

INVESTIGATING STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF TWO ACTIVE LEARNING METHODS CONVERTED TO ONLINE FORMAT: ROLE-PLAY VS. CASE-BASED LEARNING FOR CSR COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT

The Covid-19 pandemic forced rapid adjustments among university educators around the world. With millions of educators and students forced to migrate online for an extended period, teachers were challenged not only to adapt to teaching in an online environment but also to find ways of creating an active learning environment that engaged students. This challenge also created opportunities to explore the possibilities and limits of using existing active learning methods in an online mode. This research was designed to examine the learning experience of bachelor's degree students studying corporate social responsibility (CSR) communication in two different learning groups – case-based learning and role-play learning – in a fully online teaching and learning environment. The results indicate that while students found both activities engaging, the online format created several challenges for both groups. The emphasis on team-based learning in both activities was also not optimal for the students. However, the experience of presenting their CSR communication plans to work professionals online was viewed as a key part of learning. The study offers insight into how face-to-face active learning activities should be implemented for online learning and what factors should be considered when conducting these activities.

INTRODUCTION

The study was initially conceptualized around the teaching of corporate social responsibility (CSR). Previous research had reported that sustainability has become a widespread concern throughout the world (Leicht et al., 2018; Missimer et al., 2017). CSR communication is also becoming increasingly important. With the rise of corporate scandals in major corporations around the world (García-Rosell, 2019; López-Pérez et al., 2017; Sims & Felton, 2006), many organizations now view CSR as an essential activity for organizations to achieve their business objectives while maintaining ethical and social responsibility. Although many universities have started to incorporate ethics and sustainability courses into their curriculums, there has been some debate on how to integrate these key concepts into curriculums (García-Rosell, 2019; Laszlo et al., 2017; López-Pérez et al., 2017). Due to the fact that CSR is very broad and encompasses so many different activities, challenges persist in teaching CSR communication. Several teaching methods have been proposed to teach CSR, but research on the efficacy of different teaching activities can be scarce (García-Rosell, 2019; López-Pérez et al., 2017). Although this study initially focused on experimenting with different learning activities for CSR communication, the Covid-19 pandemic led this study to focus not just on the investigating the efficacy of the learning activities, but also on whether these learning activities could be converted into a completely online format.

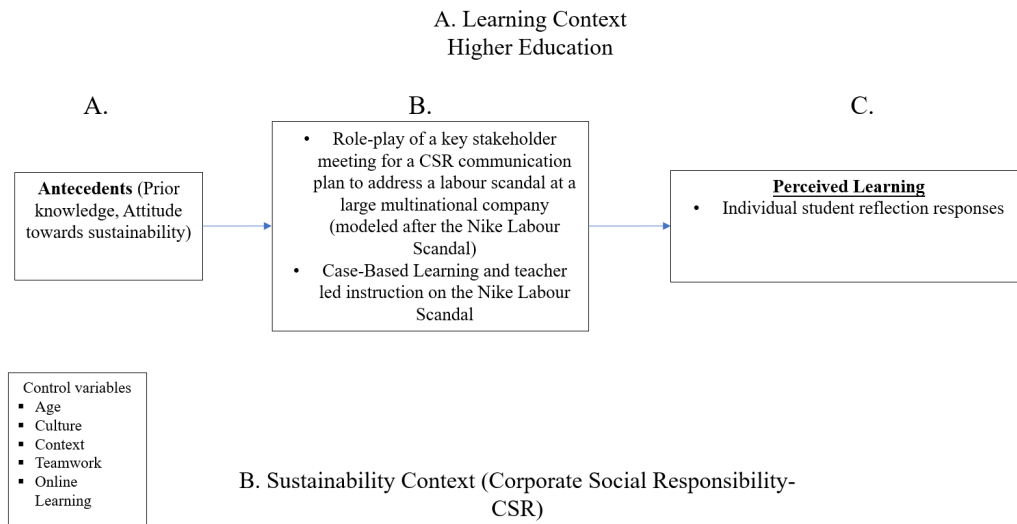
Educators around the world were disrupted as Covid-19 spread across the world (Camilleri, 2021; Cole et al., 2021; Popa et al., 2020). As many educators scrambled to adapt their activities to online learning, students widely reported that this rapid transition disrupted their studies and their ability to learn (Camilleri, 2021; Cole et al., 2021). Research indicated that, while adapting to online learning could be challenging, various factors should be considered to offset the various challenges of transitioning to online learning. For example, research has found that negative attitudes toward online learning can influence student effort. Cranfield et al. (2020) reported that online study sessions had to be carefully considered and needed to provide enough activities to keep students engaged (Cranfield et al., 2021). Kamal et al. (2020) further emphasized that participation was crucial for excellent results and stated that emotions had a significant impact on how students perceived their online learning experience (Kamal et al., 2020).

