Netiquette for Online Classes during Pandemic

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Abstract:- Just as the year 2020 was about to start, the Covid-19 shattered everyone's school calendar. Pandemic has not only affected the lives of those who are working but also the lives of those who are studying.This study focuses on the netiquette being applied in an aeronautical school in the Philippines. This includes the identification of the most complied netiquette and the least complied one with hopes for improvements and application not only in the study's locale but also in the entire country's approach to online learning. The study's respondents were the aeronautical school's faculty members, employees, and students. The study used Descriptive method using the modern way of survey, the use of Google forms. The study was based on the following variables: Netiquette for Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluating.

Based on the results, the most complied netiquette in the aeronautical school is making oneself good-looking under Planning. On the other hand, the least complied netiquette in the aeronautical school is respecting other people's bandwidth which is also under Planning. The aeronautical school is applying all ten netiquettes with different statements under each one.

It is highly recommended that the most complied netiquette be continuously monitored by the management and still be applied by the faculty, employees, and the students. On the other hand, the least complied netiquettes should be improved and evaluated by the school management every end of the semester for further enhancement of school rules and policies on online teaching and learning.

I. INTRODUCTION

The pandemic has not only affected the lives of those who are working but also the lives of those who are studying. The education system here in the Philippines shifted drastically to accommodate the needs of both students and teachers. Thus, the academe then adopted the online learning system. For most of the Filipinos, it was hard to shift to this kind of learning system. Both teachers and students struggled due to slow internet connections, outdated gadgets and even the thought of facing the laptop or mobile phones for the whole day challenged the mental health of everyone. Indeed, Filipinos really had a hard time adjusting. Was there a choice? Were there other options? Some were directed to the use of modules while others tried their best to make use of the online system. Those who went with the first one were challenged by the fact that they were learning on their own. It was in fact self-studying. Those who went with the latter were facing struggles with internet connection. Whatever path we choose, there will always be problems encountered. It is a matter of how we would deal with it.

One adjustment done by those who focused online was to make sure that netiquette was being applied. Netiquette came from the words "net" or "internet" and "etiquette". This was to make sure that there are certain rules to follow and that abuse of the use of internet or online would be avoided. The first netiquette is to remember that students are still human. Teachers should respect schedules and deadlines set for their students. There is a proper timeframe for quizzes, activities, and exams. Second is to know where you are in cyberspace. Knowing the difference between synchronous session and asynchronous sessions. The first one means that teachers and students would meet either in Google Meet or Zoom. The latter is when activities, quizzes, and exams are given. Sometimes materials and lectures are given for students to read during their most convenient time. The third is to respect other people's bandwidth. We all know that not everyone has proper internet connection. Some would only use the mobile data just to attend classes. The fourth one is to make yourself good-looking. This does not only focus on one's physical appearance but also with how one presents in Google Classroom or other LMS (Learning Management System). This focuses on detailed posts, uniformity of posts, and correct grammar usage. The fifth and the last one is to adhere to the same standards of behavior online. This suggests that whatever you do if face to face class, this would also be applied in online classes such as attending classes on time, participate when being called upon, respect others when speaking, and submitting requirements on time. Other netiquette to mention are to share expert knowledge, to help keep flame wars under control, to respect other people' privacy, to not abuse one's power and to be forgiving of other's mistakes.

This pandemic, we are not only facing health and work concerns. We also take into account the importance of education to prepare the future generation. It is truly important that these children be holistically prepared to face whatever lies in their tomorrow. It might me more than what we expect but remember that our generation tried the best that we could to embrace what is already in front of us.

A. Statement of the Problem
The study aimed to assess the netiquette for online classes during pandemic of an aeronautical school in the Philippines.
Specifically, the study sought the answers to the following questions:

a) What was the most complied netiquette for online classes as perceived by the respondents?
b) What was the least complied netiquette for online classes as perceived by the respondents?
c) What were the practices done by institutions to comply with the netiquette for online classes?

B. Background of the Study

In the Philippines, an aeronautical school was trying to cope with the pandemic to continue its goal to deliver quality education to its students. This aeronautical school is currently located at Lombos Avenue, San Isidro, Parañaque City and was founded by Atty. Ambrocio R. Valdez in 1969. It offers nine programs. For the technical programs, there are: Pre-Engineering (preparation for the engineering programs), BS Aeronautical Engineering, BS Industrial Engineering, BS Avionics Technology, BS Aircraft Maintenance Technology, BS Air Transportation and a two-year course, Aircraft Technician Course. The non-technical programs are BS Tourism Management, BS Hotel and Restaurant Management and BS Airline Business Administration. In 2016, this aeronautical school started offering two strands for the Senior High School: Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) strand and Accountancy, Business and Management (ABM) strand. These are for students who are interested in taking up aviation related programs when they enter the college level.

