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PHINMA UNIVERSITY OF ILOILO ACTIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES: ADDRESSING PASSIVE LEARNING FOR POST-PANDEMIC STUDENTS AS BASES FOR A TRAINING PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

The qualitative-phenomenological research sought to identify the active learning strategies utilized in addressing passive learning for post-pandemic students, serving as the foundation for a training program. The study involved fifteen teachers as participants purposively selected from the College of Education of PHINMA University of Iloilo. Data collection involved in-depth interviews guided by the researcher-made interview schedule. The study revealed several key themes related to active learning strategies designed to counteract passive learning among post-pandemic students. These include the strategies employed to actively engage learners in the classroom, the challenges faced in implementing such strategies, the adaptive teaching approaches developed to address these issues, and how active learning helped students overcome obstacles and attain their learning objectives. Based on the thematic insights, the researcher formulated a training program designed to assist teachers in overcoming challenges, enhancing participation, and improving instruction for post-pandemic learners.

Keywords: *Active Learning Strategies, Passive Learning, Training Program*

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INTRODUCTION

During the pandemic, designing learning activities that relied on student participation posed a challenge, as there was no assurance that virtual lessons could effectively replicate the dynamics and engagement of traditional classroom settings. This caused learners to become dependent, passively received information from the instructor, and diminished engagement and motivation due to lack of interactive and hands-on learning experiences. The restrictions of the pandemic resulted in them relying solely on technology.

According to Wise et al. (2020), students spent around 75% of their time listening and observing during online classes which characterized them as passive learners. When the restrictions were lifted, post-pandemic learners still struggled to adjust to the new learning set-up. They found it difficult to engage fully in the learning process, which consequently affected their academic achievement and overall growth.

Active learning strategies refer to instructional techniques that promote student involvement by encouraging participation and the practical application of knowledge. These strategies include a range of activities aimed at addressing the varied needs of diverse learners. According to Jarme (2024), active learning strategies were viewed as (1) helping promote interactive learning, (2) improving learners' creativity and critical thinking skills, and (3) fostering understanding and enhancing retention. In addition, active learning strategies used by English teachers included think-pair-share and peer-teaching, role-playing and debates, and reporting and mini-lectures.

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Being in the 21st century, learners were dependent on technological advancements which became a challenge for the traditional classroom set up. In a teacher-centered classroom, the one-way approach to instruction often resulted in decreased student interest and motivation to learn. These resulted in poor academic performance and could lead to academic failure. Rather than being passive learners, active learning promoted collaboration, active engagement, and critical thinking skills.

According to the American Physiological Society Journal, an average student had an attention span of 10 to 15 minutes which meant that a normal class of 1 hour and 30 minutes made a student feel unmotivated, resulting in poor academic performance, behavioral issues, and reduced class participation. By applying active learning strategies, learners were able to interact with peers, participate in the discussion, and relate with the lesson, which motivated them and improved academic and self-development through the immediate feedback of the teachers.

Post-pandemic learners, as a product of traditional classrooms, tended to be passive learners. In traditional classrooms, teachers regulated the flow of information and students depended on their teacher for knowledge. This resulted in loss of interest to learn, lack of critical thinking, and poor academic performance. Additionally, a study by Garcia and Patel (2023) highlighted that learners accustomed to passive consumption of information during the pandemic struggled with the shift back to active learning environments, facing challenges such as diminished attention spans and decreased critical thinking skills.

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It was with this connection that the researcher carried out the study to examine how active learning strategies were applied to overcome the challenges of passive learning among post-pandemic students at PHINMA University of Iloilo – College of Education.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

This chapter presented the research methodology, covering the design, participants, sampling, instruments, data collection, and analysis. The study aimed to explore the use of active learning strategies to address passive learning among post-pandemic students, forming the basis for a training program at PHINMA University of Iloilo for the 2024–2025 school year.

Research Method

The study utilized a qualitative approach, gathering data through in-depth interviews. The qualitative method was chosen because it effectively explores real-world issues and provides a deeper understanding of participants' experiences, perceptions, and viewpoints.

The descriptive method, as described in the qualitative research literature of Colorafi and Evans (2020), was a flexible approach that aimed to provide a comprehensive and detailed account of a specific phenomenon. It was well-suited for capturing the lived experiences of participants and understanding the social context of their responses.

