ISSN:1738-6764, eISSN:2093-7504

Comparing Korean College Students Perceptions Toward Online and Offline Classes

Ji-Yeon Baek [1] and Kyeong-Hee Rha [2,*]

[1] Seowon University; Assistant; Professor; bjy0429@seowon.ac.kr
[2] Chungbuk National University; Professor; kyeonghee@chungbuk.ac.kr
* Correspondence

https://doi.org/10.5392/IJoC.2023.19.2.091

Manuscript Received 06 March 2023; Received 22 June 2023; Accepted 23 June 2023

Abstract: *The purpose of this study was to investigate how Korean college students perceived online and offline classes in terms of their social interactions (with their peers and instructor) and senses of classroom community during their online and offline classes. To accomplish this purpose, two research questions were constructed: 1) How did Korean college students perceive online classes in terms of their social interactions and senses of classroom community? 2) How did they perceive offline classes in terms of their social interactions and senses of classroom community? Thirty-three students responded to the Rovai's (2002) 20-item Classroom Community Scale modified for the current study. An independent sample t-test as a main analysis method was employed. Findings of data analysis indicated that, first, students perceived two different learning environments in nearly the same way in terms of social interactions with their peers and the instructor. Second, students were more likely to rely on or trust others in online classes than in offline classes. It indicated that they might have been more used to online classes than offline classes because they had longer experience with online classes because of the pandemic. Pedagogical implications and suggestions for further research are presented.*

Keywords: Learning Environments; Online Classes; Offline Classes; Social Interaction, A Sense of Classroom Community

1. Introduction

Up to a short while ago, almost all the schools including elementary, middle, high schools, and universities had to provide online classes because of the corona virus. Now, with the gradual recovery from COVID-19, universities and colleges in Korea began to provide face-to-face classes from the school year of 2022, and tried to bring students to campus [1-4]. However, students had been more familiar with non-face-to-face classes during the past two years, so there seemed to have been clumsy parts for them in attending face-to-face classes. Especially, some students who are now juniors had never taken face-to-face classes before the year of 2022 because the pandemic started in the beginning of 2020, which was the period they started their first year of college.

It was the help of technology that made it possible to quickly switch from offline to online classes during the pandemic. As a matter of fact, the COVID-19 crisis has led to the need for technology much faster than we had expected, all the more so in the case of education because students and teachers could not meet in-person to prevent the spread of the virus. Without the help of technology, it might have been difficult to overcome the crisis. The sudden alteration from offline to online, and vice versa, led to dealing with serious issues such as technology use in the classroom, and social or affective domains of learners [2, 3], [5]. Especially among those, issues of social interactions among students, their academic achievement, senses of community, and technology-based applications as instructional tools have been noticed as the major concern in the field of education [2, 3], [5].

Looking at what has taken place as learners have experienced offline and online classes, it was assumed that learners' perceptions toward their learning situations have been changed significantly because the way they

took classes was different [6-8]. Now, several research studies have been conducted to examine the effect of online classes on students' achievement, their satisfaction with online classes, and perceptions toward online classes [2, 3], [9]. However, little research has been conducted on comparing the effects of online and offline classes on students' achievement, their satisfactions with online and offline classes, and perceptions toward online and offline classes.

Therefore, the purpose of this current study is to investigate how Korean college students perceived online and offline classes, in terms of their social interactions with their teachers and classmates during those two different types of classes. The research questions were established as follows; 1) How did Korean college students perceive online classes, in terms of their social interactions with their peers and the instructor, and senses of classroom community? 2) How did they perceive offline classes, in terms of the same factors mentioned in the first question?

2. Learners' Perceptions of Learning Environment

The learning environment, where students learn, is one of the crucial factors in affecting the process and product of their learning [10-13]. Various factors are included to construct an effective learning environment, physically and psychologically. A long time ago, [10] emphasized the importance of the educational setting, in which learners can learn optimally for their best outputs. He also enumerated a variety of learning environments, ranging from the physically-based environment such as offline classes to the remotely-connected cultural boundaries, as a system of "forces and factors which surround, engulf, and play on the individual (p. 195)." The issue of how students perceive their learning environment has been dealt as important because it is directly connected with their achievements and outputs. Therefore, it has been said that the learning environment guides how and why learners learn.

