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2022, Vol. 6, No. 1, 267-280 ISSN 2587-0130

"I did it my way": Learning autonomy and online self-access skills of students in reading classes in pandemic era in Peru context

[1] Mitchell Alberto Alarcón Diaz, [2]Doris Fuster-Guillén, [3]Jacinto Joaquin Vertiz-Osores, [4]Jeenny Sánchez Huamán, [5]Jessica Paola Palacios Garay, [6]Rosa Huaraca Aparco, [7]*Joel Alanya-Beltran*, [8]*Jeidy Panduro-Ramirez*, [9]Korakod Tongkachok, [10]C. Mashraky Mustakary

[1]Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, Perú, https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0027-5701, malarcond@unmsm.edu.pe,

[2]bUniversidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, Lima, Perú, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7889-2243, dorisfusterguillen@gmail.com

[3c]Universidad Nacional Tecnológica de Lima Sur, Lima, Perú, https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2774-1207, jvertiz@untels.edu.pe

[4]Universidad de Ciencias y Humanidades, Lima, Perú, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4517-6873, jrsanchez@uch.edu.pe

[5]Universidad Norbert Wiener, Lima, Perú, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2315-1683, jessica.palacios@uwiener.edu.pe

[6]Universidad Nacional José María Arguedas, rhuaraca@unajma.edu.pe, orcid.org/ 0000-0003-4493-7754

[7]Universidad Tecnológica del Perú, Peru c18121@utp.edu.pe https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8058-6229

[8]Universidad Tecnológica del Perú, C21289@utp.edu.pe, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9512-4329

[9]Faculty of Law, Thaksin University,Thailand Email id: tokorakod@tsu.ac.th, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2381-9161

[10]Department of Education, Sophia University, Japan, Lecturer, Department of Public Administration, Begum Rokeya University, Rangpur, Bangladesh, mitu.shona@gmail.com, ORCID id: 0000-0002-5700-725X

Abstract

In order for students to succeed, especially in times of crisis like the Covid 19 Pandemic, they must be trained to be self-sufficient in their language studies. This research investigates using a self-access language learning strategy in an emergency virtual reading class during the covid 19 pandemics to improve language learners' Autonomy. It employed a descriptive correlational research design. The study involved 89 randomly selected language students in one University of Peru. Results of the study showed that the students can utilize internet as their learning resource using devices they have. This shows that all of the students have devices to be used for their online and blended language learning. It is interesting to note the all the sampled students have access to internet for their online language learning. Hence the students have a motivated level of learning Autonomy in reading classes. As to the assessment of internet self-access reading skills of the students. This shows that the students have a favourable attitude towards using the internet in their reading lessons. It shows that the students have a fair level of technology acceptance and utilization for their language learning. Self-Access Skills in Reading was shown to be closely linked to Students' Learning Autonomy. This suggests that the relevant factors in the research have a positive correlation. This means that the students are more likely to adopt online self-access reading skills if they have a good attitude about learning Autonomy. This result shed light on the gap in

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addressing students' online language learning engagement in the COVID 19 era, particularly in the context of Peru.

Keywords: *Language Learning, Reading, Pandemic Era, Autonomy, Online Learning, Self-Access Skill*

1. Introduction

A key objective of foreign language training is to assist pupils in developing the ability to learn independently. A good learning atmosphere is essential for kids to become more self-reliant and responsible for their education. For language learners, it's crucial to know that their learning techniques may help them succeed in the classroom. Two of the most fundamental concepts in learning are Autonomy and responsibility, and both need active engagement (Godwin-Jones, 2019, Murray & Lamb, 2018).

For college students, the Covid 19 pandemic mandates the utilization of online learning. Covid 19 will no longer be allowed to spread in schools after March 2020, when virtual education will become obligatory. In addition, this affects how kids process information. A distinct set of competencies is necessary to read online than to read in a conventional situation. Because of the diverse layouts and text typefaces, reading transformation is inevitable. The use of hyperlinks further complicates online reading (Yasmin & Sohail, 2018, Kacetl & Klímová, 2019).