Despite the challenges, some studies have indicated that the pandemic has stimulated experimentation with virtual education technologies to engage students in real time, although it was also emphasized that there continue to be a number of challenging issues to successfully transitioning from traditional to fully virtual environments (Camilleri, 2021). Camilleri (2021) recommended that more research be done on the implementation and effectiveness of remote learning. To address this key recommendation, this study investigated two face-to-face learning activities that were converted to a fully online mode due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

CONCEPTUAL BACKGROUND

The rationale behind this study was informed by a conceptual framework based on previous research on role-plays, CSR communication, and how sustainability education should be taught and evaluated. The framework (Figure 1) is made up of three key sections: antecedents for learning (A), role-playing game or case-based learning (B) and the perceived learning of students from these learning activities (C). This framework not only assisted with the design of both role-play and case-based learning activities, but also informed the evaluation measures. An additional variable that was considered was the online learning environment that both activities had to adopt due to the Covid-19 pandemic (Camilleri, 2021; Cranfield et al., 2021). For this study, perceived learning measures were the key focus as opposed to actual learning for several reasons. Firstly, research has indicated that perceived learning measures can have an influence on the actual performance of the students. Secondly, the role-play and case study modules were still in development, thereby making it essential to analyze the perceptions of the students with both activities to better understand any inefficiencies with delivery of the learning activities in a full online mode. Finally, past research has emphasized that emotions can have a significant impact on the learning experience of students (Kamal et al., 2020), so this study analyzed the emotions to better understand how students could react to a classroom activity that was rapidly being converted to an online mode.

Figure 1. Conceptual model for studying the perception of online role-play vs. case-based learning for CSR communication



The research questions were as follows:

1. Were there differences in the perceived learning experience between role-play and case-based students with the online modules?
2. What were the reported challenges for students who participated in online role-play and case-based learning activities?

Description of Learning Activities

This study focused on using an experimental design to compare two active learning activities that were originally designed to be delivered face-to-face on the topic of CSR communication. One was a role-play modeled after the Nike Labour Scandal of the 1990s (Wang, 2022), and the other was case-based learning activities focused on analyzing the Nike Labour Scandal. Students in both activities received the same reading materials and resources, but were taught in a different way (role-play or case-based learning). To ensure that comparisons could be made between the two different learning activities, the role-play scenario only changed the name of company, and all other facts and information for the role-play were taken directly from academic research on the Nike Labour Scandal and were provided to both groups of students (Locke et al., 2007; Lucchini & Moisello, 2019).

In the role-play, students played the roles of different stakeholders at a fictitious multinational company called Adsport21. They were divided into different stakeholder roles such as Company Executives, PR / Communications Team, Company

supplier employees or Labour Activists (Wang, 2022). After students prepared for the role-play, they acted out their respective roles at a stakeholder meeting in the following week. As part of the meeting, they discussed their own stakeholder priorities and the key problems for Adsport21 from their perspective. After the stakeholder meeting, the students formed their own ‘mixed stakeholder’ teams in which they conceptualized and presented a new CSR communication plan to a panel of experienced work professionals in communication for development, PR, and sustainable business operations (Wang, 2022).