This approach focused on gathering and examining qualitative data—such as written narratives and recorded interviews—to gain deeper insight into key concepts and the participants lived experiences.

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During the interview, the researcher and the participant were seated at a comfortable distance to promote an atmosphere of openness and meaningful discussion. The researcher facilitated the conversation using a set of thoughtfully designed questions related to the topic under study. The main objective was to elicit the participants' perspectives within their social context through their responses. This method enabled an in-depth exploration of their viewpoints and offered significant insights into the subject being examined.

Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative phenomenological approach to examine teachers' direct experiences in implementing active learning strategies in post-pandemic classrooms. As a research method, phenomenology aims to explore how individuals perceive and make sense of their personal experiences. Its primary purpose is to uncover how people make sense of their realities and how these perspectives may differ from widely accepted views. This method typically involves conducting interviews to gather participants' insights and is commonly applied in disciplines such as psychology, sociology, and social work.

Dreyfus (2020) described phenomenology as a philosophical perspective that examines the structures of consciousness based on first-person experiences. A key concept in this approach is **intentionality**, which refers to the inherent directedness of consciousness toward an object or experience. This intentionality arises from the meaning or content of the experience, which represents the object, along with the underlying conditions that make such an experience possible.

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Participants of the Study

The study involved fifteen (15) participants, all of whom were faculty members from the College of Education. The selection process followed specific inclusion criteria: participants must be graduates of a teacher education program, licensed through the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET), and have at least two years of teaching experience at the PHINMA University of Iloilo College of Education.

Sampling Design

The study used purposive sampling, a non-probability method in which participants were intentionally selected based on traits or experiences relevant to the study's objectives (Nikolopoulou, 2023). This approach ensures that individuals included in the research possess the specific qualities necessary for the investigation.

Also called judgmental sampling, this method relies on the researcher's judgment to select participants who can provide the most relevant insights. Common in qualitative research, it maximizes resources but carries a higher risk of bias, such as observer bias.

Research Instrument

The study employed a researcher-developed interview schedule as its primary instrument, consisting of five key questions specifically designed to align with the research objectives. The questions focused on: (1) the active learning strategies used by teachers to engage post-pandemic students, (2) challenges encountered in implementing these strategies, (3) adaptive teaching methods used to address such challenges, (4) ways active

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learning strategies helped students overcome challenges or achieve learning goals, and (5) recommendations for a training program.

The research instrument was divided into two sections: the first collected participants' demographic details, and the second included the structured interview questions.

Validity of the Research Instrument

The researcher-developed interview guide was reviewed by the adviser, the Graduate School Dean, and a panel of experts in research, assessment, and English. Each item was evaluated, and suggestions for improvement were provided.

According to Trochim (2020), validity refers to the extent to which a research instrument accurately measures the construct or concept it is intended to assess. It reflects the appropriateness, significance, and usefulness of the conclusions drawn from the data collected.

The suggestions, corrections, and recommendations from the panel of validators were reviewed and integrated into the interview schedule using the validation format adapted from Good and Scates.

Data Gathering Procedures

Permit to conduct the study was obtained from the adviser, the Dean of the Graduate School, the administration of PHINMA University of Iloilo, and the participating individuals. The researcher visited classrooms and other locations convenient for the participants to conduct the interviews.

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Interviews were carried out after securing participants' consent through signed waiver or permission forms. In-depth interviews were recorded using both audio and video devices to ensure accurate documentation of responses. After completing all interviews, the researcher organized and compiled the collected data for subsequent analysis.

Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed through thematic analysis, a qualitative technique focused on identifying, exploring, and interpreting patterns or themes within the dataset. This method aims to reveal and describe the main themes that arise, providing a deeper insight into the phenomenon being studied. The analysis process includes systematically coding the data, organizing these codes into categories, and then interpreting the significance of the themes in relation to the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study was conducted to counteract passive learning in post-pandemic students, providing essential insights for creating a training program within the College of Education.

This research employed a descriptive method with a phenomenological approach, utilizing phenomenology within a qualitative research framework.

A researcher-developed interview guide was utilized for data collection. To ensure its validity, a panel of experts in research assessed it through face and content validity.

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The results revealed that teachers use a variety of active learning techniques. Among the most frequently applied were the Socratic Method, Think-Pair-Share, and Problem-Based Learning.