Reading offline is more convenient than reading on the internet. Some pupils may be able to adapt to this situation, while others may struggle. Since students need to learn on their own, teachers must encourage initiative and responsibility among them. Self-access learning may be used in reading lessons to encourage students to take control of their own learning (Tassinari & Ramos, 2020). Learner autonomy in the emergency virtual reading class is supported by self-access learning and the extent to which learners are granted learning autonomy. Autonomous learners are becoming increasingly commonplace (Navarro Cira & Carrillo Lopez, 2020). Confidence, desire, the ability to assume and accept responsibility, and take the initiative are all critical for the job.

Additionally, it includes academic, intellectual, personal, and interpersonal skills. An autonomous learner can set their own learning goals, methods of learning, and assessment and use of learning. Some requirements must be completed to obtain Autonomy. Voluntary, students may choose the activities they want to work on and their speed and place; the instructor can be flexible in putting up an encouraging atmosphere; and students can rely on their peers for assistance (Ghazali, 2020). Autonomous learners have complete control over their own learning, including the capacity to pick their learning activities, speed, location, and other factors that may impact how well they can learn (Zambaldi et al., 2019). Learner responsibility may be fostered in a supportive learning environment that incorporates the teacher as a facilitator and peers for support (Magulod 2017a, 2017b, Magulod 2018a, 2018b, 2018c, Magulod, 2019, Magulod, Capili & Pinon, 2019).

Cambridge dictionaries define "self-access" as an approach to learning in which students use books, videos, etc., on their own to study. Kids are encouraged to develop a strong feeling of self-worth and self-confidence via this learning technique. The teacher serves as a facilitator, guiding, encouraging, and reinforcing the pupils in their learning process. In self-access learning, students may study independently and work in groups to improve their intellectual, personal, and interpersonal skills. Students must take responsibility for their education. Learning environments that are favourable to remote education should be created by the teacher. Learning on one's own is one kind of assistance. Student autonomy and responsibility

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are emphasized because of this curriculum. A few results from this research might assist language facilitators in continuing to help students become more self-aware.

Looking at the context of the study in the Peru context, there are limited studies conducted that relate to the Learning Autonomy and Online Self-Access Skills of Students in Reading Classes in Pandemic Era. Studies in the Peru context are limited and need further exploration of students' language learning autonomy and online self-access skills (Alcalde Murgueittio, 2019). Hence this study was conducted as it aims to address this research gap. This study will help and guide language teachers and curriculum experts to craft and develop language learning activities that will aid Indonesian learners to become global and communicative competence.

2. Research Objectives

This study generally aims to assess the Learning Autonomy and Online Self-Access Skills of Students in Reading Classes in the Pandemic Era. This study may be a reference for future research on effective ways of teaching English as a foreign language. It specifically aims to answer the following objectives: (1) assess the Level of learning Autonomy of students in reading classes, (2) ascertain the Level of students' self-access skills, (3) analyse the difference in the Level of students' learning autonomy and self-access skills when grouped according to their profile variables, and (3) test the relationship between students' Level of self-access skills and learning autonomy.

3. Method

3.1. Research Design and Respondents

The study employed a qualitative research design. The use of self-access learning in a virtual reading lesson fosters student autonomy, according to this qualitative investigation. Google Classroom, Google Meet, and WhatsApp were used to conduct the class online throughout the semester. Online surveys were provided to 80 students in the Academic Reading 3 class, which took place in semester 3. When students were in the third week of the semester, a survey was administered to determine how they planned to study. Students should be familiar with the e-book material during the first and second weeks, and all students should have completed the add/drop period before the first survey is administered in the third week. For the selection of the respondents, since no studies have been conducted on these students on their perceptions regarding the students' self-access skills in reading, it allowed them to become the most appropriate respondents of the study. This justifies that when one is interested in looking at the effectiveness of an educational intervention, subjects must have a similar level of character and competence to avoid bias in the study.

