

## How Students' Social Emotional Skills Students were Developed through Innovative Emergency Remote Teaching of Performance-Based Courses during the Pandemic: Qualitative Study Using Participatory and Appreciative Action and Reflection Approach

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### ABSTRACT

*While the Covid-19 pandemic has mostly negative impacts causing millions of deaths and disrupted global economy, it nevertheless has some positive impacts particularly in higher education which shifted to emergency remote teaching [ERT]. Using Participatory and Appreciative Action and Reflection [PAAR] approach, this qualitative study explored strategies innovated by performance-based teachers for abrupt shift from face-to-face [FTF] to virtual ERT during the pandemic, how these innovative ERT strategies developed students' social emotional skills [SELS], and what new insights they generated. Data were gathered through one-on-one interviews from five faculty members teaching Music and Physical Education [PE], both performance-based not easy to teach online. The interview data were transcribed, analyzed thematically, and triangulated with class observations, videos, and students' reflections. Also, the perspectives of the teachers were triangulated with interviews from five Music and PE students. Results show that students developed creativity and resourcefulness, persistence, and engaging with others. The participants reflected that educators need not panic even in most adverse situations like the unexpected pandemic as they themselves have become more creative and resourceful to quickly shift to ERT and respond to students' needs and more flexible to cater to students in different time zones with various challenges.*

**Keywords:** Emergency remote teaching, participatory and appreciative action and reflection, sense of community, Music and PE teaching during pandemic

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused deaths of 6,469,458 as of August 31, 2022 (WHO, 2022) and led to the century's largest global economic crisis impacting all sectors (World Bank, 2022) including education in which over 1.5 billion students especially the most vulnerable learners have been affected (UNESCO, 2022). However, the education sector would have been more affected if school administrators and teachers did not immediately resort to emergency remote teaching [ERT]. Indeed, the global crisis hastened paradigm shift in the worldwide educational system. Teachers and students in all levels must adopt to ERT as the new normal. Hodges et al. (2020) describes ERT as:

*"In contrast to experiences that are planned from the beginning and designed to be online, emergency remote teaching is a temporary shift of instructional delivery to an alternate delivery mode due to crisis circumstances" (para. 14).*

The same authors further explain that ERT, whose primary goal is to provide quick and available access to education, utilizes entire remote teaching solutions whether blended or hybrid formats when face-to-face education is not possible yet will return to the previous modality when the emergency is over. Higher educational institutions [HEIs] worldwide had to abruptly adapt to ERT during the pandemic and have faced various challenges in their implementations such as quick decisions on appropriate technologies (Hodges et al., 2021), innovating digitally mediated pedagogies (Hodges et al., 2021; Marinoni et al., 2020), training faculty in the adaptations (Al-Azawi, 2021; Trust & Whalen, 2020; Green, 2020); and various pedagogical and technological issues (Bao, 2020; Bao, Bates, 2020; Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020; Ferri et al., 2020; McDaniel et al., 2020; Tabudlong, 2020). Ferri et al.'s study (2020) on ERT reported several specific technological, pedagogical, and social challenges in their thematic analysis of an online discussion forum with international experts and an Italian case study.

They found that technological challenges mostly pertained to Internet connections' unreliability and learners' lack of necessary electronic devices. Their study also revealed pedagogical issues relating to teachers' and learners' digital skills deficiencies, unstructured content, lacking online resources, lacking interaction and motivation of students, and teachers' insufficient social and cognitive presence.

Despite the many challenges faced by HEIs in the abrupt transformation in the educational system during the pandemic, there seems to be spinoffs or the incidental results of employing innovative virtual teaching pedagogies in ERT discovered by both faculty and students that may be carried over even after the crisis or there are serendipitous benefits in implementing ERT. Current literature on ERT focuses on how ERT has been implemented during the Covid-19 pandemic (e.g., Al-Azawi, 2021; Hodges et al., 2021; Mohammed et al., 2020; Tabudlong, 2020; Trust & Whalen, 2020). However, this qualitative study using participatory and appreciative action and reflection approach focuses on the development of social emotional skills [SES] among students by faculty's innovative pedagogies during ERT.