The other activity was case-based learning based on the Nike Labour Scandal. Students discussed the Nike Labour Scandal in teams and analyzed the key stakeholders and events that led to the Nike Labour Scandal. The students were required to review the key articles and resources before each class, and the instructor then led discussions on the Nike Labour Scandal. The topics of the case-based learning activities were structured the same as the role-play to ensure that the students learned similar topics each week and that an appropriate comparative analysis could be performed between the groups (Table 1). The case-based learning students were also able to present a CSR communication plan to the same panel of experienced work professionals as the role-play students.

Table 1. Outline of the learning activities for both role-play and case-based learning

CSR Role-play Module	CSR Case-Based Learning Module
Week 1 – Preparation for role-play (Review of the problems and priorities of each stakeholder)	Week 1 – Review of Key Stakeholders in the Nike Labour Scandal
Week 2 – Stakeholder meeting between the key stakeholders to discuss company problems	Week 2 – Review of the beginning of the crisis and Nike’s initial communication on the crisis
Week 3- Review what was learned about the crisis and formation of cross-stakeholder groups	Week 3- The end of the crisis and Nike’s communication at the end of the crisis
Week 4 – Review of communication strategies for CSR	Week 4- Review of communication strategies for CSR
Week 5- CSR Presentation to work professionals	Week 5- CSR presentation to work professionals

METHOD

Participants

The participants were third- and fourth-year students studying in a undergraduate media communication program at a Thai university. Most of the participants were Thai (more than 95%) and were studying in a second language, as it was an international English program. Main test 1 was conducted first with fourth-year students studying a media management course (n=71), while main test 2 was conducted with third-year students studying a corporate communication course (n=38).

Data Collection

The students were randomly assigned to the role-play or case-based learning group before the learning activities were conducted in main test 1 and main test 2 (Table 2). The study used weekly reflection questions posted on an open-ended online forum developed by the researchers with the informed consent of all participants. The study obtained institutional review board (IRB) approval from the university before the study was conducted. The forum asked open-ended questions to the students in which they described what they learned from the role-play or case-based learning module in each of the four or five-week periods.

Table 2. Number of Role-play vs. Case-Based Learning Participants

Test Description	Role-play Main Test 1	Role-play Main Test 2	Total Role-Play participants	Case-Based Learning Main Test 1	Case-Based Learning Main Test 2	Total Case-Based Learning participants
Sample Size (n)	36	20	56	35	18	53

Procedure

The study adopted a mixed-method approach for analyzing the learning experience of the students in both role-play and case-based learning groups. After the learning activities for each week, both groups of students were asked to write weekly

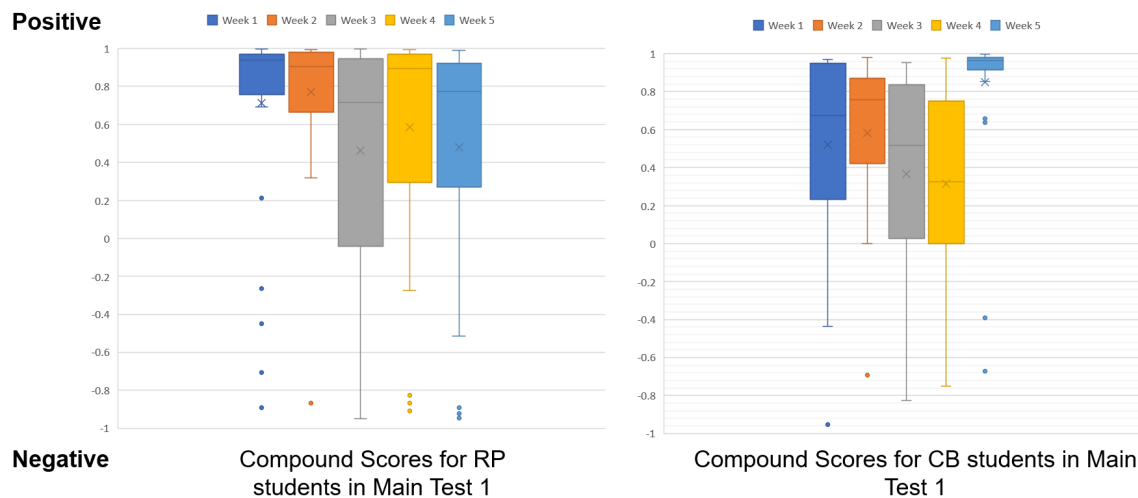
reflections about their experience each week. Students were encouraged not only to describe what they learned, but also to describe their feelings about the modules each week. Sentiment analysis and thematic coding was then used to analyze the reflection responses.