Even before the pandemic, the school started preparing its faculty through seminars and training to embrace the use of Google applications to be integrated in teaching. As lockdowns started by the end of the second semester 2019-2020, the school immediately acquired Google Suite as its LMS (Learning management System). As the 1st semester for the School Year 2020-2021, the school required its faculty to take the Google Educator Certification to master all the applications to be used in teaching for the upcoming semesters.

As online teaching is now being utilized, the school is even more eager to apply netiquette as a limitation and guide to its faculty, employees, and students.

C. Review of Related Literature

In December 2019, a new virus was identified and was first reported in Wuhan, China. During the first quarter of 2020, the virus had already spread globally, that's why it became the fifth pandemic that was documented since 1918. The virus was initially called 2019-nCoV, which was later on referred to as COVID-19. Since then, the outbreak caused more than 4 million deaths and 200 million cases globally. Worldwide lockdowns were enforced to prevent the further spread of the virus (Moore, n.d.).

A major adjustment was done to get by the pandemic. Since workplaces, businesses, and schools were closed, a shift to online systems was made. This shift happened quickly. Until now, the Philippines is still implementing the online learning systems since schools are still not allowed to operate for face to face classes. The education system here in the Philippines shifted drastically to accommodate the needs of both students and teachers. Slow internet connections, outdated gadgets and even the thought of facing the laptop or mobile phones for the whole day challenged the mental health of everyone. Most Filipinos had a hard time adjusting. Some chose the modular system while the others chose online learning. Those who chose the former were challenged by learning on their own or self-studying. Those who chose the latter were faced struggles with internet connection. Eitherway, there are challenges. It is a matter of how we would deal with it (Del Rosario, 2020).

One adjustment done by those who focused online was to make sure that netiquette was being applied. The term "netiquette" came from "internet" and "etiquette" referring to proper style and manners in communication on the internet. The term was first coined in 1993 (Online Etymology Dictionary, n.d.). This was to make sure that there are certain rules to follow and that abuse of the use of internet or online would be avoided. Since it is an "unwritten social code", it helps teachers strategize in teaching online.

Home Academy USA (n.d.) defined netiquette:

It tells you how you should manage your conduct when you are online. Everyone should take full responsibility for their words, language and actions on the internet. Netiquette helps people understand what is socially acceptable and what is not. Understanding the importance of Netiquette becomes all the more important in such a scenario, as we now these Internet driven meets are here to stay.

If an online discussion is left unregulated, it may lead to rude language and inconsiderate behavior that may ruin the discussion. Etiquette is expected of both teachers and students even though there is absence of visual and auditory clues which are present in face to face discussions (SLC online, n.d.).

Universities and colleges in the Philippines are well aware that Netiquette plays a crucial role in online learning. Ateneo de Manila University, Central Philippine University, De La Salle University, and PATTS College of Aeronautics, are some of the Higher Education Institutions in the Philippines that publicly posted their netiquette guidelines.

In 2017, Remoto wrote an editorial in Philippine Star. He gave the reader ten important guidelines from Virginia Shea's book, the Netiquette: We should always ask ourselves before sending or commenting if we would say this to the person's face; we should follow the same standards online that we follow in real life; we should respect other people's time and bandwidth; we should be concise, sensible, and correct in both spelling and grammar even online; we should share our expert knowledge; we should not abuse; we should avoid flaming; we should not abuse our power – keep things private; we should respect other people's privacy; we should keep in mind that everybody commits mistakes; and we should know the recipient of or message.

Berk (2011) wrote an article about Netiquette. He stated that:

The problem is that there are professionals who are not as sensitive to these "Be-Attitudes" as you maybe. Not only is incivility and bullying spreading in the academic workplace, but many of those behaviors also manifest themselves in communications on the Internet. Cyber-bullying is on the rise.

In line with Berk's statement, some of the strategies listed by Cole (2016) are: Include a netiquette statement in the course syllabus.1 Refer to the Student Code of Conduct, and consider placing this alongside Academic Integrity; Incorporate netiquette standards into grading rubrics. For example, criteria for grading discussion posts may include overall professionalism; and facilitate a discussion among students early in the course in which they define "good" netiquette. Wrap up by clarifying your expectations for their interactions when participating in discussion forums. Cole (2016) also suggested to utilize other's netiquette guidelines that are deemed appropriate for your own students. The basic and common fundamental rules are being scholarly, being respectful, being professional, and being polite. According to Cole (2016), rules and guidelines in Common discussion boards are also used in online learning: Read all other comments before posting; be clear and stay on topic; be mindful of your tone; be credible; and respect diversity.