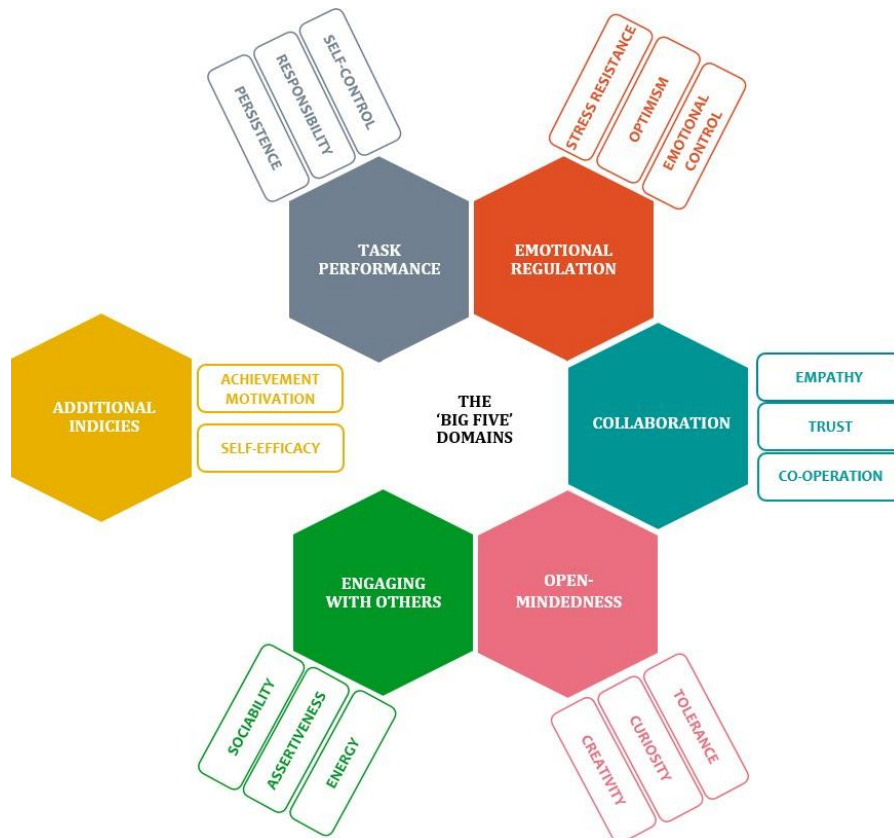
Whether it be online, blended, or face-to-face modalities, the development of learners' social emotional skills is deemed important. Preparing students with academic or technical skills alone will not be enough for them when they will be immersed in the real world (Schleicher, 2020). Even during this pandemic which still seems to uncertainly prolong and HEIs operate via ERT, SES development must be considered a priority as it is the HEIs' responsibility to produce graduates who can function well even in the most challenging situations in the society.

Chernyshenko et al. (2018) emphasized the importance of the development of social emotional skills as these influence individuals' adaptation in their environment and success in life. These OECD authors posited that:

*The development of social and emotional skills is important not only for the well-being of individuals, but also for wider communities and societies as a whole. The ability of citizens to adapt, be resourceful, respect and work well with others, and to take personal and collective responsibility is increasingly becoming the hallmark of a well-functioning society.*  
(p. 9)

Previous research on social emotional skills and social emotional learning [SEL] dealt with the importance of socio-emotional skills as well as evaluations of its incorporation within the normal classroom setting but this study is different since it deals on the development of socio-emotional skills within virtual classroom settings and/or emergency remote teaching specifically within the ASEAN context on performance-based skills which have not been easy to handle by teachers given the abrupt changes in the teaching modality and technological constraints. This paper is anchored on OECD's well-known big five model, also called the five-factor model, from the Study on Social and Emotional Skills [SSES] conducted in 2015 (OECD, 2018) with a strong empirical

foundation and is applicable in various cultural settings. As shown in Figure 1, OECD's framework of the big five domains includes task performance, emotional regulation, collaboration, open-mindedness, and engaging with others; each of these five domains has sub-domains such as self-control, responsibility, and persistence for task performance.



**Figure 1.** Social Emotional Structure (OECD, 2018)

Bozkurt and Sharma (2020) stated that emergency remote teaching or re-engineered distance education should collaborate with different shareholders. They went on to say that what teachers teach their students in the time of pandemic is of secondary importance and that teachers must have to keep in mind that students will remember not the educational content delivered but how they felt during these times.