Sentiment analysis was first conducted on the weekly reflection responses written by the students in which they discussed their learning experiences from the multiweek modules. Sentiment analysis, or opinion mining, is a field of natural language processing (NLP) that analyzes people’s opinions and emotions expressed in text and computationally categorizes the text as positive, negative, or neutral (Bonta & Janardhan, 2019). Although there are several different applications for conducting sentiment analysis, this research utilized the VADER Sentiment Analysis tool. Research has reported that the Vader sentiment analysis was not only more accurate than human raters (Hutto & Gilbert, 2014), but also compared favorably in terms of accuracy to other sentiment analysis tools (Bonta & Janardhan, 2019). Written reflections were also analyzed using qualitative thematic coding to better understand the reasons behind the positive or negative sentiments expressed by the students. Thematic coding is the process of identifying passages of text linked by a common theme (Gibbs, 2007). It has also been used in previous studies to understand the key themes and challenges of Covid-19 and remote learning (Garbe et al., 2020).

RESULTS

The results for main test 1 and main test 2 will be reported, before the findings and insights from both test groups will be summarized at the end of the section.

Figure 3. Sentiment Analysis of Role-Play (RP) vs. Case-Based (CB) Learning Students in Main Test 1



Perception of Role-Play Students (Main Test 1)

For main test 1 (Figure 3), the role-play students in week 1 were initially very positive and excited to perform the role-play.

Although there was some confusion among some of the students, most of the students were excited to learn in this experiential learning format, even in an online mode.

“I was a little uncomfortable working with new friends. Also, I was a bit confused and misunderstood the task. However, the information for the second breakout really helps me to understand the task and to be able to see the picture of the crisis and the point of view of my given role. I feel like role play helps me understand more from the point of view of my role.”

“However, except just a little confusion I got, the role-plays started to be more enjoyable when the instructor stated that we will discuss and negotiate with others roles. with that statement, I feel more confident in what we supposed to do in the role play since at the beginning I still cannot grab the gist and the orders of the activities.”

“The role that I got is supplier employee. I am a group of people who got abused both physically and verbally. I felt excited and still confused with what to do in the next 4-5 weeks and waiting for the coming task to be completed. I hope that I can help my teammates and instructor to get the maximum advantages of being in this role.”

In week two, several students reported that they thought that doing this role-play in an online format might have been boring but were actually quite surprised at how engaging and realistic the role-play was despite it being conducted online.

“At first, I think that it must be getting boring. listening to other teams speak and ask another team would be nothing to do. But it seems like I overestimated it. The Q&A session, it quite interesting and fun since I have heard many interesting questions from different stakeholders. Also, the answer of some teams is really good and provides a new angle for thinking and discussing in the further meeting.”

“During the activity, it was fun, I really like it how we cooperate and understand the real situation that every person is different and we can know the problem and find the consensus.”

There were, however, several participants that were dissatisfied with the role-play because of the lack of participation of some of their team members. The online format of the stakeholder meeting also made it difficult for many of the teams to collaborate and share responses to other members before responding to inquiries from the other stakeholder groups.

“There are several problems with how some people in the group do not talk about their opinions. Overall it was a good week for learning something new but not good for team working.”

“Only [one classmate] help answering question out loud the other just hanging in the group chat giving some answered (but since I'm a fast thinker I answered it before they finished their opinion in the chat T-T) That is why I think it is a bit all on me and felt overwhelmed by it.”

“I have never heard [one student's] voice and opinion since the first week. I think he just logged-in to the meeting and disappeared.”