In 1994, Shea wrote a book entitled "Netiquette." She is considered an authority on the etiquette of cyberspace. Few of her rules include: Remember that there are real people out there in cyberspace. Just because you don't see the person on the other side of the screen doesn't mean they don't have feelings; We all live our lives by certain standards; Take care of your online image; Respect the privacy of others; and Don't be super critical of other's mistakes.

The New York Times also published an article on how Corona Virus Is Changing Digital Etiquette. Turk (2020) wrote:

Digital etiquette rules remain more important now than ever.

It's certainly no time for pedantry, but a base level of etiquette is critical to keeping up good relations and avoiding miscommunication at a time when everyone's already stressed enough. The No. 1 thing to remember: Be kind, to others and to yourself.

Turk (2020) also wrote that video call plays an important role during the pandemic so maintaining video etiquette is critical. These calls are not to be taken for granted as there should be a clear agenda for the meeting. The mute button is also crucially important and should be used frequently and wisely. Also, given the current circumstances, sending a work email nowadays is relatively acceptable.

Netiquette helps people to be more compassionate, tolerant, and patient (Home Academy USA, n.d.). The internet can be a toxic place if unregulated, so being mindful of our words online can make the internet a better and happier place.

D. Theoretical Framework

Fig. 1: Administrator Experience Factors diagram

This is the Administrator Experience Factors diagram by Georgetown University (Wiley Education Basics, 2020). This diagram shows that the administration needs something to balance online programs wherein policies and procedures are created through seeking the best practices done in the institution. These practices make sure that the programs offered by the institution works in unison for the welfare of the students.

The implementation of the following practices were suggested:
- Identify a single individual to oversee the entire online initiative and approve policy implementation.
- Identify individuals to establish and implement accountability and support procedures for faculty members.
- Determine levels of LMS permissions, and identify which personnel will receive what level.
- Craft an independent organizational structure to support all decisions and execution related to online learning.
- Create a transparent process for decision making regarding online learning that involves appropriate stakeholders from faculty members and administrators.
- Create an independent department within the institution that assumes primary responsibility for the execution of all online initiatives.

Although there were suggestions, there are also aspects to consider such as:
- Create a unified program map and sequence for all course offerings that aligns program- and course-level outcomes.
- Implement a across the institution, ensuring a more consistent student experience from course to course.
- Regularly involve deans and department chairs in the development of online curriculum.
- Determine and address all programmatic requirements and expectations prior to online course development.

- Create and enforce program standards for all online offerings during course design and facilitation.
- Create academic integrity policies and discuss them with faculty members and students frequently.
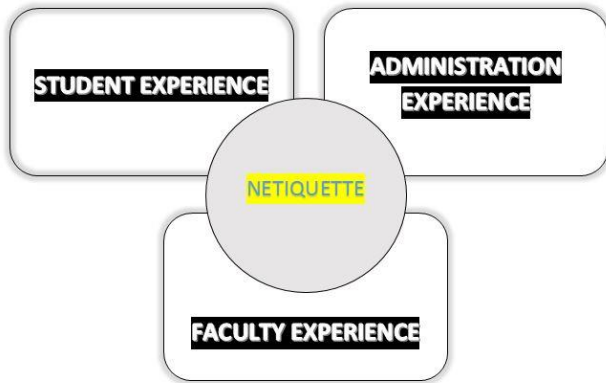
E. Conceptual Framework

Fig. 2: Paradigm on Netiquette Practiced by the Aeronautical School for Compliance

Figure 2 is the conceptual framework based on the Administrator Experiences Factors diagram by the Georgetown University. This shows the three important factors: Student experience, Administrator experience, and faculty experience. The additional factor, netiquette is in the center as this is the focus of the study.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This study made use of the descriptive method of research wherein survey questionnaire in the form of Google Forms was used to gather the data needed from the respondents. The study was based on the following variables: Netiquette for Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluating. The respondents are the faculty, employees, and students of an aeronautical school.

B. Respondents
Profile of Respondents in Terms of Position

Profile	Frequency	Percentage
Faculty	83	18.65
Employees	38	8.54
Students	279	62.70
Total	445	100

Table 1: Frequency and Percent Distribution of the Respondents in Terms of Position

The respondents of this study are the faculty, employees, and students of an aeronautical school in the Philippines. The least number of respondents are the employees which is 8.54% or 38 individuals followed by the faculty with 18.65% having 83 instructors. The greatest number of respondents are from the student with 279 individuals or 62.70%.