As for the learners' perception toward their learning environment, previous studies showed that positively-perceived students obtained higher test scores than negatively-perceived students [11-13]. [12] tried to examine the nursing students' perspectives of their learning environment by using a survey questionnaire, and found out that the students were strongly affected by their learning environment, in terms of learning motivation and academic achievement. Also, they asserted that obtaining the students' feedback on the learning environment would be very important for the learners' best outputs.

In the beginning of 2020, the immediate change from offline to online classes was made because of COVID-19, and teachers could not help adapting Internet-based classes for providing instruction to students. However, the issue of an optimal learning environment was not considered enough because it was more urgent to prevent the spread of the virus. Some prior research which was conducted before the pandemic indicated that teachers and students showed negative attitudes toward online activities such as video conferencing and Internet-utilized tasks, but the pandemic changed their perceptions toward online classes upside down [14-16]. As a matter of fact, students' perceptions of online classes during the pandemic have been shown to be very positive in many research studies [14], [17-19]. According to the findings of [19]'s research, the majority of Saudi Arabian university students in their research mentioned that they felt more comfortable in obtaining knowledge, and received higher test scores during online classes. Therefore, the students were satisfied with non-face-to-face classes using Internet-based tools. On the other hand, some students' perceptions toward online classes were found to be negative in some research. For example, [14] tried to listen to college students' opinions and views about online classes, in terms of the sudden change from face-to-face to non-face-to-face online classes during the pandemic. From the data of interviews with the students, the researchers found out that the students felt uncomfortable with online classes, and found out the disadvantages of online classes, which were decreased motivation, isolation, misunderstandings, and a lack of feedback from teachers.

In a research study glancing at students' opinions of offline classes, which was conducted before the pandemic, [13] found out that 58% from 112 students showed higher motivation and more interest in in-person activities, mentioning that they could have more classroom interactions with the teacher, or peer students in the actual classroom. Since the research was conducted before the pandemic, the students in the study did not have much experience with online classes. Then, upon the resumption of offline classes, [19] conducted a qualitative study to explore the challenges and impacts the students faced by the comeback from online to offline classes. They found out that a majority of students in the research perceived negatively toward moving from online into offline classes, which can mean that the students did not like to be located in the offline environment. It might have been partly because they had been more familiar with online activities.

Some students would prefer online classes to offline ones because they would not have to move around to attend classes, which is one of the advantages that online classes provide. Some would like to be involved in face-to-face activities in the actual classroom. Since learners' positive, or negative perception toward their learning environment is directly related to their achievement, it is necessary to create an effective learning environment, respecting individual learners' preferences. Along with the issue, [13] emphasized that teachers need to integrate modes of face-to-face and non-face-to-face class, and consider the quality of learners' learning experiences.

3. Research Method

3.1 Participants

The present study took place at a four-year university located in the central region of Korea. Initially, a total number of 40 Korean EFL university students participated in this study. Among them, only 33 students (female: 17, male: 16; as of 2022, sophomores: 7, juniors: 14, seniors: 12) who experienced both online and offline classes were selected as the final participants of this study. Furthermore, seven students were excluded as they graduated in Feb. 2022 and could not take the offline classes. The two different English major classes were selected for this study as they met the following three criteria. Firstly, the courses were all English major ones. Secondly, they were all taught by the same instructor. Thirdly, they were all conducted in the same way, by using group activities such as group discussion and writing as major activities for instruction. The sole difference was that the classes were accomplished online in 2021, and offline in 2022.