Although the students were generally very positive in the first two weeks of the role-play, the next few weeks in which they separated into cross-stakeholder teams to conceptualize a CSR communication plan were perceived less positively. Several students reported that some of their team members did not really “play” their roles realistically and did not really help the team create a CSR communication plan that addressed the priorities of all the stakeholder groups. This was a key problem for several of the groups, and did impact their perceptions of the learning.

“I said that there are both helpful and unhelpful teammates. Two of my teammates have helped me a lot since day 1. I'm really grateful for them, they gave lots of useful ideas and carefully discussed every little detail. While two of my teammates will only help after I assigned them to do something, otherwise they would stay still which really makes me angry.”

Another issue with the role-play in main test 1 was that despite the fact that all participants were told several times before each class that work professionals would be judging the quality of their CSR communication plans at week five, some of the students admitted that they thought it was just a “part of the role-play” and like the role-play, these working professionals would actually just be played by the instructor. When seeing the work professionals in week five judge their CSR presentations, several students became shocked and frustrated, leading them to have more negative feelings about their CSR communication presentations in week five.

“I think we did pretty well for ourselves. I was not aware that the board members would actually be attending the pitching. This really threw me off my game and made me even more nervous.”

“Although the instructor already said that there will be a CEO and board members, I thought [the instructor] just mentioned this so we would be more active. However, there were real people sitting there to judge our idea, so it made me a little bit stressed out.”

Perception of Case-Based Learning Students (Main Test 1)

For the case-based learning students in main test 1 (Figure 3), the students were actually much less positive about their initial experience with case-based learning. They reported that they were overwhelmed and anxious about the readings that they had to prepare to discuss each week and that the learning did not seem very fun.

“To speak frankly, I really don’t like reading through the case and study from it because I hate reading. Anyway, when the class comes, I can see that the lesson was really intense and needed the brain to process those stuffs that the professor was talking in order to catch up and not lose. The feeling of the first class of myself would be “hopelessness” since It was really fast and hard to catch up but I tried my best to pay attention and participate in the class.”

“For the first class, I felt worried and panic because the class went too fast. I was worried to answer all of the questions and send them on time. I hope that after I read all articles that are provided, I will understand more about the case and hope that this case will be beneficial for making further CSR campaign.”

However, the perceptions of the students improved as case-based learning progressed and they became more familiar with the learning format. The students were also very positive about a documentary film they had to review on the Nike Labour Scandal (Nike Sweatshops: Beyond the Swoosh). Positive reception to the provided video resource led to later changes for main test 2.

“the video clip we watched together is enjoyable. But after that I felt stressed when the reading materials came again.”

“The documentary is good yet heartbreaking. It gave me a clearer picture and understanding of the issue. However, the readings are quite a lot which is hard to digest all of the information. I much prefer the documentary to the readings.”

Similar to the role-play group in main test 1, several students noted teamwork problems. While some teams reported strong commitment from all of their members, several other teams reported that some of their members were not preparing before class each week, and did not seem to understand what they should have been doing in each class. This led to challenges and problems with the presentation of the CSR communication plan to the working professionals at the end of the activity.

“The work might have been more effective if they are on the same page by reading the material and study about the situation by themselves without others telling them. [One of my team members] showed me that she did not read the material well enough since she thought that Adsport21 was a small business. It was frustrating since the first session of grouping with representatives of each stakeholder. They did not mind their task and the willingness to produce the best group work.”

However, despite these challenges, case-based students were generally very positive about their experience with case-based learning. Several students reported that although this learning journey was difficult and challenging, they felt that they learned many useful things about CSR communication by discussing the case of the Nike Labour Scandal in more detail.

“I think the most enjoyable part of the case base is to planning a communication strategic plan. Because we are able to analyze, plan, create mockups and illustrate things out in our own versions.”

“The previous week had been quite stressful and anxious to complete all of the tasks in a timely and efficient manner, but pitching with an outsider on board made me feel like I had taken my experience to the next level and faced the simulated atmosphere that will be useful in the future. I think I feel happy right now.”

