

Australia-ASEAN Academics Forum: Online Education during COVID-19 and Beyond

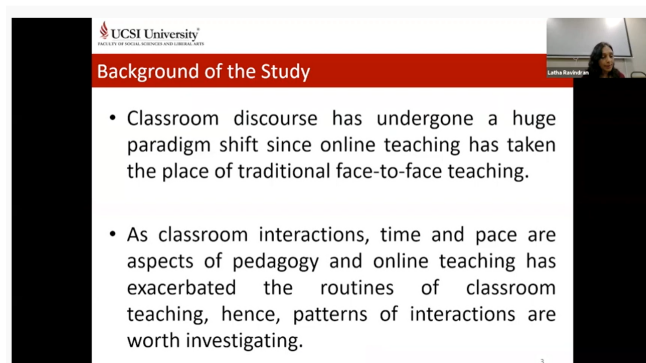
AAAF Dr Latha Ravindran talk 13th Sep 2021

Transcript

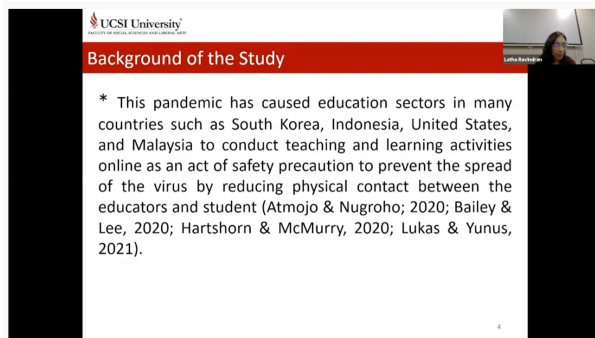
So, good afternoon everyone and thank you for allowing me to share my thoughts on this particular topic. And I'm glad to just share my findings with you. And so, I would start now. This is my topic for the day.



Pedagogical approach with an intent – focusing on interaction, time and pace during COVID-19: lessons learnt. So of course, this stems from the fact that we have had to suddenly transit from face to face to online classes. And therefore, what changes have taken place. So this is focusing basically on interaction, time and pace during the COVID-19 period. So, without further ado, I would go with the background of the study here.



So basically, classroom discourse has undergone a huge paradigm shift since online teaching has taken the place of traditional, face-to-face teaching. And as classroom interactions, time and pace aspects of pedagogy and online teaching has exacerbated routines of classroom teaching, hence the team, we have decided the patterns of interactions are worth investigating. And that would be the background of my study.



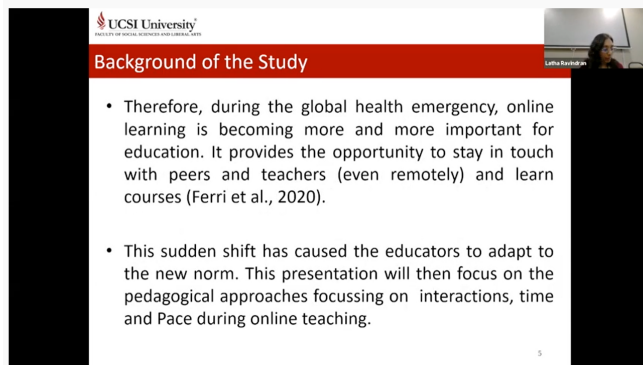
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Background of the Study

* This pandemic has caused education sectors in many countries such as South Korea, Indonesia, United States, and Malaysia to conduct teaching and learning activities online as an act of safety precaution to prevent the spread of the virus by reducing physical contact between the educators and student (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Bailey & Lee, 2020; Hartshorn & McMurry, 2020; Lukas & Yunus, 2021).

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So, this pandemic has caused education sectors in many countries such as South Korea, Indonesia, United States and Malaysia to conduct teaching and learning activities online as an act of safety precaution to prevent the spread of the virus by reducing physical contact between the educators and the student.