3.2 The Overview of Online and Offline Classes

During the pandemic, two courses mentioned above were conducted in a hybrid mode. Those were carried out with a combination of asynchronous and synchronous modes. Two 3-credit ones were split into 2-hour and 1-hour class sessions on two different days. For the first two class hours, students were required to watch two pre-recorded video clips and perform the after-class tasks on the online platform of the school (e. g., LMS: Learning Management System). The tasks were designed to boost students' social interactions. Therefore, the students were required to perform one of the tasks each week. First, they were required to present their opinions on the pre-provided topic in the video clips, and provide responses about their peers' opinions on the LMS discussion board. Second, they were guided to create their own questions about the video clips they had watched and answer their peers' questions on the LMS board. At this time, they were required to create at least one question and respond to their peers' questions at least twice.

For the rest of the class time, the students were required to attend a one-hour zoom class. During this synchronous session, the instructor briefly reviewed what the students studied from the video lectures, let them go to the small meeting room, and have a group discussion on the pre-given topic, asking questions to each other. After they were finished with their discussion in the meeting room, they came out of the room and gather in the main room to talk about what they had discussed in the small room. Finally, the instructor wrapped up the class, by briefly talking about the after-class activities and assignments, as well as a preview for the following week. Additionally, mid-term and final examinations were conducted as follows; 1) for the mid-term examination, written tests were conducted on the examination section of the LMS. For the final examination, oral interviews and presentations of students were conducted in a Zoom meeting room. Some other test types were used depending on the characteristics of the classes.

Two offline classes were carried out in a face-to-face mode in the actual classroom, in which the instructor provided lectures, and utilized small group discussions as well as after-class activities. Two 3-credit courses were split into 2-hour and 1-hour class sessions on two different days. For the first two class hours, the instructor covered the class by providing lectures on the given topic, and let students join the small group discussion or tasks such as Korean-English interpreting or interviewing each other after the instructor's lecture. The offline classes also adopted the same after-class activities or tasks which were used to facilitate students' interactions. Finally, the instructor wrapped up the class, by briefly talking about the after-class activities and assignments, as well as a plan for the following week. And, mid-term and final examinations were conducted in the same test formats as the online classes, but in an actual classroom. Thus, it can be noticed that both online and offline classes were carried out in the same instructional methods which consisted of instructor's lectures, group discussion, and after-class activities on the online platform.

3.3 Data Collection

The main source of data was from the survey questionnaire, which was carried out during the two Spring semesters in 2021 and 2022. The survey questionnaire consisted of three parts: 1) demographic information about the students' major, gender, and school year, 2) 18 questions items asking about the students' social interactions and a sense of classroom community, and 3) one open-ended question on what they liked or disliked about two different educational settings, online and offline. Since this study aimed to investigate Korean EFL university students' perceptions of social interactions and a sense of classroom community in their online and offline educational settings, the Rovai's (2002) 20-item Classroom Community Scale (CCS) was used for this study. Eighteen question items out of the original survey were extracted, and modified appropriately for the research purpose, utilizing a five-point Likert scale (1: strongly disagree, 2: disagree, 3: neutral, 4: agree, 5: strongly agree). Among the items, nine items were related to students' social interactions with their peers and the instructor both in the online and offline educational settings, and the other nine items were related to students' sense of classroom community. Additionally, Cronbach's α coefficient of both sub-constructs was greater than 0.8.

3.4 Data Analysis

The main purpose of this study was to compare the students' perceptions of online and offline learning environments, in terms of their social interactions and a sense of classroom community. Firstly, Cronbach's α coefficient was measured to assess the internal consistency of survey items. Upon the acceptable level of reliability for items of the survey questionnaire, the data from the questionnaire were processed and analyzed by SPSS 26.0. Secondly, the frequency of 18 items was calculated to examine how the students experienced and perceived online and offline classes. Lastly, an independent sample *t*-test was used to compare the means of two sets of survey responses. In other words, the mean comparison has been performed to determine whether the mean values of two independent groups' perceptions of the two constructs in each educational setting would be different or not.