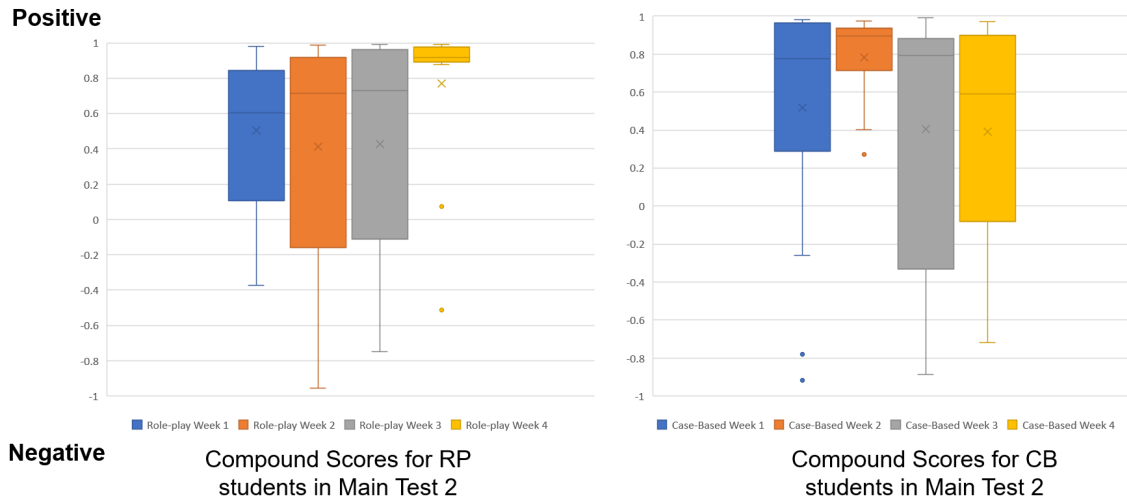
Key Changes to the Learning Activities for Main Test 2

After main test 1, several minor changes were made to both activities due to feedback from participants in the first test group. First, the reading materials and resources were consolidated to one key reading and one key video for each week, rather than several reading materials for each week. Students reported that reviewing the reading materials was overwhelming even when working in teams and there was some evidence that several students in both groups did not review the materials prior to their respective modules. Second, the instructions for both activities were made clearer and more concise to help the students better understand the activities they would be doing. Third, due to reported teamwork problems, teamwork feedback forms were provided in which students could write more detailed feedback on how each of their team members performed. Finally, the learning activities were reduced from five to four weeks, as it was determined that more concise directions and explanation meant that another week of learning was no longer necessary for either module. In essence, the same topics taught in main test 2 were also taught to the participants of main test 1, but some modules were combined so that the learning could be done over a shorter time period (for example, modules three and four from main test 1 were combined into module three for main test 2).

Perceptions of Role-Play Students (Main Test 2)

Even after these changes were made for main test 2, the sentiment analysis found that there was no significant change in the perceptions of the students and similar patterns emerged (Figure 4). For example, the role-play students started out quite positive about the role-play, though they were also quite anxious about participating in the role-play.

Figure 4. Sentiment Analysis of Role Play (RP) vs. Case-Based (CB) Learning Students in Main Test 2



“I am quite excited for my next class since I have to act and I get to see other people as well, but also scared if I misunderstood and did it wrong. I wish I could learn more of all roles like this as well since I feel like I understand a lot about this role.”

“I don't know if I can actually pretend to be in the worker's shoes and that would make the whole role play a little bit awkward. But we will see how it goes. Looking forward to next week!”

Unlike main test 1, there was more anxiety among some of the participants about how they performed in the role-play. However, several students reported that the experience was quite interesting overall.

“Although I got to learn many different kinds of aspect during the meeting and when we group up. I find myself (which surprised me) scared to ask question or to raise the topic because I don't know if I am right or wrong. I don't know if I ask the question and when people response back, I am scared that I won't be able to answer to them. I feel that this is really challenging because it is hard to find the solution since all of us have different perspective. I also feel scared that I couldn't do best on my part.”