Given these contexts, this study examined what and how innovative digitally mediated pedagogies work to develop social emotional skills in virtual classrooms during the ERT from the perspective of both the faculty and the students. Specifically, this appreciative inquiry answered the following research questions:

1. What strategies have the performance-based faculty of Music and PE innovated in their abrupt shift from face-to-face to virtual emergency remote teaching during the pandemic?
2. How do the study participants describe their lived experiences on how these innovative ERT strategies developed students' social emotional skills?
3. What new insights have the participants generated in their emergency remote teaching experience?

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study utilized a relatively new approach to research called participatory and appreciative action and reflection [PAAR] developed by Ghaye et al. (2008) which is intended “to enable individuals and groups to move forward, to improve their working practices and lives in particular communities and contexts” (p. 361). As a process, Ghaye and colleagues describe PAAR as basically an improvement process focusing on reflective learning (r-learning) framework that involves four intentional actions as follows:

1. Developing an ‘appreciative gaze’ or actively and consciously starting the understanding and improvement process by looking at what is positive and supportive of human flourishing and well-being in current thinking and practice.
2. Reframing lived experience or essentially trying to look at ‘problems’ (or challenges) creatively and with a critical spirit to seek out alternative and innovative approaches for future working.
3. Building practical wisdom (productive thinking) improving working practices through local and regional ownership of issues and an understanding, not simply the outcome of reproductive thinking or simply refining what is already known. It generates new insights and improved actions.
4. Ethical action and moral courage to use what has been co-produced to demonstrate achievement and move practices and policy positively forward. (p. 370)

The participants of this study were five faculty members of the College of Arts and Humanities [CAH], four from the Music Department and one from the Physical Education [PE] Department. To triangulate the shared experiences of the faculty participants, five students (three from the Music Department and two from PE) were also interviewed. Apart from triangulation by interview of the five students, the major researcher also observed both Music and PE faculty as well as collected videos and reflections from the students to as part of the data analysis to ensure the trustworthiness of the study.

One-on-one interviews were conducted to capture the reframed lived experiences of the participants in which the major researcher [CAH Dean] began by verbalizing appreciation of the commendable innovative strategies initiated by both Music and PE teachers as an ERT response from the onset of the pandemic. They first shared how they faced the challenges in abruptly shifting from face-to-face classes in their performance-based classes to online modality and how they themselves turned to be resourceful and reflective of their own practices to solve the problems including the use of technology and virtual pedagogies. Then, they reported insights on how they developed confidence in their innovations to overcome the limitations and challenges and how happy they have been in discovering that they have developed social emotional skills alongside with the hard skills their students learned from their innovative ERT strategies. The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and thematically analyzed. Permission to use photos in this study was also sought although some faces were covered or blurred.

## 3. RESULTS

### 3.1 Strategies Participants Innovated for Virtual ERT

To answer Research Question 1, “What strategies have the performance-based faculty of Music and PE innovated in their abrupt shift from face-to-face to virtual emergency remote teaching during the pandemic?”, two major themes emerged: demonstration using technology in teaching Music and PE and collaborative performances.

### 3.1.1 Using Technology in Teaching Music and PE Not Used Before the Pandemic

At first, Music teachers could not imagine how they could continue to teach performance courses online. Unlike in the FTF classes where Music teachers can easily draw musical notes and symbols on the whiteboard to easily demonstrate to the students, they had to resort to the virtual Whiteboard in either Zoom or MS Teams, the University's official conferencing platforms. P2, for example, shared:

*At the onset of the pandemic, I was still able to use the physical classroom in a hybrid modality. I had some students in the classroom and some attended my classes virtually. My technological adjustment at that time was how to make my online students see what I was teaching using both the whiteboard and the piano to demonstrate both theoretical and practical for better students' better learning. When total lockdowns were implemented, I had to transform the hybrid classroom into fully online. That was a real challenge at first as I had to devise a space in my house to create a similar teaching venue as if I was still teaching in the classroom like still having a whiteboard and a piano.*

Below is a photo of how P2 still used Zoom's Whiteboard to facilitate better understanding and therefore learning particularly for visual learners who need to see demonstrated concepts. This photo is to triangulate the interview data from the interview with P2.