4. Results of Data Analysis

4.1 Students' Perceptions of their Social Interactions in Online Classes

A frequency analysis was conducted to examine how the students experienced and perceived the online classes in terms of their social interactions with the other members in the classes. The following table describes the descriptive results of survey responses on the nine sub-constructs of social interactions in online classes.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of 'Social Interactions' in Online Classes

Sub-construct of Social Interactions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean
Asking questions	1	1	8	9	13	4.03
Feeling hard to get help	18	8	5	0	1	1.69
Receiving timely feedback	0	0	1	14	17	4.50
Feeling uneasy to expose learning gaps	2	4	7	16	3	3.44
Learning from the course	0	1	3	14	14	4.28
Getting help from others for learning	0	2	7	14	9	3.94
Receiving ample opportunities to learn	0	1	3	15	13	4.25
Feeling hard to achieve learning needs	2	0	5	14	11	4.00
Confidence in getting support from others	1	4	16	7	4	3.28

As presented in Table 1 above, the sub-construct 'receiving timely feedback' had the highest mean score which was 4.50. More specifically, 31 out of 32 students (97%) answered either 'agree' or 'strongly agree'. And the mean scores of three other sub-constructs were also counted for more than 4.00 as follows: 'learning from the course' (M=4.28), 'receiving ample opportunities to learn' (M=4.25), and 'asking questions' (M=4.03). On the other hand, one of the negatively-denoted sub-constructs 'feeling hard to achieve learning needs' also had a high mean score of 4.00, which means the students were not satisfied with their learning achievement, in which the online mode was used. Also, the sub-construct 'confidence in getting support from others' had a relatively low mean score of 3.28. Now, it can be assumed that the students in the online

classes did not show enough self-confidence of themselves as active learners although they felt that they were given opportunities to learn and get help from their peers and the instructor.

4.2 Students' Perceptions of their Social Interactions in Offline Classes

A frequency analysis was conducted to examine how the students experienced and perceived the offline classes in terms of their social interactions with other members in the classes. The following table presents the survey results on the nine sub-constructs of social interactions in offline classes.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of 'Social Interactions' in Offline Classes

Sub-construct of Social Interactions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean
Asking questions	2	4	6	15	6	3.58
Feeling hard to get help	7	20	1	4	1	2.15
Receiving timely feedback	0	2	2	24	5	3.97
Feeling uneasy to expose learning gaps	5	6	9	10	3	3.00
Learning from the course	0	0	8	17	8	4.00
Getting help from others for learning	1	3	10	16	3	3.52
Receiving ample opportunities to learn	0	1	7	18	7	3.94
Feeling hard to achieve learning needs	2	2	10	14	5	3.55
Confidence in getting support from others	1	2	15	10	5	3.48

As seen in Table 2 above, 'learning from the course' had the highest mean score which was 4.00 followed by 'receiving timely feedback' (M=3.97) and 'receiving ample opportunities to learn' (M=3.94). Additionally, except for the negative-wording sub-constructs, the following three sub-constructs had the lowest mean scores: 'confidence in getting support from others' (M=3.48), 'getting help from others for learning' (M=3.52), and 'asking questions' (M=3.58). This suggests that the students in the offline classes felt that they got relatively less help or support from others than the learning opportunities or feedback.

4.3 Comparing Students' Perceptions of their Social Interactions in Online and Offline Classes

A *t*-test was conducted to find out how differently the students perceived their social interactions with members, or with the instructor in two different environments of classes, and at this time, the statistical condition was that there would be a statistically significant difference if a *p*-value is less than 0.05.

