Research Article

Exploring the Online Students' Support during the Covid 19 Pandemic towards the Development of the 21st Century Life Skills of LSPU Students

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to determine the extent of the online student support and the 21st century life skills development of the students. Descriptive and correlational study was employed using a self –made questionnaire with 60 respondents. Pearson correlation analysis was used to know the relationship of the two variables. It was found out that the online support in term of student engagement, learning support and mental health are highly practiced. While the 21st century life skills in terms of leadership, responsibility, and teamwork are highly developed. This study is a first step to understand the online support in building of their 21st century life and skills. It may serve as a basis for each institution to review their existing strategies on online support. Sustainable institutionalized faculty program in the support of their students no matter the modality they might employ should be promoted. Further research about the student services and 21st century life and skills could be explore considering the possible balanced portfolio of online and face to face support align to the current status of the pandemic using other variables, more wider respondents and qualitative method to validate or contradict the result.

Keywords: *Covid 19, Online student support, 21st Century life and skills, Institutionalized faculty program*

Introduction

With the unprecedented impact of the Covid 19 pandemic that shackled the world particularly the educational institutions which forced particularly the higher education institutions to migrate from traditional teaching to online modality to ensure educational process to its stakeholders (Garrett, Legon, & Fredericksen, 2019). Among other key operations, the higher education institutions must provide high-quality and equitable support services to their online students including retention services (e.g., orientation, advising, coaching, course registration), student engagement (e.g.,

student activities, athletics, student government), student wellbeing (e.g., student counselling, health services, administration), and learning support (e.g., library, writing centre, tutoring, career services, technology support) (Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions, 2011; Gratz, 2020). With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, as colleges quickly transitioned to universal remote learning, institutions needed to quickly identify strengths and areas of opportunity in the operations of their online student support services.

As stated by Garrett et al., (2020) the onset of COVID-19 and the ensuing pivot to remote instruction highlighted the preparedness, nimbleness, and flexibility of student support services, such as advising, tutoring, mental health support, and the overall infrastructure and readiness of an institution to work with students in a completely virtual environment (Ludeman & Schreiber, 2020). The rapid pivots to remote teaching and learning added weight to previous literature that highlighted gaps in the support services offered to online students since now all students were learning virtually (Brown, 2017). This section outlines research into previous literature related to online student support services as compared to on-campus ones prior to the onset of COVID-19, as well as the impact of COVID-19 on remote teaching and learning, and the resulting need for remote student support. Moreover, this literature lays a foundation for understanding this study's interviews and its findings related to the impact of COVID-19 on online student support services overall.

Thus, the researchers after identifying this gap, wanted to determine Support during the Covid 19 Pandemic towards the Development of the 21st Century Life and Skills of LSPU Students. Although there are literatures which Garrett et al., (2020) states that the support to students has a relationship to the 21st century and life satisfaction, there are very few of them which talk directly on the relationship these variables during the pandemic. Therefore, the researchers were decided to explore this area for further examinations and study.

Methods

In order for a research to be successful, the researcher needs an effective methodology. This part includes the discussion of the research design the respondents of the study and how participants were selected, sampling technique, research instrument, research procedure, and statistical treatment of data.

A descriptive and correlational method was used to find out the relation between the level of Online Students Supports and the Development of the 21st Century Life Skills. Descriptive and correlational method was used in this study because the research aims to correlate the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The researcher used the purposive sampling technique, which is a non-representative subject of some larger population, and is constructed to serve a very specific use or purpose. This means that the 60 respondents are students of LSPU San Pablo Campus and was enrolled during the A.Y. 2020-2021 using flexible learning.

A researcher made instruments was used in this study which was comprised of three parts namely, personal information sheet, the questionnaire on Online support Service and questionnaire on 21st century life skills. This was validated by experts and distributed by researchers thru Google forms/email or fb messenger due to existing health protocol to the respondents for an easy collection of data.

Information Sheet. This includes the basic information about the respondents, which are also the profile of the respondents. This includes the age, gender, family monthly socio-economic status. Meanwhile the questionnaire on Online Student support was divided into three categories which are Student engagement, learning engagement and mental health support. Each categories has 5 questions that answer the perceived level of online support of the respondents. On the other hand, the questionnaire on 21st century life skills was also divided into three categories with 5 questions each to know the extent of development of the 21st century life skills.

The researchers administered the self – made questionnaire to the respondents and tallied the answer of the selected LSPU Students, whose ages from 18 and above. The researchers had explained clearly the directions logically to the subject. All the respondents were given enough time to answer the self-made questionnaires. After answering all the questions, the results were tallied. After these, summary, conclusions and recommendations has been be made.

