students since they are pre-recorded and downloadable.	4.32	Strongly Agree
6. E-reports create an active atmosphere in the online class that cause more learning	3.70	Agree
7. E-reports make students more active in online discussions	3.58	Agree
8. E-reports help students achieve better understanding on different issues and facts related to the topic	3.70	Agree
9. E-reports help students retain more knowledge of the subject matter.	3.73	Agree
10. E-reports cause better academic performance of students	3.55	Agree
11. E-reports increase the creativity of students	4.19	Agree
12. E-reports improve students' lay outing and editing skills	4.34	Strongly Agree
13. E—reports help students to learn at their own convenience and at a pace that is right for them	4.33	Strongly Agree
14. E-reports help students build critical thinking, decision-making and problem-solving skills.	3.98	Agree
15. E-reports offer a lot of savings	3.67	Agree

The respondents largely supported the benefits of e-reporting, with high agreement levels noted for several key advantages. Firstly, e-reporting was perceived to significantly enhance students' learning of lessons, as evidenced by a computed average mean of 4.67, indicating strong agreement. Secondly, it was found to improve students' layouting and editing skills, with an average mean of 4.34, suggesting effective content organization and presentation. Additionally, e-reporting facilitated learning at students' own convenience and pace, with an average mean of 4.33, indicating flexibility in engagement with course materials. Furthermore, the provision of additional learning opportunities through pre-recorded and downloadable content was seen as beneficial, also obtaining an average mean of 4.33.

While these benefits garnered strong agreement, other identified advantages were generally agreed upon by the respondents. These included e-reports fostering creativity (average mean of 4.19), aiding in understanding important concepts (average mean of 4.02), contributing to critical thinking and problem-solving skills (average mean of 3.98), promoting cooperation and collaboration (average mean of 3.91), enhancing communication skills (average mean of 3.82), improving retention of subject matter knowledge (average mean of 3.73), providing a comprehensive understanding of different issues (average mean of 3.70), creating an active learning atmosphere (average mean of 3.70), offering cost savings (average mean of 3.67), encouraging active participation in online discussions (average mean of 3.58), and enhancing academic performance (average mean of 3.55).

These findings collectively highlight the multifaceted benefits of e-reporting, including its role in promoting comprehension, developing skills in content presentation, offering flexibility in learning, expanding access to resources, fostering creativity, and improving overall academic performance.

Challenges Met by Students in Making E-Reports

The shift to digital learning has led to the adoption of e-reporting, presenting both benefits and challenges. This overview delves into the obstacles students face when creating e-reports, encompassing technological barriers, unfamiliarity with digital tools, content organization challenges, multimedia integration issues, time management struggles, and resource accessibility limitations. Educators can aid students by addressing these challenges, enhancing their e-reporting experiences, and maximizing learning outcomes in digital environments.

Table 2 presents the pre-determined challenges encountered by students in the process of developing e-reports. This includes 15 challenges which were tallied and tabulated. Based on the results of the tabulation, 2 challenges were strongly agreed by the respondents. These includes, Weak internet connectivity and E-reports occupy large space that make uploading difficult. They were the 1st and 2nd in rank among all other pre-determined challenges which have a computed average means of 4.67 and 4.25 respectively.

The table presents 15 pre-determined challenges that students may face when creating e-reports. These challenges were identified and tabulated, and the results provide insights into the level of agreement among the respondents regarding each challenge. Among the 15 challenges, two challenges stood out as strongly agreed upon by the respondents. The first is **Weak internet connectivity**. This challenge ranked 1st among all the pre-determined challenges, with a computed average mean of 4.67. The respondents strongly agreed that weak internet connectivity posed a significant challenge during the development of e-reports. This suggests that students encountered difficulties due to slow or unreliable internet connections, which may have hindered

