

THE PROS AND CONS OF FACE-TO-FACE CLASSES

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Why are face-to-face classes preferable? Morong National High School is now face-to-face classes ready. The possible effects of the changes brought by the implementation of face-to-face classes are already anticipated. As a volunteer teacher at this school, I've witnessed firsthand how important face-to-face instructions are to the students. Can you imagine how a learner would learn how to use paper and pen to produce essays, equations, and other outputs without the teacher present to guide them? What about the learners who have no one at home to teach them? What about those whose situation finds modular distance learning favorable? These are the reasons why the pros and cons of having face-to-face classes should be discussed.

Face-to-face learning is an educational method in which a group of students is taught the course content and learning material in person. What about the pros and cons of the face-to-face classes? Let us deal first with the advantages of having face-to-face classes. First, students can easily ask questions or clarify their concerns, and feedback from teachers will be given immediately. For example, if the student is at home, he cannot immediately ask the teacher for his clarifications. Because the internet may be weak or the teacher may not be online. Unlike in face-to-face class, students are accompanied by a teacher who may focus on their questions and needs. Second is physical interaction- the body language and voice of the teacher and students can provide more information and deeper comprehension. For example, in a classroom, the teacher will inevitably criticize the students' misbehavior. Because of that, the teacher's paralanguage cues will help the students remember what behavior is acceptable or not during classes. With this, the student develops values such as showing respect, following the rules, and getting along

with their classmates. Third, learners will have the chance to engage in problem-solving activities and experience socialization with students from all walks of life. "Results suggest that the most positive impact with face-to-face learning is interaction through class discussions, group projects, and other types of active learning."(Crews and Butterfield 38-47)

Now, let us proceed and discuss the disadvantages of face-to-face classes in our current situation. The first one is that students need to spend more money and allot more time on their travel to school, especially if they live in far-flung areas. For example, students from distant places or mountains such as Kanawan, Sampaloc, or Tatlong Poste studying at Morong National High School must travel an hour before their first class. Sometimes, they even have to pay the fare for a special trip to reach the school on time. Second, shy learners may find it difficult to approach the instructor if they have queries. Some students are embarrassed to associate with others because they are used to studying at home. Because they do not often meet the teacher since the implementation of the modular or online class, students are sometimes uncomfortable asking questions to the teacher. Third, students prefer online rather than face-to-face classes because they no longer have to leave home. They can study and get the learning tasks they have to accomplish on their computer, smartphones, or tablet. Even group activities can be done online using various platforms like Zoom or Google Meet, without having to leave home. Unlike in face-to-face classes, some students may not be able to participate in group activities if they cannot come to school because of distance. "Outcomes revealed that online small group discussions have more advantages over face-to-face ones.

Online small group discussions can be an effective strategy to interweave whole-class discussions with small group discussions to reduce overall information loads in large classes while providing more opportunities for interaction."(Qiu and McDougall 1-11)

With all these advantages and disadvantages, face-to-face classes are still more effective why? Because to produce students with skills and knowledge needed in the future, they need to have face-to-face interaction with their teachers. But with the situation today, the students are free to choose whether they'll have online classes, modular classes, or face-to-face classes. What they need to do is to think carefully about which method will best suit them.

References:

Crews, T., & Butterfield, J. (2014). Data for Flipped Classroom Design: Using Student Feedback to Identify the Best Components from Online and Face-to-Face Classes. *Higher Education Studies*, 4(3), 38-47.

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