The following formula in statistical treatment was used in scores of the respondents to obtain necessary results:

Frequency. It was utilized to determine the number of occurrences of a repeating event per unit.

Mean. This used to determine the mean scores of descriptive correlation study. It intends to convey, indicate, or refer to (a particular thing or notion); signify.

Pearson r. It was used to correlate the independent and dependent variables, which were emotional stability and socialization

Percentage. It was employed to determine the way of expressing the number as function of 100.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. Level of Online Support as to Students Engagement

Indicators	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. The school motivates me to be productive.	4.23	0.664	Agree
2. Teachers are willing to extend help to their students.	4.19	0.677	Agree
3. They schools encourages me to participates actively in activities. .	4.28	0.587	Agree
4. Teachers allow their students to share their ideas.	4.14	0.739	Agree
5. Everyone is allowed to speak of their mind and share their thoughts.	4.27	0.640	Agree
Overall	**4.22**	**0.675**	**Agree/High**

Legend: *4.50 - 5.00= Strongly Agree (very high practiced); 3.50 - 4.49=Agree (highly practiced); 2.50 - 3.49= Moderate, (moderately practiced) 1.50 - 2.49=Disagree (rarely practiced); 1.00 - 1.49= Strongly Disagree (not practiced)*

It is clearly indicated from the table above that the students are agreeing the university is able to still engage the student's despite of the new normal in education. It is shown by the indicator 3 "*the school encourages me to participate actively in activities*" which has a mean of 4.28 which is verbally interpreted as "*highly practiced*." It is supported by the study of Briggs, (2015) which states that student engagement is empowered by the school initiatives to make the students engage in learnings. It has also been described as the level of interest demonstrated by students, how they interact with others in the course, and their motivation to learn about the topics.

Table 2 present the level of online supports as to Learning engagement of the students. We can glean from the result of the table that the students are agreeing that learning support is extended to the students. The indicator 4 "*Learning technologies are utilized for unlocking learning potentials*" got the highest mean of 4.52 which is verbally interpreted as "*highly practiced*." Thus, thru the reinforcement of technological gadgets and tools by the university, learning engagement by the students improved. The increasing presence in online environments using gadgets and tools can promote greater student engagement that produces retention over the long term (Jaggars et al., 2013). Providing direct instruction using video and audio in synchronous and asynchronous sessions allows students the opportunity to understand better the lessons. In 'live' sessions the instructor is able to share personal stories related to the course content or discussion and respond directly to student questions or concerns (Anderson et al., 2001)

Table 2. Level of Online Support as to Learning engagement

Indicators	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. Students are encourage to develop a meaningful understanding.	4.30	0.689	Agree
2. Students are encourage to engage in intellectual forum and discussion.	4.19	0.662	Agree
3. Trainings and workshops are still provided for students' development.	4.35	0.592	Agree
4. Learning technologies are utilized for unlocking learning potentials. .	4.52	0.522	Strongly Agree
5. Learning materials are provided thru SLM.	4.36	0.560	Agree
Overall	**4.403**	**0.603**	**Agree/High**

Legend: 4.50 - 5.00= Strongly Agree (very high practiced); 3.50 - 4.49=Agree (highly practiced); 2.50 - 3.49= Moderate, (moderately practiced) 1.50 - 2.49=Disagree (rarely practiced); 1.00 - 1.49= Strongly Disagree (not practiced)

Table 3. Level of Online Support as to Mental Health

Indicators	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. The School provides online counselling.	4.49	0.595	Agree
2. Mental health awareness program is practiced.	4.12	0.782	Agree
3. The School has Manual on mental health.	4.49	0.611	Agree
4. The teachers are holding dialogue with their students.	4.08	0.720	Agree
5. Online recreations and activities are provided to the students by the school.	4.01	0.745	Agree
Overall	**4.227**	**0.730**	**Agree/High**

Legend: 4.50 - 5.00= Strongly Agree (very high practiced); 3.50 - 4.49=Agree (highly practiced); 2.50 - 3.49= Moderate, (moderately practiced) 1.50 - 2.49=Disagree (rarely practiced); 1.00 - 1.49= Strongly Disagree (not practiced)

Table 3 shows the level of Online Supports in terms of Mental Health of the students. We can see that the students are agreeing that the university is an advocate of mental health as a form of support to the students. The indicators 1 "*the school provides online counselling*" and indicator 3 "*The school has manual (policy) on mental health*" both received the highest mean of 4.29 which is verbally interpreted as "*highly practiced.*" Despite of the unprecedented effects of the Covid 19 to the mental health of the students, the university were still able to assure that the mental health of the students is one of their utmost priorities.