Table 3. Independent Sample *t*-test Results of 'Social Interactions' in Online and Offline Classes

Sub-construct of Social Interactions	Educational Setting	Mean	SD	*t*	*p*-value
Asking questions	Online	4.00	1.047	1.577	0.120
	Offline	3.58	1.119		
Feeling hard to get help	Online	1.69	0.965	-1.899	0.062
	Offline	2.15	1.004		
Receiving timely feedback	Online	4.50	0.568	3.395*	0.001
	Offline	3.97	0.684		
Feeling uneasy to expose learning gaps	Online	3.44	1.045	1.547	0.127
	Offline	3.00	1.225		
Learning from the course	Online	4.28	0.772	1.533	0.130
	Offline	4.00	0.707		
Getting help from others for learning	Online	3.94	0.878	1.909	0.061
	Offline	3.52	0.906		
Receiving ample opportunities to learn	Online	4.25	0.762	1.659	0.102
	Offline	3.94	0.747		
Feeling hard to achieve learning needs	Online	4.00	1.047	1.761	0.083
	Offline	3.55	1.034		
Confidence in getting support from others	Online	3.28	0.958	-0.865	0.390
	Offline	3.48	0.939		

According to the *t*-test results of comparing the mean scores of the surveys in online and offline classes respectively, the mean scores of the sub-constructs such as 'Asking questions,' 'Feeling hard to get help,' 'Learning from the course,' 'Getting help from others for learning,' 'Receiving ample opportunities to learn' were higher in the survey of online classes than in the survey of offline classes. However, the sub-construct of 'Receiving timely feedback' was found to be the only item that was statistically significant at $p<.05$. More specifically, the mean scores of the sub-construct were 4.50 in online classes and 3.97 in offline classes with a significance level of 0.001. It might be inferred that the students have received almost immediate feedback from their peers or the instructor through the online platform during the online classes. It might have been because the students had to complete their commenting tasks through the Internet platform right after the video classes while classes were carried out online.

Meanwhile, it was statistically verified that the sub-constructs such as 'Asking questions,' 'Feeling hard to get help,' 'Feeling uneasy to expose learning gaps,' 'Learning from the course,' 'Getting help from others for learning,' 'Receiving ample opportunities to learn' had no significant difference between the two different educational settings. But, the mean scores of 'Feeling hard to achieve learning needs,' 'Confidence in getting support from others' were slightly higher in offline classes than in online classes, but there was no significant difference at a *p*-value of higher than 0.05.

As presented in Table 2 above, it was revealed that the perceptions of students showed no significant difference, in terms of social interactions with their peers and the instructor in two different educational settings. During the online classes, the students needed to take two pre-recorded video lecture clips, work on the routine tasks, which were writing their own opinions and providing feedback about their peers, and also creating their own questions and answering their peers' questions on the online platform. Then, they attended a one-hour synchronous Zoom class. Looking at the figures in Table 3 above, the students seemed to be motivated and encouraged to interact with each other in both asynchronous and synchronous classes. Also, during the offline classes, the students needed to take three-hour face-to-face classes on two different days. They were also encouraged to work on the same routine tasks on the online platform after attending the offline classes. Here, it can be indicated that since similar interactive activities or tasks in both educational settings had been carried out, there might have been no statistically significant difference in terms of social interactions even though two different types of environments had been provided.

4.4 Students' Perceptions of their Sense of Classroom Community in Online and Offline Classes

4.4.1 Students' Perceptions of their Sense of Classroom Community in Online Classes

A frequency analysis was conducted to examine how the students experienced and perceived the online classes in terms of their sense of classroom community. The following table shows the survey results on the nine sub-constructs of sense of classroom community in online classes.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of 'Sense of Classroom Community' in Online Classes

Sub-construct of Classroom Community Sense	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean
Caring for each other	0	0	4	12	16	4.38
Feeling connected to others	0	2	6	12	12	4.06
Feeling a spirit of community	1	1	5	9	16	4.19
Feeling like a family	1	2	19	6	4	3.31
Feeling isolated	20	4	7	0	1	1.69
Trusting the others	0	0	4	16	12	4.25
Relying on others	0	0	5	15	12	4.22
Having someone to depend on me	1	2	19	7	3	3.28
Feeling uncertain about others	0	2	6	10	14	4.13

As shown in Table 4 above, the sub-construct 'caring for each other' had the highest mean score which was 4.38. More specifically, 28 out of 33 students (84.8%) answered either 'agree' or 'strongly agree' to the item. And two other sub-constructs such as 'trusting the others' (M=4.25) and 'relying on others' (M=4.22) showed relatively higher mean scores, and the sub-constructs such as 'having someone to depend on me' (M=3.28) and 'feeling like a family' (M=3.31) showed the lowest mean. Based on this result, it can be said that the students relied strongly on their peers in the online classes, but they did not show much trust in themselves.