Table 2 Challenges Met by Students Who Did E-reporting

Challenges	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Rating
1. Weak internet connectivity	4.67	Strongly Agree
2. Less knowledge in Information Technology/ Insufficient knowledge in using the system.	3.77	Agree
3. Lack of electronic gadgets	4.19	Agree
4. No available editing application	3.73	Agree
5. Less knowledge of the subject matter	3.63	Agree
6. Less knowledge in lay outing	3.77	Agree
7. Less knowledge in editing	3.70	Agree
8. Less time in crafting e-reports	3.78	Agree
9. Classmates are not so cooperative	3.96	Agree
10. No available music for e-reports	3.04	Neutral/ Uncertain
11. No available reference materials	3.22	Agree
12. E-reports occupy large space that make uploading difficult	4.25	Strongly Agree
13. Financial constraints in producing materials during e- reporting	3.75	Agree
14. Lack of instructions/information	3.46	Agree
15. Lack of personal motivation	3.65	Agree

their ability to access online resources, upload their e-reports, or collaborate effectively in digital platforms. The second is **E-reports occupy large space that make uploading difficult**. This challenge ranked 2nd among the pre-determined challenges, with a computed average mean of 4.25. The respondents strongly agreed that the large file sizes of e-reports made uploading and sharing them challenging. This indicates that students may have faced issues related to file size restrictions, limited storage capacity, or difficulties in transferring large files within their digital learning environments.

The high average mean scores for both of these challenges suggest that they were prominent and widely experienced by the respondents. Weak internet connectivity and the challenges associated with large file sizes demonstrate the technological barriers and limitations that students encountered during the e-report development process. It is important to note that while these two challenges were strongly agreed upon, the data does not provide information on the specific percentage or number of respondents who agreed. Therefore, it is advisable to interpret these findings as a general indication of the challenges rather than precise quantitative measures.

These findings have several implications for educators and institutions: 1. Infrastructure and technical support: Addressing weak internet connectivity should be a priority for educational institutions. Providing

reliable and robust internet access can help mitigate the challenges faced by students and ensure a smoother e-reporting process. Additionally, offering technical support and guidance on optimizing file sizes can assist students in overcoming uploading difficulties. 2. File compression and alternative formats: Educators can guide students on techniques for compressing e-report files without compromising their quality. Exploring alternative formats or platforms that facilitate easier uploading and sharing of large files may also be beneficial. 3. Flexible submission options: Institutions can consider implementing flexible submission options for e-reports, such as utilizing cloud storage or learning management systems with larger storage capacities. This can alleviate the limitations imposed by file size restrictions and facilitate smoother file transfers. 4. Clear communication and guidelines: Educators should provide clear guidelines and instructions on file size limitations, recommended file formats, and technical requirements for e-report submissions. Clear communication can help students understand the expectations and navigate potential challenges more effectively.

By addressing these challenges and providing appropriate support, educators can help students overcome the technical barriers associated with weak internet connectivity and large file sizes, ultimately enhancing their e-reporting experiences and ensuring the successful completion of their assignments.

Furthermore, 12 challenges listed were just agreed by the respondents. These challenges includes, Lack of electronic gadgets, Classmates are not so cooperative, Less time in crafting e-reports, Less knowledge in lay outing, Less knowledge in Information Technology/ Insufficient knowledge in using the system., Financial constraints in producing materials during e- reporting, No available editing application, Less knowledge in editing, Lack of personal motivation, Less knowledge of the subject matter, Lack of instructions/information, and.No available reference materials. The computed mean for each challenge includes 4.19, 3.96, 3.78, 3.77, 3.77. 3.75, 3.73, 3.70. 3.65, 3.63, 3.46, and 3.22, respectively.

