Factors Influencing Inactive Participation of Students in Classroom Discussion: Basis for Intervention

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Abstract

The result of the study might seem controversial from other studies, mentioning that active participation of students in class discussion, can result in getting better grade while inactive participation of students in a class discussion can hamper learning and undesirably influence academic performance .In this study, the factors affecting inactive class participation of students were identified through a thematic analysis based from a focus group discussion and these are communication, insecurity, external factors and personality/behavior. These factors were the independent variables in the study and, it showed that it cannot predict the passing or failing class standing grades of the students (the dependent variable) in the prelim period, because there were no cases that showed significance at P-value of 0.05 using a binary logistics regression. This means that there were no concrete evidences to show that these independent variables will have a probability that an event of getting a passing or failing class standing will occur. The result of the T-Test for independent samples between the gender and these factors influencing inactive participation were all in favor of the female students. Although the result of the study is rather provocative, there is still a need for continuous improvement to augment interventions to improve active participation of the students in classroom discussion.

Keywords: Class Discussion, Active Participation, Continuous Improvement, Classroom Motivation

1. Introduction

Active participation of students asserts efficient performance in classroom setting[1] while motivation plays an important role in making students participate in classroom setting while rewards and appreciation are relevant issues to motivate the students[2]. In addition, active class participation improves communication skills of which the significance and benefit will result to employability and career growth[3].

The objectives of the study were to identify the factors and themes that influences inactive participation of students in classroom discussion. In addition, was to recognize endearing

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[1] Bahmanbijari et. al (2019), Identification of the Reasons Behind Students' Lack of participation in Classroom activities using a Delphi Technique, DOI:10.22038/FMEJ.2019.15154.1091

[2] Rone et al. (2023), Students' Lack of Interest, Motivation in Learning, and Classroom Participation: How to Motivate Them? Psych Educ Multidisc J, 2023, 7 (8), 636-646, doi: 10.5281/zenodo.7749977, ISSN 2822-4353

[3] Pooja (2023), Developing Communication Skills in English for Employability and Career Growth. IUP Journal of Soft Skills. Dec2023, Vol. 17 Issue 4, p34-39. 6p.

factors that influences inactive participation of students in classroom discussion based on the themes developed. Furthermore, was to develop interventions to improve and strengthen the employability skills of students and help them gain global competitiveness.

2. Methodology

The research design of the study was mixed method using focus group discussion, thematic analysis, descriptive correlation, T-test for independent samples and binary logistic regression. The research locale was in Emilio Aguinaldo College Cavite Campus Philippines. A total population of 192 students were considered in the study (3rd Year Operations Management, Human Resource, Finance Management and Custom Administration) and no sampling size. A focus group discussion was conducted to 17 students of Bachelor of Arts in Financial Management Section 3-2 students at Emilio Aguinaldo College Cavite last February 7,2024 to gather ideas on the factors influencing inactive participation of students in classroom discussion. After the focus group discussion, the authors subsequently conducted thematic analysis by clustering similar and different ideas to each of their respective buckets and the following themes were identified: Communication, Insecurity, External factor and Personality/Behavior. The instrument was a questionnaire survey using a 5-scale likert with a ranking of 5 to 1; as 5 is the highest and 1 is the lowest. The instrument was validated using Pearson Moment of Correlation and Cronbach Alpha for reliability.

Frequency/Percentage was used to describe the profile of the respondents according to gender. Measures of Central Tendency and Variability were used to represent the different assessment levels on the factors influencing inactive participation of the students. T-Test for Independent Samples was used to identify if there are significant differences among the gender of the respondents and assessment levels on the factors influencing inactive participation of the students. Binary Logistic Regression was used in order to predict whether the independent variables which were communication, insecurity, external factors and personality/behavior can predict a passed or failed class standing of the student (dependent variable).

For the data gathering procedure, the actual survey was done from February 8 to February 9, 2024 to a total population of 192 students who are third year students with the following major courses: Operations Management, Human Resource, Finance Management and Custom Administration.

3. Discussion

1. The majority of the respondents were female gender representing 59.2%, as compared to their male counterpart which is 41.1%. The ages of students were ranging from 21 to 22 years old. According to Balita (2022), female to male ratio in tertiary education in the Philippines dated 2005 to 2017 were approximately 1.32 females per one male. This might be the probable reason why the female gender is greater than their male counterpart.
2. The endearing factors found from the different themes after the focus group discussion, that influences students in their inactive class participation were communication, insecurity, external factors and personality/behavior. A study conducted by Cadano (2023) revealed reasons of inactive youth engagement in the community in the province of Leyte, Philippines and these were lack of interest, no invitation, lack of self-

confidence, lack of time and financial constraint. Similarly, these factors have similarities with the themes developed for the inactive participation of the students.