But some sub-constructs showed very contrastive scores. While the students showed that they would have 'trusted the others' (M= 4.25), they would have 'felt uncertain about others (M=4.13).' It might be inferred that there was still a lot that the students need to build a stronger sense of connectedness and friendship.

4.4.2 Students' Perceptions of Sense of Classroom Community in Offline Classes

A frequency analysis was conducted to examine how the students experienced and perceived the offline classes in terms of their sense of classroom community. The following table describes the survey results on the nine sub-constructs of sense of classroom community in offline classes.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of 'Sense of Classroom Community' in Offline Classes

Sub-construct of Classroom Community Sense	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean
Caring for each other	0	2	6	18	7	3.91
Feeling connected to others	0	3	11	14	5	3.64
Feeling a spirit of community	2	1	10	17	3	3.55
Feeling like a family	5	6	11	9	2	2.91
Feeling isolated	8	14	4	6	1	2.33
Trusting the others	0	0	12	16	5	3.79
Relying on others	0	3	11	14	5	3.64
Having someone to depend on me	1	7	16	5	4	3.12
Feeling uncertain about others	1	4	11	11	6	3.52

As presented in Table 5 above, the sub-construct of 'caring for each other' showed the highest mean score of 3.91. More specifically, 25 out of 33 students (75.8%) answered either 'agree' or 'strongly agree'. And 'trusting the others' had the second highest mean score of 3.79 followed by 'feeling connected to others' and 'relying on others' with a mean score of 3.64 each. Based on the analytical results, it can be assumed that the students in the offline classes had no high confidence in their relationships with the members of the classes. It might be because they had not had much in-person opportunities to interact with each other yet.

4.4.3 Comparing Students' Perceptions of their Sense of Classroom Community in Online and Offline Classes

A *t*-test was conducted to find out how differently the students perceived their social interactions with members, or with the instructor in two different environments of classes, and at this time, the statistical condition was that there would be a statistically significant difference if a *p*-value is less than 0.05.

Table 6. Independent Sample *t*-test Results of 'Sense of Classroom Community' in Online and Offline Classes

Sub-construct of Classroom Community Sense	Educational Setting	Mean	SD	*t*	*p*-value
Caring for each other	Online	4.38	0.707	2.476*	0.016
	Offline	3.91	0.805		
Feeling connected to others	Online	4.06	0.914	1.937	0.057
	Offline	3.64	0.859		
Feeling a spirit of community	Online	4.19	1.030	2.629*	0.011
	Offline	3.55	0.938		
Feeling like a family	Online	3.31	0.896	1.570	0.121
	Offline	2.91	1.156		
Feeling isolated	Online	1.69	1.030	-2.398*	0.019
	Offline	2.33	1.137		
Trusting the others	Online	4.25	0.672	2.721*	0.008
	Offline	3.79	0.696		
Relying on others	Online	4.22	0.706	2.979*	0.004
	Offline	3.64	0.859		
Having someone to depend on me	Online	3.28	0.851	0.697	0.488
	Offline	3.12	0.992		
Feeling uncertain about others	Online	4.13	0.942	2.483*	0.016
	Offline	3.52	1.034		

As shown in Table 6 above, the mean scores of the six sub-constructs among nine were found to be statistically significant at $p<.05$. And considering the fact that there were three negatively-phrased sub-constructs in the survey, which need to reverse the score, the mean scores of five sub-constructs such as 'caring for each other,' 'feeling a spirit of community,' 'feeling isolated,' 'trusting the others,' and 'relying on others' were higher in the online classes than in the offline classes at $p<.05$. The mean scores of two other sub-constructs such as 'feeling like a family,' and 'having someone to depend on me' were also slightly higher in the online classes than in the offline classes, but it was verified that there was no statistical difference between two learning environments.