C. Instrumentation
The survey questionnaire is a researcher-made questionnaire which was tested and validated. The instrument is divided into four (4) major parts:

Part 1 – Respondent's profile
Part 2 – Netiquette for Planning
Part 3 – Netiquette for Monitoring
Part 4 – Netiquette for Evaluating

The answers for part 2 to 4 were measured using the following scale:

4- Always
3- Sometimes
2- Rarely
1- Never

Value	Range	Description
4	3.51-4.00	Always
3	2.51-3.50	Sometimes
2	1.51-2.50	Rarely
1	1.00-1.50	Never

Table 2: Value, Range, and Description of Scale

D. Statistical Treatment of Data
The data gathered in this study were statistically treated using the statistical tools such as frequency and percentage, standard deviation, and weighted mean.

III. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS
A. Findings

Netiquette	Faculty	Employees	Students	Overall Mean	Remark
1. Remember the HUMAN	3.70	3.69	3.11	3.50	Sometimes
2. Know where you are in cyberspace	3.72	3.31	3.20	3.41	Sometimes
3. Respect other people's bandwidth	**3.45	**2.83	**3.01	**3.10	Sometimes
4. Make yourself good-looking	*3.89	3.72	*3.57	*3.73	Always
5. Adhere to the same standards of behavior online	3.48	3.55	3.02	3.35	Sometimes
6. Share expert knowledge	3.63	3.48	3.06	3.39	Sometimes
7. Help keep flame wars under control	3.76	3.41	3.40	3.52	Always
8. Respect other people's privacy	3.78	*3.75	3.34	3.62	Always
9. Don't abuse your power	3.75	3.63	3.28	3.55	Always
10. Be forgiving of other people's mistakes	3.76	3.57	3.22	3.51	Always
Mean	3.69	3.49	3.23	3.47	Sometimes

Legend: *most complied; **least complied

Table 3: Netiquette Practiced by the Aeronautical School for Compliance

a) The most complied netiquette for online classes as perceived by the respondents

For the faculty members and the student body, the most complied amongst the ten is making oneself good-looking with the highest weighted means of 3.89 and 3.57. For the employees, the most complied netiquette is respecting other people's privacy with the weighted mean of 3.75.

Overall, the most complied netiquette in the aeronautical school is making oneself good-looking with the overall weighted mean of 3.73 which is under Planning.

b) The least complied netiquette for online classes as perceived by the respondents

All respondents agreed that the least complied netiquette in the institution is respecting other people's bandwidth with an overall weighted mean of 3.10.

Overall, the least complied netiquette in the aeronautical school is respecting other people's bandwidth with the weighted mean of 3.10 under Planning.

c) The practices done by institutions to comply with the netiquette for online classes

Overall, there are ten netiquettes with different statements under each which are being practiced by the aeronautical school in the study as a compliance.

i. Planning

For the netiquette on remembering the human, the most complied statement according to the faculty and students is that they know their schedule with the weighted mean of 3.7 and 3.41, while for the employees, it is them asking for permission from their immediate superior whenever they have something new with the weighted mean of 3.89. On the other hand, all respondents agreed that the least complied netiquette in the school is having a fixed schedule for synchronous and asynchronous sessions with the overall weighted mean of 3.18.

For the netiquette on knowing where you are in cyberspace, all respondents agreed that understanding the difference of asynchronous from synchronous sessions is the most complied statement with the overall weighted mean of 3.76. For the least complied statement, both faculty and students agreed that uploading materials in advance is the least complied statement with 3.30 and 2.88 weighted means. For the employees, the least complied statement is the announcement or posting only during the class period with the weighted mean of 3.13.

Respecting other people's bandwidth as a netiquette is most of the time being neglected. For the faculty and students, the most complied statement is the recording of synchronous sessions with the weighted means of 3.76 and 3.34 which is ironically the least complied statement of the employees with only 2.42 weighted mean. For the least complied statement, again, both faculty and students agreed that the use of different gadgets is least complied with the weighted means of 2.84 and 2.59 which is the ironically the

most complied statement of the employees with the weighted mean of 3.13.