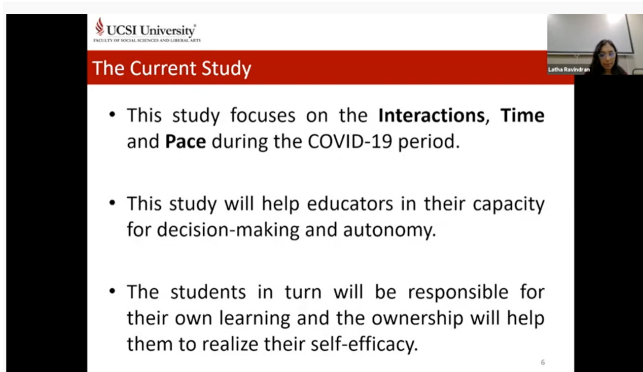
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Background of the Study

- Therefore, during the global health emergency, online learning is becoming more and more important for education. It provides the opportunity to stay in touch with peers and teachers (even remotely) and learn courses (Ferri et al., 2020).
- This sudden shift has caused the educators to adapt to the new norm. This presentation will then focus on the pedagogical approaches focussing on interactions, time and Pace during online teaching.

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So therefore, during the global health emergency, online learning is becoming more and more important for education. It provides the opportunity to stay in touch with peers and teachers and learn courses. So this sudden shift has caused the educators to adapt to the new norm and this presentation will then focus on the pedagogical approaches focusing on interactions, time and pace during online teaching. So we would also focus on the sudden paradigm shift that has taken place and what it entails in the run for the educators.




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The Current Study

- This study focuses on the **Interactions, Time and Pace** during the COVID-19 period.
- This study will help educators in their capacity for decision-making and autonomy.
- The students in turn will be responsible for their own learning and the ownership will help them to realize their self-efficacy.

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So this is the current study, and this study will help educate us in their capacity for decision making and autonomy. The students in turn will be responsible for their own learning and the ownership will help them to realize their self-efficacy.



Objectives of the Study

- To examine the pedagogical approaches used by the lecturers to address the social challenges of online teaching.
- To underscore practitioners' perspectives on interactions, time & pace to facilitate collaborative learning.


So moving on, these would be the objectives of the study: to examine the pedagogical approaches used by the lecturers to address the social challenges of online teaching, and also to underscore practitioners' perspectives on interactions, time and pace to facilitate collaborative learning. So, of course, during online teaching, the most important thing we noticed is the social challenges in online teaching, that included how students interacted with the lecturers and how lecturers had difficulties interacting with the students. And also, their perspectives on how it has helped them to find their own ways and means to facilitate collaborative learning during these challenging times.



Research Methodology

Research design	• Qualitative Research
Sampling Method	• Convenience sampling method
Participants	• 8 lecturers from a private university
Data Collection	• Classroom Observations (Microsoft Teams) • Interviews (Microsoft Teams) Semi-Structured
Data Analysis	• Thematic Analysis

So, this would be the research methodology. The research design was a qualitative research and the sampling method was a convenience sampling method. So we chose about eight lecturers from private universities and our data collection was through classroom observation. So it's again not a face-to-face observation but through Teams. And also, we did semi-structured interviews through Microsoft Teams and the data was analysed thematically.

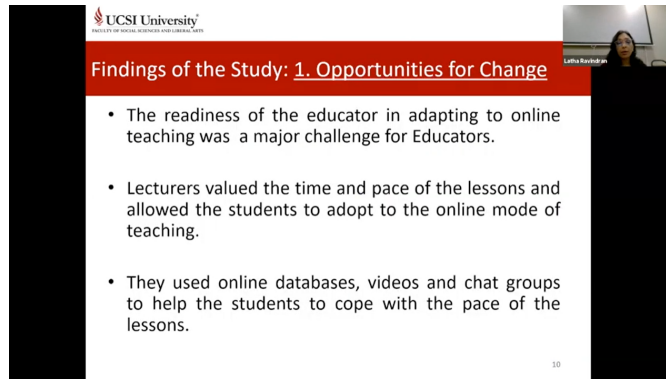


Findings of the Study

1. Opportunities for Change	2. Instructional Support(online Resources)
3. Building Rapport	4. Perceived Anxieties

So, based on this, we came up with four main data findings for this. The first one was opportunities for change and the second one was instructional support and online resources. The third was

building rapport and the fourth was the perceived anxieties. So, these were the four major findings that we came up with for these studies. So I would go on to elaborate on each of the findings and also the perspectives we have gathered.