Ethical Protocols

For the study's ethical procedure, informed consent was employed and two days of online orientation on the study's risks and benefits were performed through Zoom conference. " In the same way, the research was carried out only after adequate coordination and the relevant authorization had been obtained. Those under 18 years old were asked to have their parents sign the parental permission form so that their children may participate in the research. Finally, preparations were made with the school and instructors to ensure that the other classes would not be disrupted. The researcher performed a debriefing procedure using Google meet at the conclusion of data collection. Participants were made aware that their identities and replies would be kept private and Data Privacy Consent were requested in order to conduct the research as completely as feasible. Wherein the article, no names were given save to say that they are students. Only facts and conclusions based on the obtained data will be presented in order to prevent plagiarism, this hypothesis has passed the plagiarism check

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of Turnitin with a similarity value of less than 20%.

3.2. Instrumentation

The study used two sets of tools for the students. The first instrument was the tool to assess students' Level of learning Autonomy in reading classes was adopted from Gamble et al, (2012). It assessed responsibility as an essential aspect of learning autonomy. The tool was initially designed and developed by Ustunluoglu (2009), a Turkish researcher investigating the students' responsibilities and abilities relating to autonomous learning. The instrument consisted of 20 questions broken down into ten items on students' perceptions of responsibility-based o motivational level and students' perceptions of their ability based on motivation level. It has a scale of 1 as the lowest and four as the highest. The instrument was translated into Spanish and was validated by three Spanish-English language teachers. As a rule, to ensure compressibility, it was pilot tested on a group of students in the university and was improved based on the suggested points for enhancement. The tool has a reliability score of 0.89. As to the credibility on the relevance to its reading context, it was modified accordingly by the researchers to suit its applicability to the respondents. In like manner, the second tool was the internet self-access skill tool where the items were adopted from One of the most often used Internet self-efficacy scales is the Internet Self-Efficacy Scale (ISES) established by Tsai and Tsai in 2003 and Wu and Tsais in 2006, which modified the 5-point Likert-type scale by adding 10 items (very unconfident). General Internet self-efficacy (GISE) measures a person's confidence in their ability to use the Internet's fundamental functions.

3.3. Data Gathering Protocol

Researchers utilized a survey questionnaire to gather data for their investigation. Before it was disseminated, the questionnaire was reviewed and validated by a group of experts, including the dean, expert consultants, adviser, and the university statistician. The researcher contacted the Registrar's Office to gather more about the study's participants as part of the sample selection procedure. For this study, the researchers used purposeful sampling. After then, individuals who had taken part in the sampling procedure received questionnaires from the researcher. Zoom Meeting was utilized to convey the study's purpose and context to the participants when they were assembled. After that, data was collected through Google Forms, with respondents filling out the survey there. A Data Privacy Consent form notified respondents that their answers were private and confidential. Data was analysed after the results were tallied.

Data Analysis

The following statistical methods were used in the data analysis. The responder demographic profile was described with the use of a percent distribution. Calculating the results, which looked at the effectiveness of CALL and Facebook in improving students' writing skills, included using a variety of techniques and a grading system. The following Likert Scale was used to assess the following variables: There are four levels of use: highly acceptable to not acceptable with 5 as the highest and 1 as the lowest. Using statistical software SPSS 23 version at an alpha level of 0.05, all of the study's data was further analyzed to assess its results. Spearman Rho was used to test the relationship among the variables.

4. Results and Discussion

Students' Access Devices and Internet Account Ownership

Table 1 presents the Students' Account and Access Devices Ownership. All of the respondents have cell phones (100%), followed by those who have laptops (75%), with tablet (65%), with desktop computers (34%), and those students who have all the devices (40%).

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With regards to the students' internet account ownership. This shows that the students can utilize internet as their learning resource using devices they have. This shows that all of the students have devices for their online and blended language learning.