Particularly, the mean scores of sub-construct 'relying on others' ('I feel I can rely on others in this course' as described in the survey) were 4.22 in the online classes and 3.64 in the offline classes with a significance level of 0.004. The mean scores of sub-construct 'trusting the others' ('I trust the others in the course' as described in the survey) were also higher in the online classes (M=4.25) than in the offline classes (M=3.79) with a p-value of 0.008. From the result of data analysis, it might be inferred that the students felt more connected to other students in the online classes than in the offline classes. They had already experienced the online classes together for more than two semesters, and, therefore, they had got used to each other even in the online setting. On the other hand, in the face-to-face classes, the students might have needed more time to be accustomed to each other in the actual classroom. The offline learning environment might have been somewhat new to the students because they just got recovered from the COVID-19 school closure

5. Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to compare how Korean college students perceived online and offline classes, in terms of their social interactions with their peers and the instructor, and senses of classroom community during their online and offline classes. First, it was revealed that the students perceived two different learning environments almost the same way, in terms of social interactions with their peers and the instructor. While they were taking the online classes, the students watched two pre-recorded video clips, and worked on a task. Then, they attended a one-hour synchronous Zoom class. And, while they were taking the offline classes, they attended the three-hour face-to-face classes on two different days. They were also encouraged to work on a task after attending the offline classes. These two types of classes had been carried out differently, but the contents and progressions of the classes were very similar, so there might have been no statistically significant difference in terms of social interactions. Second, it was revealed that the mean scores of sub-constructs 'relying on others' and 'trusting the others' were higher in the online classes than in the offline classes. From this result, it can be inferred that the students felt more connected to other students in the online classes than in the offline classes because they had got used to other students in the online setting for more than one year. However, the students had just returned to the actual classroom from the COVID-19 school closure, so they might have needed more time to be accustomed to other students in the actual classroom.

Therefore, teachers need to foster a sense of classroom community and promote strong relationships among students and instructors through diverse social interactions. This is crucial for students who have been learning online for about two years, to facilitate a smooth transition back to face-to-face classes and campus life. More specifically, in order to help the students with their college adaptation process, teachers need to make an attempt to identify what kinds of difficulties and challenges they are experiencing, and what types of classroom interactions and activities they prefer to do before, during, and after class.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

[1] K. H. Rha and J. Y. Baek, "Korean College Students' Perceptions of Offline Classes after COVID-19: Focused on Their Social Interactions and Senses of Community," The Journal of the Convergence on Culture Technology, vol. 9, no. 1. pp. 169-174, 2022, doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.17703/JCCT.2023.9.1.169.

[2] K.-H. Pyo, M. Yang, and K.-H. Rha, "Comparison of Korean College Learners' Sense of Community between Full-Sync and Half-Sync/Half-Async English Courses," Journal of the Korea English Education Society, vol. 20, no. 2, pp. 25-47, 2021a, doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.18649/jkees.2021.20.2.25.

[3] K.-H. Pyo, M. Yang, and K.-H. Rha, "Content Analysis on College English Teachers' Experiences of Online Instruction during the COVID-19 Pandemic," Studies in Linguistics, no. 60, pp. 261-283, 2021b, doi: http://doi.org/10.17002/sil.60.202107.261.

[4] UNESCO, Education: From Disruption to Recovery. (2020). Accessed: Aug. 11, 2021. [Online] Available: https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse

[5] J. S. Barrot, I. I. Llenares, and L. S. del Rosario, "Students' Online Learning Challenges during the Pandemic and How They Cope with Them: The Case of the Philippines," Education and Information Technologies, vol. 26, no. 6, pp. 7321-7338, 2021, doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10639-021-10589-x.

[6] S. Dhawan, "Online Learning: A Panacea in the Time of COVID-19 Crisis," Journal of Educational Technology Systems, vol. 49, pp. 5-22, 2020, doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0047239520934018.