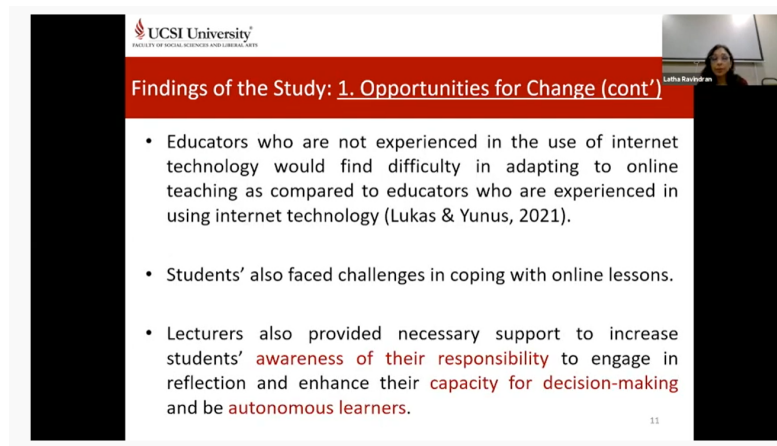
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Findings of the Study: 1. Opportunities for Change

- The readiness of the educator in adapting to online teaching was a major challenge for Educators.
- Lecturers valued the time and pace of the lessons and allowed the students to adopt to the online mode of teaching.
- They used online databases, videos and chat groups to help the students to cope with the pace of the lessons.

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So, the first one would be, of course, opportunities for change. So, the readiness of the educator in adapting to online teaching was a major challenge for our educators because in our university and also elsewhere there are lecturers who are not very adept with using technology. And they were using Teams, a majority of them, for the first time. So, the readiness in adapting to online teaching was a major challenge for educators because they had to go quickly on to Teams. And therefore, that was quite challenging for the educators because they were not very sure about using the pedagogical tools and they were not really used, like talking to the screen most of the time, as the educators described. So that was a major change for them. And the second was that the lecturers valued the time and pace of their lessons and allowed the students to adapt to the online mode of teaching. So, with this sudden transition also came about learners who were not really willing to go online and who had many concerns going online. And therefore, the lecturers had to value their time and pace of their lessons so that students would be able to adapt to this online mode of teaching. And how they did this is by, they used online databases, they used videos and also they used chat groups to help the students to cope with the pace of the lessons. Because obviously, considering we have learners with different proficiencies and at different levels in one class, the pace had to be adjusted, especially so when it was during an online platform. And therefore, the lecturers used various online databases as well as chat groups and videos to help the students, so that students can cope with the pace of the lessons.



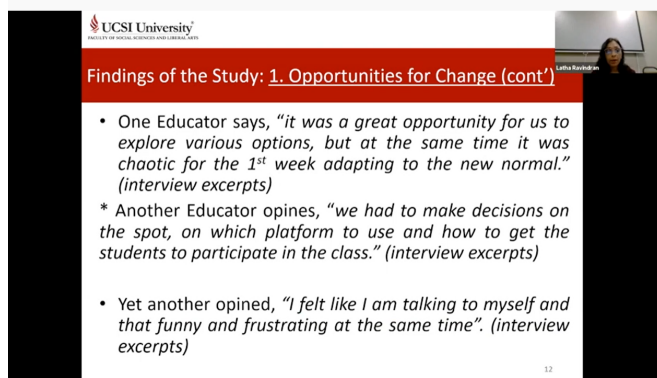
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Findings of the Study: 1. Opportunities for Change (cont)

- Educators who are not experienced in the use of internet technology would find difficulty in adapting to online teaching as compared to educators who are experienced in using internet technology (Lukas & Yunus, 2021).
- Students' also faced challenges in coping with online lessons.
- Lecturers also provided necessary support to increase students' awareness of their responsibility to engage in reflection and enhance their capacity for decision-making and be autonomous learners.