In the study of Jackson, (2022) he described strategies employed by their teachers and school administrators to ensure that youth felt supported and seen throughout the school year. Simple actions like respecting young people's authentic self-representation by allowing them to share their names and personal pronouns on a virtual learning platform or in a classroom were validating for all young people. Wellness and academic break is practiced to allow students to rest and recharge while the Online Counselling is always ready to listen to the students.

Table 4 shows the extent of development of the 21st Century Life skills as to Leadership of the students. It is clear the based form the table above that the students are agreeing that the university was able to assure that their leadership is given enough consideration as one of the in leading 21st century skills. The indicator 1 "*I use positive thinking even when I am in a difficult situation*" got the highest mean of 4.40 which has a verbal interpretation of "*highly developed.*" Thus, despite of the absence of physical interaction brought by the pandemic, the leadership aspect of the students was highly

developed. Educational institutions are required to impart knowledge and competencies among students, so they are able to augment leadership skills. In order to carry out one's tasks and activities in a well-organized manner,

guide and lead others in the right direction and in promoting well-being of themselves and community, it is vital for the individuals to develop a post pandemic leader. (Haynes and Tross, 2015)

Table 4. Extent of Development of 21st Century Life Skills as to Leadership

Indicators	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. I use positive thinking even when I am in a difficult situation.	4.40	0.636	Agree
2. I recognize when to delegate tasks to others.	3.93	0.967	Agree
3. I display good interpersonal skills.	3.98	0.724	Agree
4. Sometimes I feel down, but I bounce right back again.	4.31	0.526	Agree
5. I always find a solution to a problem.	4.26	0.613	Agree
Overall	**4.23**	**0.69**	**Agree/High**

Legend: *4.50 - 5.00= Strongly Agree (very high developed); 3.50 - 4.49=Agree (highly developed); 2.50 - 3.49= Moderately agree (moderately developed), 1.50 - 2.49=Disagree (rarely developed); 1.00 - 1.49= Strongly Disagree (not developed)*

Table 5. Level of 21st Century Life Skills as to Responsibility

Indicators	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. I accept and utilize suggestions given to me by colleagues.	4.29	0.556	Agree
2. I hold myself accountable without blaming others.	4.22	0.629	Agree
3. I am willing to take risks just to accomplish the task given to me	4.43	0.573	Agree
4. I accept the work given to me and the colleagues assigned to help me.	4.27	0.617	Agree
5. I generally build a solid relationship with those I work with.	4.34	0.639	Agree
Overall	**4.29**	**0.62**	**Agree/High**

Legend: *4.50 - 5.00= Strongly Agree (very high developed); 3.50 - 4.49=Agree (highly developed); 2.50 - 3.49= Moderately agree (moderately developed), 1.50 - 2.49=Disagree (rarely developed); 1.00 - 1.49= Strongly Disagree (not developed)*

Table 5 shows the extent of development of the 21st Century Life Skills as to Responsibility of the Students. It is clear from the table above that the students are agreeing that their sense of responsibility has improved and help them be a mature person. The indicator 3 "*I am willing to take risks just to accomplish the task given to me*" got the highest mean of 4.43 with a verbal interpretation of "*highly developed.*"

Thus, students were thought of the value of responsibility and risking and making decisions is an integral part of the functioning of classroom activities and the entire educational institutions. When one is experiencing challenges, they need to remain calm, conduct an analysis of the alternatives available and put into practice the alternative that would be most suitable. (Kaphur, 2019)

Table 6. Level of 21st Century Life Skills as to Teamwork

Indicators	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
1. I enjoy working with my classmates.	4.20	0.667	Agree
2. I believe that if we work hard, we will achieve our goals.	4.57	0.590	Strongly Agree
3. As a student, I would rather work in groups than alone.	4.24	0.698	Agree
4. I excel most in collaborative activities.	4.29	0.701	Agree
5. I prioritize group goals rather than personal glory.	4.29	0.671	Agree
Overall	**4.28**	**0.68**	**Agree**

Legend: *4.50 - 5.00= Strongly Agree (very high developed); 3.50 - 4.49=Agree (highly developed); 2.50 - 3.49= Moderately agree (moderately developed), 1.50 - 2.49=Disagree (rarely developed); 1.00 - 1.49= Strongly Disagree (not developed)*

Skills as to Teamwork of the students. As we can see from the table above that the students are agreeing that the aspect of teamwork is important in personal development as an individual. The indicator 2 "*I believe that if we work hard, we will achieve our goals*" got the highest mean of 4.57 which has a verbal interpretation of "*highly developed.*" We can say that the students were able to understand the value of working together as an essential skill that is necessary to accomplish and achieve the goals, plans and objectives of the organization and to activate and enhance the performances of the group.