3. The assessment level of the respondents that influences their inactive class participation in terms of communication showed that although the mean score of the variable "Using Tagalog was not allowed by the professor" was the highest among the rest of the data set but meant not endearing, because its standard deviation of 1.41767 was spread out further from its mean score of 3.5260, indicating a greater variability and dissimilarity of data points. Comparatively, the variable, "I have difficulty expressing my ideas in the English language", (having an adjectival interpretation of low influence with standard deviation of 1.02007 and mean score of 2.96) showed less variability in the spread of the scores. This means that this variable might represent a true indication of the data set but showed a relatively low influence in their inactive participation of the students during class discussion. One method being used in multilingual system under communicating idea, was idea generation wherein students were allowed to organize their ideas first in their native language and then transferring those ideas in the English language through collaboration (Huynh T (2022).

4. The assessment level of the respondents that influences their inactive class participation in terms insecurity was, "I have low comprehension in understanding the topic being discussed.", (mean of 2.35 with standard deviation of 1.02) might be a true representation among the variables, because the spread of scores was much closer to its mean value. Victoria State Government (2019) claimed that it is vital to pre-identify first the cause of low comprehension before augmenting some intervention to improve comprehension of students. The author further mentioned the different signs in reading comprehension difficulty of the students. This literature is important to the study because low comprehension in understanding the topic being discussed might be attributed to difficulty understanding words and ideas, limited vocabulary or underdeveloped oral language skills and difficulty answering questions about or discussing a text as mentioned by Victoria State Government (2019)

5. The assessment level of the respondents that influences their inactive class participation in terms external factor were, "I am not interested studying because I was force by external elements to take this course" (mean score of 1.48 and standard deviation of 0.693) , and "I would prefer navigating my cellphone when there is class discussion" (mean score of 1.48 and standard deviation of 0.824) might be perceived true representative influencing inactive participation of students because the mean scores are not dispersed although it got an adjectival interpretation of very low influence. Kelly (2019), proposed different strategies on how to cope up with students who are demotivated and disengaged. She mentioned nine strategies but the strongest among the strategies for this particularly study, would be authentic learning because with this method students felt l that what they are learning is connected to their life outside the classroom. Furthermore, using Project Based Learning wherein students are taught to solve real-world problems and according to Kelly (2019), it is the beginning of the educational process instead of the end, and it is a learning strategy that is quite motivating.

6. The assessment level of the respondents that influences their inactive class participation in terms external factor was "I might as well not participate because I don't know the answer" (mean score of 1.90 and standard deviation of 0.962) might be a representative

value for the entire data set because the standard deviation is closer to its mean value. According to Chiles (n.d.) from Inner Drive Education Resources students who don't know the answer might lack confident and fear of providing a wrong answer. The author suggested to adopt a psychologically safe classroom environment where students believe they can make mistakes without being humiliated by their teachers and peers.

7. T-test for independent samples between the gender of the respondents and the communication factor showed, two variables were found with significant differences and surprisingly, the variables were," I am uncomfortable using English language" and "I feel a shame to my classmates because my English grammar or tenses might sound incorrect". The t-value of -2.407 and -2.126 respectively, with the corresponding probability value of .017and .035, were significant at alpha 0.05. The mean differences of -.37885 and -.39128 were in favor of the female students. This means that there were sufficient sample evidences to prove that the female students were uncomfortable using English language and they have a feeling of being a shame with their classmates because their English grammar or tenses might not be appropriate than their male counterparts. The study of Pooja (2023) mentioned that college graduates have inadequate oral and written communication skills, therefore, the author pursued a study to bridge the gap between importance of improving communications skills and employability of college graduates. On the other hand, this literature is relevant to the study because it is the role of every higher education institute to help students acquire the necessary communication skills being required by the employers in the 21st century. For continuous development of the students, the authors can coordinate with the Counselling and Guidance Department to augment future seminars and training about personality development and communication skills for the students.

8. T-test for independent samples between the gender of the respondents and insecurity factor were manifested to the female students, this means that there were sufficient sample evidences to prove. that the female students might seem to be more conscious on what others will perceive and having less confidence and insecurity than their male counterparts. The variables were "I have less confidence to myself answering the question being asked" (t-value -= -3.614, mean difference = -55159, and probability value of 0.000) "Fear of failure in answering the question correct", (t-value=-2.983, mean difference =- .57018, and probability value of 0.003). "I am nervous and uncomfortable speaking to groups or with my classmates" (t-value = -3.674, mean difference = -0.63078, and probability value of 0.000) and "It's because of the fear that I will look silly, nervous, or less smart if I get the answer wrong—and my classmates will judge me for it." (t-value = -2.595, mean difference = -0.505, and probability value of 0.010).