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So, moving on still with the opportunities for change, educators who are not experienced in the use of internet technology would find it difficult in adapting to online teaching as compared to educators who are experienced using internet technology. So, obviously, lecturers who are in teaching mass com subjects, they were more fast in adapting to the online mode, whereas other lecturers were struggling to grapple with new change and adapting to using this online classes. Similarly, students also faced challenges in coping with online lessons because they, we found they lost their attention quite frequently, and it was a challenge for the educators to keep their attention all the time, considering it was the online classes. And lecturers, also, they provided necessary support to increase students' awareness of their responsibility, to engage in reflection, and also enhance their capacity for decision making and to be autonomous learners. So, nowhere as in now it was more important for students to be aware of their own responsibility. So, we had to repeatedly tell them that they are also responsible for their own learning and they had to make a decision and be autonomous learners. So, in a way, there was a lot of autonomy given to them to take charge of their own learning and also to enhance their capacity for decision making, because the whole collaboration, online collaboration, was quite different. And the dynamics of the online classes were also different because we had students who are willing to participate and we had students who were very unwilling to participate, even to turn on their cameras. And therefore, the lecturers had to come up with enough support, and also to make them aware of their own responsibility and let them take charge for their own learning, to be autonomous learners.



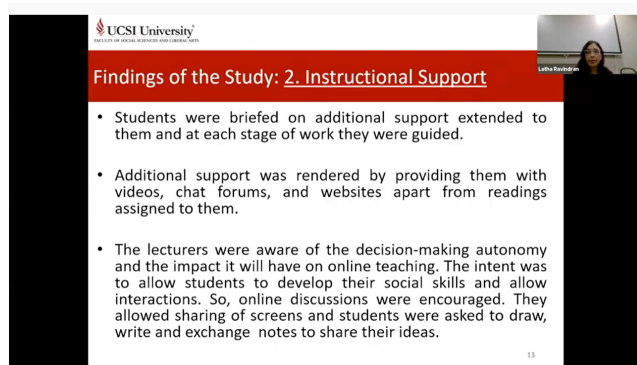
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Findings of the Study: 1. Opportunities for Change (cont')

- One Educator says, *"it was a great opportunity for us to explore various options, but at the same time it was chaotic for the 1st week adapting to the new normal."* (interview excerpts)
- * Another Educator opines, *"we had to make decisions on the spot, on which platform to use and how to get the students to participate in the class."* (interview excerpts)
- Yet another opined, *"I felt like I am talking to myself and that funny and frustrating at the same time".* (interview excerpts)

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So, as one educator says, 'it was a great opportunity for us to explore various options. But at the same time, it was quite chaotic for the first week, adapting to the new norms'. So again, another educator points 'we had to make decisions on the spot, which platform to use and how to get students to participate in the class', because obviously, they were prepared for a particular platform or to do a certain type of activity, only to find that only some students were willing to participate. So, that entailed making on-the-spot decisions or switching to other kinds of interactions so that we could get as many students to participate. So, another lecturer says, 'I felt like I'm talking to myself and that was quite funny and frustrating at the same time'. So, majority of them also talked about this, where they felt they were talking to themselves, because we had students who were reluctant to turn on their cameras. And therefore, it was like lecturers talking to the screen most of the time, unless it was a presentation and they were forced to turn on their camera. So, that was a challenge.



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Findings of the Study: 2. Instructional Support

- Students were briefed on additional support extended to them and at each stage of work they were guided.
- Additional support was rendered by providing them with videos, chat forums, and websites apart from readings assigned to them.
- The lecturers were aware of the decision-making autonomy and the impact it will have on online teaching. The intent was to allow students to develop their social skills and allow interactions. So, online discussions were encouraged. They allowed sharing of screens and students were asked to draw, write and exchange notes to share their ideas.