Making yourself good-looking as a netiquette is really important. For the faculty member, the most complied statement is that they avoid eating or drinking in front of the class with the weighted mean of 3.92 with was ranked the least complied by the employees with the weighted mean of 3.55. For the employees and students both agreed that wearing appropriate clothes is the most complied one with the weighted means of 3.84 and 3.72. Both faculty and students agreed that the least complied statement is arranging the class work properly online with the weighted means of 3.87 and 3.43.

ii. Monitoring

For the netiquette adhering to the same standards of behavior online, both faculty and students agreed that making students participate is the most complied statement with the weighted mean of 3.69 and 3.11 while for the employees, checking of the class attendance is most complied with the weighted mean of 3.89. Unfortunately, the latter statement is the least complied by the faculty with the weighted mean of 3.13. Both employees and students, however, agreed that the least complied in the institution is putting the learners on the pedestal with the weighted means of 3.16 and 2.88.

Sharing expert knowledge is also a netiquette. All respondents agreed that making sharing easy is the most complied statement with the overall weighted mean of 3.46. Both faculty and students agreed that the least complied statement is demonstrating what is being discussed with the weighted means of 3.61 and 3.05. On the other hand, for the employees, the least complied statement is using videos to demonstrate lectures that could not personally demonstrate with the weighted mean of 3.16.

The seventh netiquette is helping keep flame wars under control. All respondents agreed that the most complied statement is avoiding profanity with the overall weighted mean of 3.60. the least complied statement as agreed by all respondents is the statement avoiding praising eye candy with the overall weighed mean of 3.45.

Respecting other people's privacy is one of the most important netiquettes. For all the respondents, the most complied statement is avoiding of posting in social media about what is going on in the class with the overall weighted mean of 3.74. meanwhile, the faculty, employees, and students all agreed that the least complied statement is the avoidance of requiring everyone to open their cameras during a meet with an overall weighted mean of 3.46.

iii. Evaluating

The ninth netiquette is not abusing your power. For the faculty and employees, the most complied statement is that they follow the rules of the institution on online teaching with the weighted means of 3.88 and 3.87 while for the students, the most complied one is being careful with the choice of words with the weighted mean of 3.42. On the other hand, the least complied statement, both employees

and students agree that focusing on competence is the least one with the weighted means of 3.50 and 2.94 while for the faculty, it is the statement of avoiding sarcasm with the weighted mean pf 3.69.

The last netiquette is being forgiving of other people's mistakes. Both faculty and employees answered that the most complied statement is listening to the students' reasons and explanation with the weighted means of 3.83 and 3.74, while for students, it is the statement having long patience in explaining and discussing with the weighted mean of 3.38. The least complied statement for both employees and students is the extension of deadlines with the weighted means of 3.39 and 3.03 while for the faculty, it is g=having a long patience in explaining and discussing with the weighted mean of 3.70.

IV. DISCUSSION

A. Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following were concluded:

- Overall, the most complied netiquette in the aeronautical school is making oneself good-looking under Planning. The most complied under each netiquette are: knowing own schedule; understanding the difference of asynchronous from synchronous sessions; having at least one synchronous session in a week; wearing of appropriate clothes; making everyone participate; making sharing easy; avoiding profanity; avoiding posting in social media about what is going on in the online meet; following the rules of the school on online teaching; and listening to students' reasons and explanations.
- Overall, the least complied netiquette in the aeronautical school is respecting other people's bandwidth under Planning. The least complied statement under each netiquette are: having a fixed schedule for synchronous and asynchronous sessions; uploading materials in advance; using different gadgets during the online meet; avoiding eating or drinking in front of the class and arranging the class work properly; putting learners on the pedestal; using videos to demonstrate lectures that could not be personally demonstrated; avoiding praising eye candy; avoiding students to open their cameras; focusing on competence; and extending the deadlines.
- There are ten netiquettes being practiced by the aeronautical school. These are: remembering the human; knowing where you are in cyberspace; respecting other people's bandwidth; making oneself good-looking; adhering to the same standards of behavior online; sharing of expert knowledge; helping keep flame wars under control; respecting other people's privacy; not abusing one's power; and being forgiving of other people's mistakes.

B. Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn, the following were recommended for the continuous quality improvement efforts of the Research Development Program for the non-teaching staff, faculty and students:

- The school management should strictly apply rules and policies on online teaching and learning wherein these netiquettes will be monitored to avoid misunderstandings and problems in the future.
- The faculty, employees, and students must improve all the least complied netiquettes and statements under each netiquette to further enhance the application of these netiquettes which should be evaluated at the end of each semester.
- Future researchers may dig deeper on other netiquettes and statement under each netiquette for further improvements and application not only in the study's locale but in the entire country to have a unified online approach of the education sector.

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