“I found that during the role-play game I got really into the role that I was assigned too and it was really fun! I really enjoy getting challenged by questions that were being asked and also enjoying challenging others with my opinions too. When the claimed about child labour and prostitution were being raised in the meeting I went completely blank because I couldn't recall that issue from my brief and I was afraid that I might have missed something. I think it at that part, I felt like I got a bit lost and didn't know how to response to that.”

“At first, I'm not so sure if I did it right or not but the result turn out to be better than I expected. I got to hear more point of views from other stakeholder. So far, one thing that surprise me is I that I must do whatever it takes to protect the role I played and think carefully that it is the best for the team. I kinda enjoyed so far when I got to ask hard questions to other stakeholders.”

Unfortunately, some students did all the interaction during the stakeholder meeting for their team. On the teamwork feedback forms, several students highlighted this issue that while the preparation for the stakeholder meeting was fine, some were actually forced to do all the talking and interaction for their group while their team members sat passively in the background.

“I think we did alright together as a team in our private group chat. Everyone delivered what was needed to be done, showed contribution, and shared ideas. But the other 2 members in the group went completely quiet during the role-play game and showed no support. It was only me who did all the talking. At first we agreed that I'll be the one who present our roles to the other stakeholders and then we would all help each other out in the discussion part, but that was not the case at all.”

“Not all of my teammates helped much, some of them don't even answer when myself or this one other student asked or talked. When it came to presenting during the stakeholder meeting, only myself and another student showed up.”

Similar to main test 1, the role-play students also had problems with some participants not playing their stakeholder roles appropriately and helping the team conceptualize their CSR communication presentations. The issue became so problematic for one team that a student commented that it might be better for all participants to have to be ‘checked’ that they have a proper understanding of their stakeholder role before being allowed to become a member of one of the cross-stakeholder teams.

“I think this activity relies heavily on the investment of the student's role in the activity where I think that not everyone invests the same amount of thoughts and efforts in this role playing activity. This can surely affect the efficiency and quality of the ideas of those particular stakeholder groups to which those students belong to. The solution to this could easily be for other students and their stakeholder groups to help ensure and check that each individual stakeholder representative in each of the team consistently helping provide ideas and shares their opinions from their stakeholder group to make this activity more efficient.”

Perceptions of Case-Based Learning Students (Main Test 2)

The case-based learning group of main test 2 featured similar trends as main test 1 (Figure 4). In week one, many of the students were quite negative about the learning activity when introduced to the learning format.

“At first, I felt very frustrated because it was a bit hard and confusing for me to understand the subject matter because I was confused about some details taught in class like the stakeholder theory. Also, I didn't know much about the Nike business insight, but the professor was really helpful in guiding us to the answer to the question he was throwing in the class.

“For my first class, as it is a morning class, I feel confused and frustrated about the information. It encourages me to always pay attention in the class and try to engage as well but it's a good thing to make me understand more about it and awake to listen to the professor. Moreover, for the assignment, I still get confused and do not understand much. So my friend and I don't really know whether what we did is correct or not so it's kind of confusing for us.”

“The class was a bit confusing for me at first since I was so confused about the whole stakeholders' thing. The class was also stressful for me because I couldn't understand anything but then the group work was fun.”

As the activity progressed and the students discussed the Nike Labour Scandal in greater detail, they began to appreciate the case-based learning approach more. There were still students who struggled to engage with the material and admitted to becoming disengaged with the learning.

“Overall, I got to learn so many crucial things in doing a CSR campaign which is the thing that I like even though it's hard and challenging sometimes. I'm more than happy to learn in this case-based class.”

“Last week, I felt interested to know how Nike solved the problems and exchanged opinions and listened to others but sometimes it makes me a bit bored and sleepy.”

“Despite feeling sleepy during some parts of class, I tried to stay focused on the material. And for the Adsport21 project group, I have something that will help me understand CSR better.”