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Moving on to the second finding, we have instructional support, how the lecturers provided them with instructional support. So, the students were briefed on the additional support extended to them, and at each stage of work they were guided. So, every lecturer whom I interviewed had a specific group chat whereby the lecturers would constantly post articles for students to read, and also give them reminders and motivate them and send them YouTube video links, so on and so forth. So that was an additional platform for them to read besides the classroom hours. So, additional support was also rendered by providing them with videos, chat forums and websites apart from readings assigned to them. And the lecturers also used both Microsoft Teams as well as CN. CN is course networking. That is the normal platform, the official platform, where the students would go in, login, to find the materials related to their classes. So the lecturers had to simultaneously post materials and videos in both Teams as well as in CN, CN is our course networking, in order to capture again students' attention.

So, the lecturers were aware of the decision-making autonomy and the impact it will have on online teaching. And the intent was to allow students to develop their social skills and also to allow them to do their interactions. And so, online discussions were encouraged. They also allowed sharing of screens, and students were asked to draw, write and exchange notes to share their ideas. So, some students had a thinking that, asking them to share PowerPoint slides was kind of a formal interaction. So, the lecturers had to allow other forms of sharing by students. For example, one lecturer who was teaching literature allowed students to draw and explain. For example, if the topic for the day was on the themes or the plot or characterization, they could come up with interesting aspects and also they had asked them to draw the characters and explain the characteristics and then relating it to the plot and the theme. So, there were not just one way for students to share their thoughts and also their discussions but they were allowed other kind of sharings. Some were allowed to share their screens, some were allowed to draw and exchange notes, and they also had this meeting rooms assigned to them so that they had their own discussions. And then they would join the main platform to discuss what they had during their online meetings.




Findings of the Study: 2. Instructional Support (cont.)

- Hobbs (2007) recommends that this self-development process be encouraged in any field whose members work with people.
- Evidently, Cheung (2021) pointed out that educators who already had knowledge and experience in using internet technologies face very few difficulties.
- Lecturers also assigned the reading materials synchronously.

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So, moving on, Hobbs recommends that this self-development process be encouraged in any field whose members work with people. Evidently, Cheung pointed out that educators who already has knowledge and experience in using internet technologies face very few difficulties. And so the lecturers also assigned the materials synchronously.




Findings of the Study: 2. Instructional Support (cont.)

- The lecturers' opined, "the support by the institution was also very important. We had trainings on rotational basis and the IT department swiftly came into action". (interview excerpts)
- One educator recalls, "it was frustrating for those with no knowledge in IT skills and we had no choice but call our friends to teach us many things". (interview excerpts)

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So, that was for instructional support, and this is one of the raw data. The lecturer says, 'the support by the institution was also very important, and we had trainings on rotational basis, and the IT department swiftly came into action'. So, the first week that the online teaching happened, the very next day the IT department had come up with batches of people where the instructors were having training sessions on teaching them how to use Teams, as well as teaching them how to share screens, post materials, so on and so forth. And these trainings were conducted throughout the day on a daily basis for about one week until all the lecturers were more or less able to gain a footing on how to use the Microsoft Teams. So, one educator recalls 'it was frustrating for those with no knowledge in IT skills, and we had no choice but call our friends to teach us many things'. So, apart from the instructional support provided by the IT department, educators also had their own support group, and the lecturers actually had a video call to teach others who were less familiar with these features. And that was also another instructional support that was given to the lecturers who had to face this. We do also have scholarship students who were aiming for their As and they were quite worried about this sudden transition.