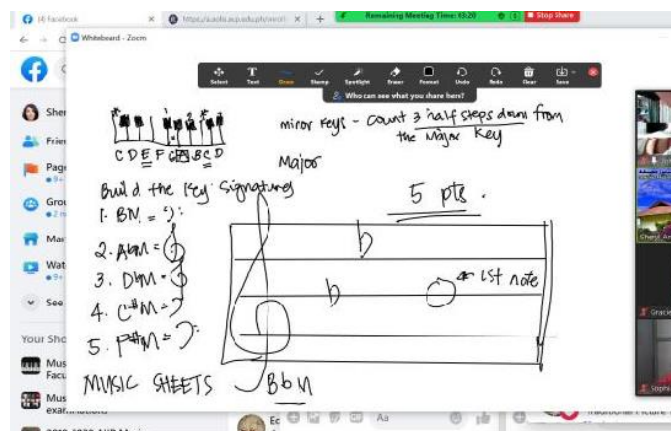


Figure 1. Zoom's Whiteboard used.

Not only is technology necessary in ERT but also for teaching listening such as using Sibelius for music notation and for accompaniments, applications for music mixing, etc. Technology is also essential for assessments such as for demonstrations of both Music and PE classes of the skills-based concepts. Teachers have to use videos, either ones they create or adopt, in order to teach while students had to return demonstration. P1 narrated how she benefited from recording videos which she has used for about 3 years now during the entire pandemic. She also shared that students used videos for their practical examinations.

*At the onset of the pandemic, I was able to record videos to demonstrate dance steps, rules of the games, and others. It is necessary to have videos as just talking or just lecturing about the rules without any actual demonstration is not so effective. Then, I ask students to return demonstration during their exams.*

To triangulate what P1 described during the interview, here is a photo showing a return demonstration by a student:



**Figure 1.** Photo showing a return demonstration by a student.

### **3.1.2 Collaborative Performances**

Apart from the use of technology to demonstrate performance-based concepts and skills and for return demonstration, the participants of the study also innovated collaborative performances to realize their set course and learning outcomes during their emergency remote teaching from the onset of the pandemic until the second semester of academic year 2021-2022. Like other Music faculty, P3, part-time Choral Conducting instructor, was still able to teach the course remotely through collaborative performances. For example, his students who went home to China organized their own choir in their community. The Music students interviewed reported that they were still able to maximize learning through the creativity of their teachers who designed requirements that helped them develop not just about Music but also other social emotional skills such as collaborating for their tests or performances. This photo demonstrates this ERT initiative by the innovative Music faculty in their requiring collaborative performances.



**Figure 3.** ERT initiative by the innovative Music faculty in their requiring collaborative performances.

As to how collaborative performances as an innovative ERT strategy by PE teachers, P1's Physical Education classes have also been impressive. For instance, P1 reported:

*My folk-dance students who mostly went home to their provinces or home countries have to invite their relatives, friends, or community to join them in their dance for video recording for them to have a grade in their final requirement. Some dance with their entire family, the Lola [grandmother], Lolo [grandfather], their parents, and siblings especially those in the US or abroad where there are limited people to invite for the Filipino folk dance. It's so*

*interesting that they even sew their own costumes for their performances or have their parents and grandparents cooperate to produce their costumes and props. For team sports, they also ask their friends and neighbours to play with them to fulfil their PE requirements.*

### **3.2 How Participants' Innovative ERT Strategies Developed Students SELs**

There were three themes that emerged to answer RQ2, 'How do the study participants describe their lived experiences on how these innovative ERT strategies developed students' social emotional skills?'. These include creativity and resourcefulness, persistence, and engaging with others.

#### **3.2.1 Creativity and Resourcefulness**

Creativity and resourcefulness is the most common theme reported by the participants of the study in the innovative ERT strategies they employed. For example, P4 mentioned that her voice students became more resourceful during the pandemic like when they had to use Sibelius, a software for music notation. She further describes that:

*My students have become more resourceful during the pandemic by using Sibelius they used to ignore as they could simply ask their friends to accompany them if they had to sing. When they had no one to request to accompany them, they use the app to transcribe or encode notes for their accompaniment for their rehearsals and performances.*

P1, on the other hand, shared her experiences on how collaborative performances taught her PE students to become more creative and resourceful.