Table 1. Students' Access Devices

Access Device Ownership	Frequency (n=89)	Percentage
Cell phone	89	100
Laptop	67	75
Tablet	58	65
Desktop Computer	30	34
All have the devices	40	45

Table 2 also showcases the students' account ownership. All of the students have Facebook (100%), have google meet app (100%), and have zoom app (100%), while only 88 percent of them have WhatsApp, and a 75% of them have twitter. This shows that the Peru students have favorable internet account ownership. It is interesting to note the all the sampled students have access to internet for their online language learning.

Table 2. Student Account Ownership

Student Account Ownership	Frequency (n=89)	Percentage
Facebook	89	100
WhatsApp	78	88
Twitter	67	75
Google Meet	89	100
Zoom	89	100

Students Level of learning autonomy in reading classes

As shown in Table 3 is the assessed Students Level of learning Autonomy in reading classes. Two important learning autonomy have been assessed in the present study namely, the students' perceptions of responsibility and their ability. A computed grand mean of 3.17 has been computed in the study showing that the students have a motivated level of learning Autonomy in reading classes. As to the domain of student's perceptions of their responsibility, the computed mean of 3.23 (SD= 0.23) showed they are motivated. Most students, regardless of motivational levels, assumed that studying outside of the classroom was their responsibility. A majority of Highly Motivated students believe that both students and teachers have a role to play in achieving progress in English classes. A larger number of the participants also said that they and their professors are responsible for promoting interest, discovering weaknesses, and setting class goals. According to the findings, a bigger number of respondents believe that teachers should be responsible for choosing what students should study. According to the majority of respondents, instructors are also responsible for choosing activities, determining how long to spend on activities, selecting resources, and assessing student learning. In like manner, on the domain of students' perceptions of their ability, the computed mean of 3.11 (SD=0.43) showed that the students have positive behaviour. This means that the students perceived themselves to have a

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favourable and motivating attitude learning autonomy in reading class. This indicates that students can perform autonomous-related tasks in reading classes.

Table 3. Students Level of learning autonomy in reading classes

Dimensions	**Mean (n=89)**	**SD**	**Interpretation**
Students' Perceptions of Responsibility on Reading According to Motivational Level	3.23	0.23	Motivated
Students' Perceptions of their Ability According to Motivational Level	3.11	0.43	Motivated
Grand Mean	3.17		Motivated

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Highly Motivated; 2.50 – 3.49 =Motivated; 1.50 – 2.49 = Unmotivated; 1.00 – 1.49 = Not at all

Consider whether or not students are willing to accept responsibility for their own education. According to Sun and Gao (2020) findings, students say they are highly motivated, yet they do not actively look for extracurricular activities in which they may join. Fazey and Fazey (2001) underline the importance of motivation in which students accept more responsibility if they think they have a larger control over the outcomes. However, this belief seems to be at odds with these results. If the students are motivated internally or externally, this result might be affected. Additional research is needed to determine whether the students in our study were motivated by intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. Students should be encouraged to be self-motivated, according to the conclusions of this study. According to Liu, Tai and Liu (2018), students driven to study are more likely to accept more responsibility for their educational outcomes. A number of another research supports this. According to Scharle and Szabo, incentives and responsibilities may operate together in the workplace. Instructors should encourage students to make important academic choices by allowing them to do so (Xu, 2020, Hsu et al, 2019, Ullman & Lovelett, 2018). Giving students choices helps them feel more in charge of their education and gives them a feeling of ownership over it. As a consequence of this, people get greater self-confidence because they develop a sense of responsibility and self-motivation.