Findings of the Study: 3. Building Rapport

- The study revealed that Building Rapport and addressing the perceived anxieties of student's are very crucial to address the social challenges in classroom interactions.
- Kyriacou (2009) discussed rapport from the perspective of classroom effectiveness, arguing that effective classrooms are task-oriented but are also characterized by "mutual respect and rapport" (p. 115)

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So, as another author discussed, rapport from the perspective of classroom effectiveness, arguing that effective classrooms are task oriented but also characterized by mutual respect and rapport. So, at this stage, the lecturers try to build a connection with the students, which of course is easily done when there is a face-to-face interaction. But doing classes online, then they had to go the extra mile to build a connection with the staff, even by having a small talk before their classes started, and asking about the situations in their own country and how they are coping with the sudden changes and also the online classes.




Findings of the Study: 3. Building Rapport (cont')

- The students developed **positive attitude** towards learning after the instructors build rapport with them. This was established by communicating with them constantly. There was also a group chat created to post updates on the class as well as the reading materials.
- Real time feedback in classes as well as allowing peer interaction to take place also helped to build connection with students.

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All right, so moving on, the students developed positive attitude towards learning after the instructors built rapport with them. And this was established by communicating with them constantly. And there was also a group chat created to post updates on the class as well as the reading materials. So, all these lecturers, there was a class monitor in the WhatsApp group who would also be responsible to act as a connecting point between the lecturers and the students. And the lecturers themselves gave a lot of rapport and gave them lot of materials to read so that the students were not left behind. And this kind of connecting, and even sometimes they share small stories of success that help the students to maintain the positive attitude during this online learning. And real-time feedback, as well as allowing peer interaction to take place, also helped to build connection with the students. So obviously, from the first to the introduction classes, throughout the 14 weeks that they had classes, there was real-time feedback given to students, and somehow that allowed interactions to take place.




Findings of the Study: **3. Building Rapport (cont')**

- Being humorous and exchanging pleasantries also are part of support system to build rapport.
- Created predictable 'routines' & 'structures' to allow students to settle with online classes.
- That included providing with all the information they are required to know, including assessments and having a regular 'routine' to avoid any "surprises".

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Moving on, even being humorous and exchanging pleasantries was also part of the support system to build rapport. And they had sometimes online games and sharing, exchanging pleasantries, so that the lessons were not too tedious. Because our lessons are usually for 1.5 hours. So, this, they also created predictable routines and structures to allow students to settle with online classes. So, by routines and structures is like having a fixed routine and how is the structure, which was all very well communicated to the students before the start of the class. And as far as possible, the lecturers try to stick to this routine and structure so that it does not disrupt the students, and so that they are also able to settle very well with the online classes. So that included providing the information they are required to know, including assessments, and also having a regular routine to avoid any surprises, because that would have disrupted the students' emotions and also the participation in process.



Findings of the Study: **3. Building Rapport (cont')**

- They were able to **connect classroom experiences to the real world outside** as the issues they discussed pertained to their experience. They were asked to relate every issue discussed **to their experiences and draw examples** from it.
- The lecturers maintained the tone of interactions in a friendly manner compared to the traditional face-to-face classes.

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So, moving on, they were able to connect classroom experiences to the real world outside. As they discussed, pertaining to their experience. And they were also asked to relate every issue discussed to their experiences and draw examples from it. So, for example, in a writing class, the students were even asked to encourage to bring things like oranges, flowers, fruits or leaves, and then asked to smell, touch, feel, and then asked to write a descriptive paragraph about it. So, by doing that, they were able to connect through experiences, and that compensated for the lack of face-to-face interactions. And also, the lecturers maintained the tone of interactions in a very friendly manner compared to the traditional, face-to-face classes. Because in a traditional, face-to-face classes, sometimes the lecturers tend to be more strict in terms of participations or in chiding students who do not participate. But in this case, they were quite friendly and they went the extra mile to encourage them to participate in class.



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Findings of the Study: **3. Building Rapport (cont')**

- Participants in this study expressed on the importance of building rapport as, "we felt a greater need to reach out to our students as many were lost in this transition. We had quickly formed chat groups to interact and stay connected". (interview excerpts)

Latifa Rashid

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So, the participants in this study also expressed on the importance of building rapport, as we felt a greater need to reach out to our students as many were lost in this transition. We had quickly formed chat groups to interact and also to stay connected. So, that was for the third finding.