*I found it interesting that my students have developed themselves to be more creative and resourceful during the pandemic. Some students have to weave coconut leaves to use for soccer or basketball especially when they could not go out to buy one. Also, many of my students involve their families to dance with them for their final requirements. Can you imagine that they need to practice before they can perform and they also need to have props and costumes as part of the criteria for their grades. So, they ought to be resourceful because of the requirements.*

#### **3.2.2 Persistence**

From both the interview and observation data, students have shown persistence by welcoming changes from F2F classes to online especially in their skills-based courses. For example, the major researcher observed how the Choral Conducting students in China persisted to practice their choir members despite the challenges brought about by the pandemic in which gatherings were restricted. Some choral conducting students shared that it was not easy for them to gather all their members for regular practice due to the restrictions but they were so supportive of the Music student so they had to cooperate. Also, P3 had to correct the students conducting online right away if they made a mistake. P3 stated:

*It is different when we do the Choral Conducting class online as the supervision is remotely done unlike in face- to-face and the organizing of the choir itself might be challenging during this pandemic. But then, I admire the persistence, the patience, of our Music students. They also had to be patient when mixing virtual choir. They have to edit again and again and that's another way of developing patience or persistence aside from creativity in doing their job well. They need these values to succeed in their career.*

P2 also shared that her students had to persist and endure the different situation they had during the pandemic. Some do not have their own instruments like piano to practice at home when they had to go home during the lockdowns.

*For those who don't have instruments back home, they had to overcome their challenges. Some would go to their church to practice and to have their lessons. Even those who stayed in the dorms could not also go to the Music Department to practice due to the restrictions here on campus. They also have limited time to do it in their dorms if they are allowed as the dorm residents might be disturbed. It's indeed a challenge but I admire their persistence in finding ways.*

To triangulate the teachers' perspectives, a PE student who wrote her reflection shared:

*Despite tons of requirements, I did not give up; instead, I learned how to enjoy doing things (like folk dance) without putting pressure, with PERSISTENCE. I had to find people to dance with me again and again until perfect in the video recording.*

### **3.2.3 Engaging with others**

Aside from creativity and resourcefulness as well as flexibility developed through innovative strategies in teaching skills-based courses during ERT, the participants also reported that their students learned to engage with others during the pandemic. This was evident in P1's PE classes.

*Some have engaged their busy parents and even grandparents in their dance, badminton, or team sports with them and they end up having good bonding time and exercise together, a positive result of to the pandemic. I find it amusing to see some of my students involved like an entire neighborhood or community in their final requirements.*

Below is a photo showing how one first year student had to gather her neighbours to dance Tinkling with her. Some of the children and even adults served as audience.



**Figure 4.** A first year student had to gather her neighbours to dance Tinkling with her.

In the reflection of one of the PE students submitted to P1, the student wrote:

*Since our class is more on the skill-based, it is an epitome of "if there's a will, there's a way." [STRONG WILL] I never imagined myself neither recording a folk dance nor dancing with my family. Even though, there were times when my whole being was exhausted of the things*



*happening, I was surprised that I still strived to complete my obligations. Although, I am worried about my final grades, I am still proud of myself that sometime in my life, I did folk dance with my family, finished my requirements, and survived this misery.*

### **3.3 Participants Insights on Their Improved Actions in ERT**

To answer RQ3, “What new insights have the participants generated in emergency remote teaching experience?”, the two themes were staying calm even in adverse situations and becoming more open-minded.

#### **3.3.1 Staying Calm Even in Adverse Situations**

The pandemic has taught teachers that even with worst or adverse situations, they have to be calm as long as they stay positive and open-minded. P4 explained:

*At the onset of the pandemic, everything was uncertain. We were hopeful that the pandemic won't last long. I thought that it was just like the Taal Volcano eruption in which our university was affected yet we were able to clean it up right away and went back to normal. I also thought that we during the volcano eruption, we were urged to prepare and train for online teaching in case the ashes would continue to fall. Somehow, that kind of preparation made us stay calm believing that we could handle the situation although we had no idea yet at that time how Music, a skills-based discipline, especially in the case of Voice which I'm teaching or even piano or violin, can be handled remotely.*

For P1 who teaches PE and chairs the PE Department, she also has a similar thought.