Similar to the role-play group however, the team-based learning approach led to some frustration for several of the participants, who reported that some of their team members were not helpful or active with participating in the case-based learning activities or in working on the CSR presentations.

“I feel like I'm the only one who contribute everything to the team. No one really paying attention in class, so when it comes to working as a group, I have to elaborate everything again and write down my own answers I learned in the

class. It always takes a lot of toll on me when it comes to group work. I have to manage all the things by myself. When I asked about their opinions, most of the time I'll get close to none useful ideas to use in our group work.”

“The group work approach is more individualistic than collaborative; rather than thinking collectively about each question's response, we just isolate each question for each member and then allow me or another active member of the group determine whether or not it meets our standard. This is a very typical approach to work, and while it is far from ideal for group work”

There was also an issue in which one of the case-based learning teams in main test 2 focused too much time explaining the problem and the rationale behind its CSR communication plan. Despite previous instructions to focus on presenting their communication plan, this team did not provide enough time to explain their plan and ran out of time when presenting to professionals in the field. Several team members reported that there were communication problems within the team, and one of the participants also reported that the collective inexperience of the groups may have led them to focus on the wrong aspects of the presentation despite the previous instructions. However, as with the other teams, they reported that they learned a lot from presenting their CSR communication plans to experienced professionals at work.

“I felt very satisfied with the outcome. I loved hearing from all the judges as all those comments have broadened my horizons and have addressed me to the things that I, sometimes, did not pay much attention to. All those comments and recommendations were very useful as I'm, surely, going to use them in the future when it comes to doing CSR campaigns as I found things like this to be very interesting and eye-opening for me.”

“The learning activities helped me to prepare for the presentation as I gained more knowledge and information from the assignments I did. I have been reading, brainstorming, and discussing CSR campaigns with my classmates. So, I can make use of this from the presentation to plan the CSR campaign and think thoroughly about the factors that included stakeholders as well. Moreover, know what will make good for the organization and its reputation.”

Sentiment analysis and thematic analysis of both test groups suggested that many students in both the role-play and case-based learning groups found the activities engaging, even online. However, qualitative data also indicated that the complexity of the case, along with the online format, made it difficult for some students to properly engage with either online module. The lack of work experience and the fact that the participants were learning both activities in their non-native language also led to quite a bit of confusion and uncertainty for the students in both activities. Additionally, the team-based learning format of both activities led to challenges with communication and collaboration among the participating students. The results of the teamwork scale provided further evidence that team-based learning was not optimal for several of the groups in both activities. However, the students in both modules felt that presenting their CSR communication plans to experts was an integral part of their learning experience.

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

The study was carried out on a limited sample of Thai university students, so the results of this study are not generalizable due to a limited sample and the cultural context. It is very possible that different students may have had different reactions to these online active learning activities. Furthermore, this study only focused on data that depicted the perceived learning of the students. Therefore, it is possible that the actual learning of the students could have been different than the perceived learning outcomes of the students (Anderson & Lawton, 2009). As the learning activities are still in development, the focus on the perceived learning of the students did provide insights on some challenges with converting two modules to a fully online mode. Therefore, despite the limitations, the study offers some interesting insights into the impacts of two active learning activities that had to be quickly converted to an online format due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

CONCLUSION

The study revealed several challenges in converting classroom role-plays and case-based learning activities into an online format. It should be noted that because these activities were both very team-oriented, the commitment and dedication of individual participants had a significant impact on the perceived learning outcomes of the students. Students who worked with other participants who were deeply committed to participating in these activities reported better perceptions of learning outcomes than those students who struggled to work with disengaged participants. In these types of team-based learning activities, the commitment of the participants is just as important as the technology used to connect them online. Educators must be aware of how teams work together in these activities and may need to consider other more individual-based learning activities (e.g., computer simulations) if team-based learning is not ideal. The study encourages further research on how students should be trained to work in teams before team-based learning activities are conducted. Overall, the study indicates

that shifting classroom activities to a fully online format is possible, but several other factors such as student engagement and the complexity of the activity should be considered when such activities are transitioned to an online format.

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