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
Findings of the Study: **4. Perceived Anxieties (cont')**

- Students' participation during online class was a huge concern with educators.
- As majority of them were not willing to turn on their camera and cited connectivity issues which could not be verified.
- Some weak students could not be monitored due to limitation with online classes .

Latifa Rashid

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And the fourth one was related to perceived anxieties. So, the students' participation during online class was a huge concern with educators because we do have students with various levels as well as competencies, and therefore that was a huge concern for the educators. So, a majority of them were not willing to turn on the camera. And they cited connectivity issues, which couldn't be verified by the lecturers at all times. And some weak students could not be monitored because of the limitations with the online classes. So, in a quantitative study by Bailey and Lee in South Korea, the findings show that educators that are inexperienced with utilizing internet technology encounter more challenges during online teaching.



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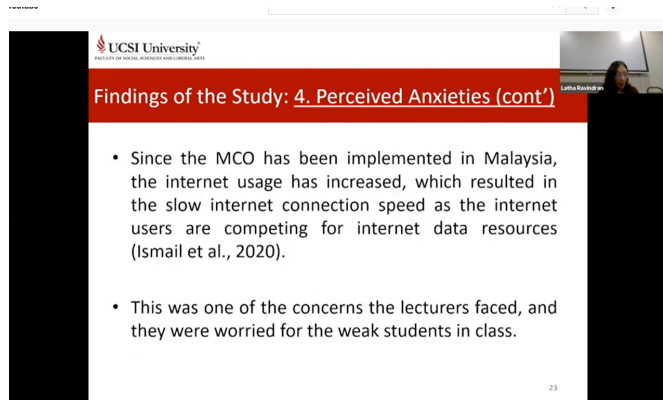
Findings of the Study: **4. Perceived Anxieties**

- In a quantitative study by Bailey and Lee (2020) in South Korea, the findings show that educators that are inexperienced with utilising internet technology encounter more challenges during online teaching. For instance, if a student faces technical issues, an educator that is not experienced with internet technology would find it hard to assist the student as they are not familiar with how the device functions (Bailey & Lee, 2020).
- This requires the educator to identify the best possible platform and resources for online teaching.

Latifa Rashid

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For instance, if a student face technical issues, an educator that is not experienced with internet technology would find it hard to assist the student as they are not familiar with how to deal with the device and the functions. So this required educators to identify the best possible platform and also resources for online teaching.



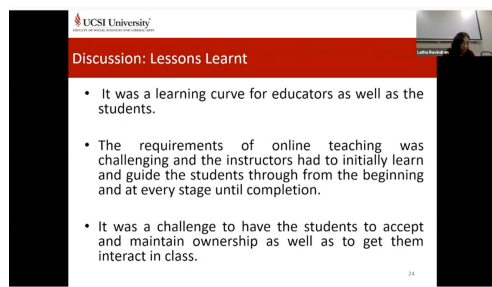
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Findings of the Study: 4. Perceived Anxieties (cont')

- Since the MCO has been implemented in Malaysia, the internet usage has increased, which resulted in the slow internet connection speed as the internet users are competing for internet data resources (Ismail et al., 2020).
- This was one of the concerns the lecturers faced, and they were worried for the weak students in class.

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And since the MCO has been implemented in Malaysia the internet usage has increased which resulted in slow internet connection speed as the internet users are competing for the internet data resources. So, this was also one of the concerns the lecturers face. And they were worried for the weak students in the class, because the majority of the students did not want to turn on their camera and cited bandwidth issues. And therefore, the lecturers were also worried to really see whether the students were online. Of course, they could see their names on the platform, but how much they were participating was really a challenge for the lecturers.




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Discussion: Lessons Learnt

- It was a learning curve for educators as well as the students.
- The requirements of online teaching was challenging and the instructors had to initially learn and guide the students through from the beginning and at every stage until completion.
- It was a challenge to have the students to accept and maintain ownership as well as to get them interact in class.