9. The study conducted by Vooren et. al (2022), claimed that in STEM program, female students tend to graduate late because the program is less popular among female students however, these female students perform equally well in STEM higher education in the long run. These reviews are significant to the study because it demonstrated that female students might have a greater tendency not to be engaged in active participation during class discussion. For continuous improvement, faculties are encouraged to communicate to their students that there is no right or wrong answers to the questions being asked by the faculty and must emphasized what is relevant is the sharing of the insights or perspective of the students.

10. T-test between the gender of the respondents and under external factor: Accordingly, the only variable that was significant to the alpha level was, "I am not focus because I am discreetly using my cellphone when there is class discussion". The t-value of 2.030 with the corresponding probability value of 0.044 was significant at alpha 0.05. The mean differences of 0.23972 were in favor of the male students. This means that there were sufficient sample evidences to prove that some of the male students have the guts to discreetly used their cellphones during class discussion. The study of Rone et. al (2023) showed that motivation is the primal requirement in any classroom setting because motivation is the foundation of the learning process. For continuous development it is suggested that teachers should identify the methods that will suit the learners' level. Educators should actively engage students and gain their attention by rewarding and appreciating them in other ways. Furthermore, students should be reminded not to use their gadgets as a policy in the classroom. Just recently, one of the Senator of the Philippines, Senator Win Gatchalian is proposing a bill prohibiting smartphone and gadget use during class hours to avoid distractions and increase learner academic performance (19th Congress Senate of the Philippines, June 10, 2024)

11. As a result of the T-test between the gender of the respondents and under personality/behavior factor: In relation to this factor, there were two variables significant to the alpha level which were, "I am an introvert person and feel comfortable working alone" and "I am a shy person and I do not like to be the center of attention". The t-values of for both variables respectively of -2.923 and -2.088 with the corresponding probability values of 0.004 and 0.038 were significant at alpha 0.05. The mean differences of -0.51383 and -.038176 were in favor of the female students. In the article of School Should Be (2022), the suggested strategies for introverted students are group work, allow them time for silence and give time to prepare in order for them to be engaged in class discussion.

12. Binary Logistic Regression Analysis was used to determine whether the independent variables which are communication, insecurity, external factors and personality/behavior can predict a passed or failed class standing of the student (dependent variable). Secondly, the dependent variable in the study was categorized into a binary values which are: 1 as passed and 2 as failed. Thirdly, the independent variables in the study are considered ordinal data. It showed that these independent variables cannot predict nor influence the class standing grades of the students because there were no cases that showed it is significant at a P-value of 0.05. This means that there were no concrete evidences to show that these independent variables will have a strong probability that an event of getting a passing or failing class standing will occur. Comparatively, the relationship of the variables was assessed using a nonparametric statistic which was Spearman's Rho correlation. Accordingly, there is no relationship between class standing scores and the different factors influencing the inactive participation in class discussion but the independent variables have a significant relationship internally or among themselves when grouped together. According to Thompson (2023), if students are engaged in their learning they tend to perform better academically and achieve higher grades. This literature suggests the true responsibility of educators that continuous improvement in class room teaching methodologies should always be updated and improved for the betterment of the students. In addition, faculties

are reminded that not all introverted students have the tendency of being inactive in class but should be given a time to reflect and process the question being asked.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

The factors that influence inactive participation of students in classroom discussion were communication, insecurity, external factors and personality/behavior. These factors showed that it cannot predict the passing or failing class standing grades of the students using a binary logistics regression. This means that there were no concrete evidences to show that these factors will have a probability that an event of getting a passing or failing class standing will occur. The result of the T-Test for independent samples between the gender and these factors influencing inactive participation were all in favor of the female students. Although the result of the study is rather provocative,

There is still a need for continuous improvement to augment interventions to improve active participation of the students in classroom discussion such as: 1.) Collaborate with Guidance Counselling department this coming academic year 2024-2025, the need to conduct a personality development seminar and communication skills training for all incoming third-year female college students in the different courses such as Human Resources Management, Financial Management, Operations Management, Custom Administration and Marketing Management. 2.) Implement configuration of the classroom seating arrangement from traditional rows to a U-shaped seating configuration this AY 24 -25 and inform other colleges and department the objective of configuring the seating arrangement 3.) Provide questions in advance and augment on the spot grading of the class participation on a weekly basis by the faculty to encourage class participation 4.) Adopt a flip classroom style by doing an advance reading on the assigned topic and discussion will be done onsite. 5.) Augment rewards and appreciation to motivate students to participate.

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