[7] K. Siripongdee, P. Pimdee, and S. Tuntiwongwanich, "A Blended Learning Model with IoT-based Technology: Effectively Used When the COVID-19 Pandemic?" Journal for the Education of Gifted Young Scientists, vol. 8, pp. 905-917, 2020, doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.17478/JEGYS.698869.

[8] M. Stec, C. Smith, and E. Jacox, "Technology Enhanced Teaching and Learning: Exploration of Faculty Adaptation to iPad Delivered Curriculum," Technology, Knowledge, and Learning, vol. 25, pp. 651-665, 2020, doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10758-019-09401-0.

[9] C. Hodges, S. Moore, B. Lockee, T. Trust, and A. Bond, "The Difference between Emergency Remote Teaching and Online Learning," EDUCAUSE Review, 2020. [Online] Available: https://er.educause.edu/articles/2020/3/the-difference-between-emergency-remoteteaching-and-online-learning.

[10] B. S. Bloom, Stability and Change in Human Characteristics, John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1964.

[11] J. M. Genn, "AMEE Medical Education Guide No. 23 (Part 1): Curriculum, Environment, Climate, Quality and Change in Medical Education-A Unifying Perspective," Med Teach, vol. 23, no. 4, pp. 337-344, 2001, doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01421590120063330.

[12] B. Hamid, A. Faroukh, and B. Mohammadhosein, "Nursing Students' Perceptions of Their Educational Environment Based on DREEM Model in an Iranian University," Malays J Med Sci, vol. 20, no. 4, pp. 56–63, 2013.

[13] B. M. Wright, "Blended Learning: Student Perception of Face-to-face and Online EFL Lessons," Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 64-71, 2017, doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v7i1.6859.

[14] M. Curelaru, V. Curelaru, and M. Cristea, "Students' Perceptions of Online Learning during COVID-19 Pandemic: A Qualitative Approach," Sustainability, vol. 14, 8138, 2022, doi: https://doi.org/10.3390/su14138138.

[15] D. Serhan, "Transitioning from Face-to-Face to Remote Learning: Students' Attitudes and Perceptions of using Zoom during COVID-19 Pandemic," Int. J. Technol. Educ. Sci, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 335-342, 2020, doi: https://doi.org/10.46328/ijtes.v4i4.148.

[16] J. J. Seong and H. Y. Hyo, "Relationship between General Characteristics, Learning Flow, Self-Directedness and Learner Satisfaction of Medical Students in Online Learning Environment," The Journal of the Korean Contents Association, vol. 20, no. 8, pp. 65-74, 2020, doi: https://doi.org/10.5392/JKCA.2020.20.08.065.

[17] E.-J. Lee, "Exploring Lecturers' Perceptions of Virtual University General English Courses," International Journal of Contents, vol. 16, no. 3, pp. 87-100, 2020, doi: https://doi.org/10.5392/IJoC.2020.16.3.087.

[18] N. H. Kim, "A Study on English Learning Motivation and Demotivation of Cyber University Students," The Journal of the Korea Contents Association, vol. 19, no. 12, pp. 6-15, 2019, doi: http://doi.org/10.5392/JKCA.2019.19.12.129.

[19] F. Riaz, S. E. Mahmood, T. Begum, M. T. Ahmad, A. Al-Shaikh, A. Ahmad, A. Shati, and M. S. Khan, "Students' Preferences and Perceptions Regarding Online versus Offline Teaching and Learning Post-COVID-19 Lockdown," Sustainability, vol. 15, no. 3, p. 2362, 2023, doi: https://doi.org/10.3390/su15032362.

[20] X. Zhao and W. Xue, "From Online to Offline Education in the Post-pandemic Era: Challenges Encountered by International Students at British Universities," Educational Psychology, vol. 13, pp. 1-10, 2023, doi: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1093475.

© 2023 by the authors. Copyrights of all published papers are owned by the IJOC. They also follow the Creative Commons Attribution License (https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/) which permits unrestricted non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

.