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So, this was a learning curve for educators as well as students. The requirements of online teaching was challenging, and the instructors had to initially learn and guide the students from the beginning and at every stage until completion. So it was also a challenge to have the students to accept and maintain ownership as well as to get them interact in class. Because sometimes the students do have, do tend to leave everything to the lecturers, to find resources, to get them to explain. And so, this was also a great challenge the educators faced, to get the students to have ownership, to have them to learn that they are also responsible for their own learning and for interactions in the classroom. So, they resorted to even calling them by names from the attendance list to make sure that every student participated in the classroom, so that no one student gets left out in terms of interactions in the classroom.




Discussion: Lessons Learnt (cont')

- Class was **paced according to the dynamics** of the class and the slow learners were allowed to study on a self-pace monitored by the lecturers.
- Lecturers **valued the time and pace** of the lessons and allowed the students to adopt to the online mode of teaching

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So, the class was paced according to the dynamics of the class, and the slow learners were allowed to study on a self-pace, monitored by the lecturers. And the lecturers valued the time and pace and also allowed the students to adapt to the online mode of teaching, so the students, some of the weaker students were allowed on a self-pace and to read or to understand a certain topic for the day. And the lecturers monitored them through their WhatsApp groups. So this is how the lecturers managed the learning.




Implications of the study

- The effectiveness will depend on the lecturer's preparedness as well as the institutional support. Most importantly the educators also will have to adapt to the challenges in online teaching and consider the contextual considerations as well as the subjects they teach.
- The practical considerations will be the duration of the class, the learner's preferences and the institutional support they receive.

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So, now I will move on to the implications of the study. So, the effectiveness will depend on the lecturer's preparedness as well as the institutional support. Most importantly, the educators will also have to adapt to the challenges in online teaching and consider the contextual considerations, as well as the subjects they teach. Because some subjects were more inclined to practical sessions, whereas others were heavily content-oriented subjects. So they will have to adapt accordingly based on the nature of the subject and the practical considerations such as the duration of the class and the learner's preference, as well as the institutional support they receive is also one of the implications.

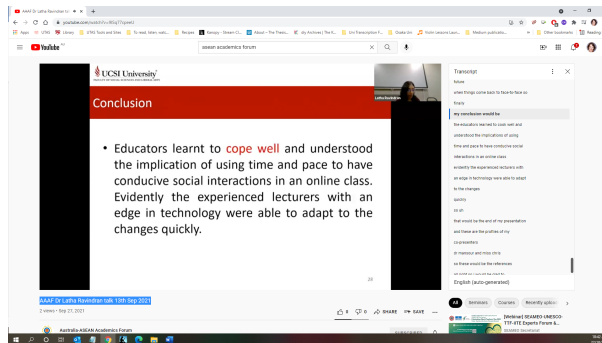


Implications of the study

- The end date of the pandemic has yet to be determined, so educational institutions around the world have decided to use available technical resources to create online learning materials for students in all academic fields (Kaur, 2020)
- On a wider scale these will include the technical preparation of the national distance education plan, the preparation of courses and support content, the preparation of home and teaching learning support, and the preparation of monitoring and evaluation (Sari & Nayir, 2020).

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So, the end date of the pandemic has yet to be determined. So educational institutions around the world have decided to use available technical resources to create online learning materials for students in all academic fields. On a wider scale, these will include the technical preparation of the national distance education plan, the preparation of courses and support content, the preparation of home and teaching learning support, and also the preparation of monitoring and evaluation. So even when students would come back to normal face to face, a lot of things would have changed in terms of how the preparation of courses and how the support content would be uploaded or would be disseminated to the students in the future, and also how we would constantly monitor and evaluate the students in the future when things come back to face-to-face.



So finally, my conclusion would be the educators learned to cope well and understood the implications of using time and pace to have conducive social interactions in an online class. Evidently, the experienced lecturers with an edge in technology were able to adapt to the changes quickly. So, that would be the end of my presentation.