In addition, the attitudes of both students and teachers towards their different roles are fascinating. According to the findings, students of all motivation levels were able to exhibit some understanding of Autonomy. In contrast, the finding that each student displayed some degree of Autonomy contradicts previous research on students from East Asia. self-direction and self-directed learning are essential concepts for language learning (Amiryousefi, 2019, Wong et al, 2019). Rather than saying that our children are incapable of learning independently, we should say that evidence indicates they can, under specific constraints. According to them, Japan's language-learning standards and purposes have created an environment that inhibits learners from taking control of their own learning process. In this study, students can accept responsibility for their own learning, but they give up most of the duty to the professors. As a result, educators must work to raise students' awareness of the need of becoming active participants in their own education. Researches show that both Autonomy and responsibility require active involvement (Henry & Thorsen, 2018, Zheng et al, 2018, Vanslambrouck et al, 2019). Therefore, in order for learners to develop a sense of responsibility, they need encouragement from teachers to realize that

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success in learning is the responsibility of both the teacher and the student.

In many cases, students lack confidence in their ability to carry out the most important jobs, such as ensuring that they are studying outside the classroom, defining objectives, and choosing activities for future courses. This has led them to doubt their ability to perform at their best under pressure. Students' ability to take charge of their education is critical (Lin, et al, 2018, Lowie & Verspoor, 2019, Alkış & Temizel, 2018). For this reason, they emphasized, intrinsically motivated learners are more inclined to assume responsibility for the outcome of learning. Unmotivated students need teachers to assist them in developing their abilities, which are essential for them to accept more responsibility for their education. For this reason, metacognitive strategies are the most important for these students.

Assessment on the Level of students' self-access reading skills

Table 4 presents the assessment of students on their Level of self-access language reading skill. The general computed score of 3.205 showed the students are confident on their online self-access skills in reading. This shows that the students have favourable attitude towards the use of internet in their reading lessons. As to internet efficacy, the students manifested a confident level with the computed mean of 3.23 (SD=0.43), on the other hand on the use of internet to access reading materials, the computed mean of 3.18 also showed that the students are confident. These results show that the students have a favourable level of technology acceptance and utilization for their language learning. Motivation and interest in using the internet for learning are influenced by students' attitudes and self-efficacy about the internet (Amin & Sundari, 2020, Qian, et al, 2018, Liu, et al, 2018). Students' attitudes and self-efficacy are also examined in the study, which makes use of the factors. This study indicated that students' online self-efficacy and positive image of the internet were high and positive. Student perceptions of the internet as a reading comprehension learning aid are positive, according to the findings.

Table 4. Assessment on the Level of students' online self-access skills

Dimensions	**Mean (n=89)**	**SD**	**Interpretation**
Internet Efficacy	3.23	0.43	Confident
Use of Internet in Language Learning	3.18	0.34	Confident
Grand Mean	3.205		Confident

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 = Highly Confident; 2.50 – 3.49 =Confident; 1.50 – 2.49 = Not confident; 1.00 – 1.49 = Not at all

Students' online self-efficacy and favourable image of the internet were found to be high and positive in this research. According to a prior study, learners had favourable attitudes and appropriate self-efficacy when using the internet (Haukås, 2018, Jackson, 2018, Zainuddin & Perera, 2019). Even though students have shown a favourable attitude, technical assistance and training are still required to facilitate students' use (Isabelli-García, et al, 2018, Kieu & Liu, 2018) Symonenko, et al, 2020). Students' computer literacy and self-efficacy are both shown to be influenced by their Level of ICT self-efficacy. In many parts of the world, self-access learning is a significant part of language training. Unregulated and/or regulated learning environments may range from self-access centers to opportunities for genuine language use outside of institutional supervision. The practical implementation of self-access learning may help students become self-reliant thinkers and lifelong learners (Reinders, 2007, Sheerin, 2014, Murray, et al, 2011). Researchers have shown that allowing students to make their own judgments rather than depending on professors

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has been more advantageous in the long run (Gimeno-Sanz. 2021). Students in the self-access mode are responsible for making key decisions concerning the assignment's Level, speed, and content. Since the students are encouraged to accept more responsibility for their own education, they are given more freedom. Several research studies have highlighted the necessity of considering individual differences (Jeyarani, 2021, Albayrak & Şener, 202).