The findings indicate that while not strongly agreed upon, these challenges were generally acknowledged by the respondents. The interpretation for these fondings were broken down to the following. **Lack of electronic gadgets** received a computed mean of 4.19. It suggests that students identified a lack of access to electronic devices as a significant obstacle in developing e-reports. Insufficient access to computers, laptops, or smartphones could limit students' ability to engage in digital activities and complete their e-report assignments effectively. **Classmates are not so cooperative** received a computed mean of 3.96. It implies that students faced difficulties in collaborating and working with their classmates during the e-reporting process. Limited cooperation from peers might hinder the exchange of ideas, feedback, and collective efforts required for producing high-quality e-reports. **Less time in crafting e-reports** received a computed mean of 3.78. It indicates that students perceived time constraints as a barrier to creating comprehensive and well-crafted e-reports. Limited time for gathering information, organizing content, and ensuring the overall quality of their work could impact the depth and effectiveness of their reports. **Less knowledge in lay outing** received a computed mean of 3.77. It suggests that students faced difficulties in effectively arranging and presenting the content of their e-reports. Insufficient knowledge of layout design principles, visual organization, and formatting may have affected the overall clarity and coherence of their reports.

Furthermore, **Less knowledge in Information Technology/Insufficient knowledge in using the system** received a computed mean of 3.77. It indicates that students lacked proficiency in using information technology tools and systems required for e-report development. Limited understanding of software applications, digital

platforms, or specific functionalities could impede students' ability to navigate and utilize the necessary technologies effectively. **Financial constraints in producing materials during e-reporting** received a computed mean of 3.75. It suggests that students encountered financial limitations that affected their ability to acquire or produce necessary materials for their e-reports. Limited access to paid resources, printing costs, or purchasing software licenses may have hindered their progress and resource utilization. **No available editing application** received a computed mean of 3.73. It implies that students faced difficulties in finding suitable editing applications for their e-reporting tasks. Insufficient access to software or applications for proofreading, grammar checking, or overall editing might have impacted the accuracy and quality of their reports. **Less knowledge in editing** received a computed mean of 3.70. It indicates that students lacked proficiency in editing techniques, including grammar, syntax, and overall coherence. Limited understanding of editing principles and strategies might have resulted in reports with errors or inconsistencies. **Lack of personal motivation** received a computed mean of 3.65. It suggests that students experienced a lack of personal drive or motivation in the e-reporting process. Insufficient self-motivation may have affected their engagement, effort, and overall commitment to producing high-quality reports. **Less knowledge of the subject matter** received a computed mean of 3.63. It implies that students struggled with a lack of sufficient understanding or knowledge of the subject matter being reported. Insufficient comprehension of the topic might have affected the depth of analysis, accuracy of information, and overall quality of their reports. **Lack of instructions/information** received a computed mean of 3.46. It suggests that students encountered difficulties due to a lack of clear instructions or information provided by instructors. Insufficient guidance and clarity in assignment requirements, expectations, or technical instructions may have caused confusion

However, the result for the indicator **No available music for e-reports** with a computed mean of 3.04 is "Neutral/Uncertain". It indicates that the respondents neither strongly agreed nor strongly disagreed with the statement. The result suggests that the availability of music for e-reports did not elicit a clear consensus among the respondents. They expressed a level of uncertainty or neutrality regarding this specific challenge. This could indicate a lack of clarity or mixed opinions among the respondents regarding the inclusion of music in e-reports. The neutral response could stem from various factors. It is possible that the respondents had differing preferences when it comes to incorporating music into e-reports. Some students may view music as a valuable addition that enhances the overall presentation and engagement, while others may consider it unnecessary or distracting. Additionally, the neutrality might also stem from the respondents' limited exposure or experience with using music in e-reports. They might not have encountered situations where music was readily available or were uncertain about the appropriateness of including music in their reports. The neutral response regarding the availability of music for e-reports suggests that further investigation or clarification is needed to understand the students' perspectives and preferences regarding this aspect. Conducting additional surveys or interviews to gather more in-depth insights from the respondents could help shed light on their attitudes and opinions towards incorporating music in e-reports.

Conclusions

Based on the given findings, the researcher therefore concludes that:

1. E-reports prove to be highly valuable for students, particularly in the context of flexible learning during the pandemic, offering significant benefits for their educational experience.

2. While students acknowledge the benefits of e-reports, they also faced various challenges, particularly related to internet connectivity and the large file sizes of e-reports, which hindered their smooth uploading and sharing.

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