Jones et al (2007) state that understanding the impact of teamwork on performance is important because teamwork is viewed by some researchers as one of the key driving force for improving a group's performance. Team members enhance the skills, knowledge and abilities while working in team (Froebel & Marchington, 2015).

Researchers and experts indicate that effective behaviors and concepts related to teamwork can increase the level of improvement of employees" performance and their productivity as well as enhancing the ability of solving conflicts and facing the urgent and sudden challenges at work.

Table 7. Test of Relationship between Profile of the Respondents and 21st Century Skills

Profile of the Respondents	Leadership			
	R-value	P-value	Interpretation	Decision
Age	-0.029	0.059	not significant	Accept
Sex	0.069	0.076	not significant	Accept
Family Socio-economic Structure	-0.025	0.061	not significant	Accept
Profile of the Respondents	**Responsibility**			
	R-value	P-value	Interpretation	Decision
Age	-0.095	0.090	not significant	Accept
Sex	-0.003	0.049	not significant	Accept
Family Socio-economic Structure	0.054	0.071	not significant	Accept
Profile of the Respondents	**Teamwork**			
	R-value	P-value	Interpretation	Decision
Age	-0.045	0.067	not significant	Accept
Sex	0.076	0.081	not significant	Accept
Family Socio-economic Structure	0.183	0.025	significant	Reject

p < 0.05, significant; p > 0.05, not significant

Table 7 shows the test of relationship between the respondents' profile and the extent of development of 21st Century Life skills of the students. It is clearly indicated that there is no significant relationship between the development of Life Skills in terms of Leadership, responsibility and Teamwork to the profile of the respondents such as Age, Sex and family socio-economic structure.

Table 8. Test of Relationship between Online Support and 21st century Skills

Leadership				
Variables	**R-value**	**p-value**	**Interpretation**	**Decision**
Student engagement	0.444	0.043	significant	Reject
Learning engagement	0.499	0.045	significant	Reject
Mental health support	0.502	0.039	significant	Reject
Responsibility				
	R-value	**p-value**	**Interpretation**	**Decision**
Student engagement	0.513	0.031	significant	Reject
Learning engagement	0.589	0.038	significant	Reject
Mental health support	0.541	0.034	significant	Reject
Teamwork				
	R-value	**p-value**	**Interpretation**	**Decision**
Student engagement	0.437	0.042	significant	Reject
Learning engagement	0.647	0.038	significant	Reject
Mental health support	0.556	0.035	significant	Reject

$p < 0.05$, significant; $p > 0.05$, not significant

Table 8 shows the test of relationship between the Online Supports to the Students and the Development of 21st Century Life Skills of the Students. It is clear that 21st Century Life Skills such as Leadership, responsibility and teamwork is correlated to the Online Supports given to the students in terms Student Engagement, Learning Engagement and Mental health support. We can say that since despite of the implementation of flexible learning to mitigate the f2f interaction in all educational institutions across country, the commitment of the University is evident in ensuring that the students will be provided with quality education that could help them to acquire the 21st century skills that will help them to be a post-pandemic citizens and leaders. It is a strong indicator that with a proper and efficient support extended by the University to the students especially in this pandemic era where uncertainty, fear and worries, we could still able to provide a quality education, and develops a productive and efficient student who will be an integral part of the nation's rebuilding process after the onslaught of the Covid 19.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn: There is no significant relationship between the profile of the respondents and the development of 21st Century Life Skills of the Students, therefore the null hypothesis is sustained. Meanwhile, there is a significant relationship between the Online Support and the Development of 21st Century Life Skills of the Students, therefore the hypothesis is not sustained.

This study is a first step to understand the online support in building of their 21st century life and skills. It may serve as a basis for each institution to review their existing strategies on online support. Sustainable institutionalized faculty program in the support of their students no matter the modality they might employ may be promoted. Further research about the student services and 21st century life and skills

could be explore considering the possible balanced portfolio of online and face to face support align to the current status of the pandemic using other variables, more wider respondents and qualitative method to validate or contradict the result.

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