Test of Relationship Between Students Learning Autonomy and Self-Access Skills in Reading

Table 5 indicates the correlation between students' learning autonomy and the ability to use self-access skills in reading. The Spearman rho-values derived from this review demonstrate a substantial connection between the variables investigated at an alpha level of 0.05. In this case, it seems like there is a relationship between the two objects. Self-Access Skills in Reading were shown to be closely linked to Students' Learning Autonomy. This suggests that the relevant factors in the research have a positive correlation. Students are more likely to adopt online self-access reading skills if they have a good attitude about learning Autonomy. Students' online language learning involvement in COVID 19 was not adequately addressed by this study's findings. Since this is the case, instructors need to examine their online language teaching methods.

Table 5. Test of Relationship Between Students Learning Autonomy and Self-Access Skills in Reading

		Spearman rho-value	**p-value**
Students Learning autonomy	Self-Access Skills	0.345*	0.002 **

*Interpretation= ns – not significant, * significant at 0.05 level of alpha test*

Learning strategies for second and foreign languages (L2) have been a significant emphasis on the field of English language education for quite a while now. LLS and related topics like self-regulation and Autonomy may still be helpful to the second language student and instructor.... Although self-directed learning is a vital area of knowledge, research, and practice related to language learning processes, self-regulation, and Autonomy, it has received little attention in our field. Students who are already self-directed in their education may be able to improve their learning stages if they are aware of self-directed learning (SDL). SDL may be taught, but only if students can conceive it. Some students may see SDL as a personal feature rather than an educational process due of their academic or cultural background. SDL is a unique characteristic that one may have (Lee & Mori, 2021, Wittmann & Olivier, 2021, Deraman, et al, 2021, Kankaew et al, 2021, Charernnit et al, 2021, Khamindullina et al, 2021, Nuncio et al, 2020, De Souza, et al, 2021, Arcinas et al, 2021, Veluri, et al, 2021). There is a strong correlation between the ability to use SDL skills and student performance in academic institutions that emphasize learner autonomy. Students' self-confidence grows as they take on greater responsibility for their own education. At the start of class, the learning objectives for each unit were broken down into more precise ones. Throughout the duration of the study, the students had excellent self-control and management skills. To ensure that students were progressing toward their objectives and acquiring the necessary reading skills, each class included an assessment of their progress in these areas. For further practice, they read internet articles. For the sake of their academic

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success, the students made an effort to keep on top of their studies, prioritize studying, pay attention in class, take initiative, prevent procrastination, maintain a healthy lifestyle, and use their social networks for help with their academics. Students utilized a number of techniques to ensure that they understood the lessons and put their reading abilities to work in the real world. Students are self-sufficient because they are confident, determined, responsible and proactive, according to the data. Students' self-esteem and social abilities are bolstered in addition to their academic achievements. In the wake of the Covid19 epidemic, all educational activities must be conducted using computers. Self-access language learning empowers students to take contrtake the initiative in education. Student self-reliance grows. A wide range of internet resources and a network of students can assist pupils find ways to enhance their reading and academic performance even when the instructor is absent. If the self-access language learning method can be used in other courses, more investigation is needed.

5. Conclusions

This study generally aims to assess the Learning Autonomy and Online Self-Access Skills of Students in Reading Classes in Pandemic Era. This study may be used as a reference for future research on effective ways of teaching English as a foreign language. It employed a descriptive correlational research design. The study involved 89 randomly selected language students in one University of Peru. Results of the study showed that the students can utilize internet as their learning resource using devices they have. This shows that all of the students have devices to be used for their online and blended language learning. It is interesting to note the all the sampled students have access to internet for their online language learning. The students have a motivated level of learning Autonomy in reading classes while the students showed that the students are manifesting a motivated behaviour. This means that the students perceived themselves to have a favourable and motivating attitude with regards to their learning autonomy in reading class. This manifests the majority of the students can perform autonomous-related tasks in reading classes. As to the assessment of internet self-access reading skills of the students. This shows that the students have a favourable attitude towards the use of the internet in their reading lessons. It shows that the students have a favourable level of technology acceptance and utilization for their language learning. Self-Access Skills in Reading were shown to be closely linked to Students' Learning Autonomy. This suggests that the relevant factors in the research have a positive correlation. Students are more likely to adopt online self-access reading skills if they have a good attitude about learning Autonomy. This result shed light on the gap in addressing students' online language learning engagement in COVID 19 era.