However, they also encountered challenges in implementing these strategies, such as ensuring student participation, monitoring individual learning differences, and facing time constraints.

To address these obstacles, teachers implemented adaptive teaching methods, including scaffolding student understanding, providing positive reinforcement and peer support, and giving direct instructions.

To help students overcome their challenges on Active Learning, the students must overcome hesitations for public speaking and understand complex topics easily and more efficiently.

Given all these findings, the researcher proposed a training program to address passive learning and improve the academic instructions of teachers in the College of Education PHINMA University of Iloilo.

From the results, the following insights were made:

The research showed that students exhibited increased engagement when participating in active learning techniques like the Socratic Method, Think-Pair-Share, and Problem-Based Learning. These methods fostered inquiry, teamwork, and the practical use of knowledge. As a result, learners developed greater confidence in expressing their ideas, thought more critically, and participated more actively in discussions.

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However, the findings also highlighted that implementing active learning came with challenges. Ensuring active participation from all students remained a concern, as some learners were hesitant to contribute. Teachers also struggled to monitor individual differences, given the varied abilities and learning styles of students. Time constraints further complicated implementation, as interactive activities often required more preparation and classroom time. These insights affirm that while active learning promotes student-centered instruction, its success depends on careful planning and adaptation.

The study underscored the importance of adaptive teaching methods in overcoming these challenges. Providing structured scaffolding allowed students to gradually gain confidence in handling complex tasks, while positive reinforcement and peer support created a safe and collaborative learning environment. These methods helped reduce barriers to engagement and promoted persistence in learning, making active strategies more inclusive for diverse learners.

Additionally, the study demonstrated that active learning techniques were essential in supporting students to overcome particular learning difficulties and reach their objectives. Many learners overcame their hesitations in public speaking through repeated opportunities for discussion, while others were able to understand complex topics more efficiently through interactive and problem-based activities. These outcomes highlight that active learning not only strengthens content mastery but also fosters essential life skills such as communication, confidence, and independent thinking.

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Overall, the insights affirm that active learning strategies, though demanding to implement, are essential in transforming passive post-pandemic learners into active participants in their own education. For this approach to be successful, teachers must be provided with the appropriate skills, resources, and institutional backing needed to maintain these practices in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and insights of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

Teachers should continue to utilize active learning strategies to engage post-pandemic learners, particularly approaches that promote questioning, collaboration, and problem-solving. To effectively sustain these practices, they should be provided with continuous professional development that equips them with practical methods and innovative techniques for creating supportive and inclusive classroom environments. Similarly, implementing adaptive teaching methods like scaffolding, positive reinforcement, and peer support is vital to meet diverse learning needs and promote active involvement from every student.

students.

Administrators are encouraged to provide consistent support for teachers by allocating time for lesson planning, offering training opportunities, and ensuring access to appropriate resources and materials. They should also foster a school-wide culture that values interactive teaching and student-centered learning, which may be achieved by embedding active learning

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strategies into institutional policies and curriculum design. At the same time, the PHINMA Education Network may consider developing a comprehensive plan to institutionalize active learning practices across its campuses, which could include faculty development programs, curriculum innovation, and systems for assessing how active learning influences both instructional methods and student results.

Also, future researchers are encouraged to investigate the long-term effects of active learning strategies on student confidence, critical thinking, and academic achievement. Studies may also explore subject-specific applications, best practices for addressing time constraints, and the role of institutional culture in sustaining active learning. These directions for further research can contribute to a deeper understanding of how active learning can be continuously improved and adapted to meet the evolving needs of learners.

Moreover, curriculum developers are encouraged to integrate active learning principles into course design by embedding structured activities such as collaborative projects, debates, and problem-based tasks across different subjects. Doing so ensures that active learning is not treated as an optional method but as a core element of instruction.

Finally, policymakers may consider supporting teacher training programs that emphasize active learning by allocating funding for research, seminars, and workshops. This investment would not only improve teacher preparedness but also sustain nationwide efforts to address passive learning and enhance educational quality in the post-pandemic era.

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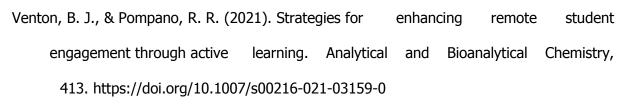
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