Recommendations and Implications

According to the findings of this study, EFL students' learning autonomy is positively correlated with their self-access online learning. Many practical and educational applications may be extracted from the study. Students who are studying English as a second language (EFL) utilize Facebook as a learning tool. English language teachers should be trained to use mobile learning in the classroom as part of the College's faculty development plan. Teachers will need to be trained in technology integration in language learning. Students will benefit more from technology integrated learning if the university's online learning environment is improved.

6. Limitations and Future Directions

The findings of this research need to be confirmed, qualitative data added, and future experiments conducted to try to impact the aspects of student autonomy via teaching are

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still required. In the present data set, there are 89 participants, but the goal is to have 1000 participants, which will make the findings more accurate. Researchers anticipate that additional researchers will replicate the questionnaire and study in a comparable South American educational setting. Qualitative data from interviews are needed to understand better the students' motivations for their opinions in this research, which has yielded a lot of quantitative data. In addition, the study's goal is to uncover strategies to help people develop their sense of self-determination. Based on the facts above, instructors need to do classroom action research to understand how to improve the learning environment. As a starting point for additional research and confirmation of this work, there are significant limitations. To be clear, this study relied heavily on self-reports from students at a single Asian university campus for the bulk of its data, which is a severe shortcoming. More institutions and research samples are needed to produce more conclusive findings and keep the education going on. Gender and age are personal determinants, but the research included more fair, individual, and school-related elements. Future research should use hybrid and quasi-experimental study designs in addition to standard methodologies.

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Bionote of Authors

1. **Mitchell Alberto Alarcón Diaz** is a Doctor in Education, Master in University Teaching and Bachelor in Education. Complementary studies in the areas of basic education and higher education. Experience in advising quantitative and qualitative research. https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0027-5701, malarcond@unmsm.edu.pe,
2. **Doris Fuster-Guillén** is a professor of Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, Lima, Perú. A Doctor in Educational Sciences. Master in Educational Sciences with mention in University Teaching. RENACYT Researcher. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7889-2243, dorisfusterguillen@gmail.com
3. **Jacinto Joaquin Vertiz-Osores** is a professor of Universidad Nacional Tecnológica de Lima Sur, Lima, Perú. He holds Master's degree in Microbiology from Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia. Master in Environmental Management, PhD in Environmental Sciences and Renewable Energies. University professor. https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2774-1207, jvertiz@untels.edu.pe
4. **Jeenny Sánchez Huamán** is a professor of Universidad de Ciencias y Humanidades, Lima, Perú. She is a Doctor candidate in Public Management and Governance, candidate for Master of Education in Educational Management and Innovation. Master in Educational Psychology. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4517-6873, jrsanchez@uch.edu.pe
5. **Jessica Paola Palacios Garay** is a professor of Universidad Norbert Wiener, Lima, Perú. She holds Doctor in Education from Universidad Nacional Federico Villarreal, with a second major in university didactics from Universidad Ricardo Palma, doctorate studies in administration from Universidad de Celaya México. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2315-1683, jessica.palacios@uwiener.edu.pe
6. **Rosa Huaraca Aparco is a Professor** Universidad Nacional José María Arguedas, Peru
7. **Joel Alanya-Beltran a professor of the** Universidad Tecnológica del Perú,
8. **Jeidy Panduro-Ramirez is a faculty of** Universidad Tecnológica del Perú,
9. **Korakod Tongkachok a** Faculty of Law of Thaksin University,Thailand
10. **C. Mashraky Mustakary is a PhD candidate of the** Department of Education, Sophia University,Japan And a Lecturer,Department of Public Administration,Begum Rokeya University,Rangpur,Banglades

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