*At first, I somehow didn't feel panicky thinking that the situation wouldn't last long just like the Taal Volcano eruption. But when many people were already dying and getting infected every day, I already had the feeling that we could not be certain anymore as to until when we could go back to normal. However, we had been oriented before how to respond to an emergency so that we can still go on teaching our students like during the volcanic eruption and we had a training for online teaching. So, I already had some ideas in mind what to do. There's no need to panic.*

#### **3.3.2 Becoming More Open-Minded**

The participants of the study shared their insights that although there is no best way to teach skills-based courses than FTF, by becoming more open-minded, they have learned many lessons from the ERT during the pandemic and have been able to overcome the challenges. P4 said:

*While face-to-face teaching is ideal for teaching Music, the pandemic has made us think outside the box. Our students have positive experiences during the pandemic such as improving their listening. Instead of watching Korean movies for long hours, they've learned to listen to repertoire and encode notes using Sibelius. If not for the pandemic, they would have tried using it. So, it opened new possibilities for us teachers to introduce new things to students, as long as we're tolerant to changes.*

P5, on the other hand, shared how ERT led her to new ideas such as the various benefits of technology. She also admitted that for Music teaching, FTF is the best modality especially as it is skills-based. Besides, the research setting, being the Adventist University of the Philippines, which caters to students from over 50 countries, requires teachers to design strategies to address diversities including time zones. All these factors require open-mindedness to thrive in ERT. P5 shared that:

*Open-mindedness is the key to limitless possibilities. Who would have thought that students can do voice synchronization using apps even if our students are from various countries like some of them are in China, Korea, and other countries? Without meeting or practicing face-to-face, we can still create beautiful music even for church worships online.*

For PE, P1 said that:

*It was actually during the Taal Volcano eruption when I didn't know yet what to do with PE if we would teach it online. But then, I realized that having a positive and open mind to try new ways of teaching even if it means we need to adjust and invest time to learn, we can overcome challenges and grow. We just have to be tolerant of uncertainties.*

#### **4. DISCUSSION**

The findings of this study show that using technology in teaching Music which they never used before such as Whiteboard in both Zoom and MS Teams helped the faculty to be able to illustrate musical concepts for better learning for students. In PE, the teachers had to shift to demonstrations via recorded videos and had to require their students to have return demonstrations. Teachers had to find alternative ways to still make learning effective adapting to the emergency situation. Using technology in these strategies has been very helpful during the emergency remote teaching in which students reported facilitated their learning skills-based courses, i.e., Music and PE. Green et al. (2020) stated that "educators had to quickly reconfigure their designs, as specific pedagogical strategies set for in-class arrangements would no longer be appropriate for the new scenario" (p. 906).

Also, collaborative performances used as innovative strategy by skills-based teachers in their ERT turned out as one excellent way for students to cope with isolations and maintain wellbeing during the pandemic. For example, PE students who had to perform folk dances at home needed to have a team. Even musical performances that needed accompaniments or a group to perform urged students to collaborate. Fram et al. (2021) found that music makers have been resilient to extrinsic shocks in their collaborative practices during the pandemic and they seem to prioritize collaborative aspects requiring teamwork in their music-making including musical style. Furthermore, Bozkurt and Sharma (2020) asserted that ERT or re-engineered distance education requires collaboration with different shareholders. In this study, teachers had to collaborate with their fellow teachers or experts in the field, i.e. in Music, to thrive in transferring skills in their emergency remote teaching such as by holding webinars via Zoom or MS Teams. They even invited international speakers from the US, Indonesia, Thailand, etc. as well as renowned Music experts from the Philippines to demonstrate both use of technology in Music and collaborative performances during the pandemic at the new normal that will still be relevant even after.

Teachers' innovative strategies during the pandemic have developed creativity and resourcefulness, persistence, and engaging with others among students. For instance, the recorded return demonstrations required from the student's which teachers demonstrated via recorded videos also showed resourcefulness such as looking for participants to do the recording even at the height of the pandemic. Some students reported that they appreciated the efforts of their teachers in finding ways for them to be able to still effectively teach virtually PE and Music, which are skills-based. Thus, teachers did not just demonstrate PE and Music lessons but also social emotional skills such as creativity and resourcefulness and persistence amid challenging situations when lockdowns during the pandemic hindered face-to-face teaching. On the part of the students, they had to be resourceful in finding partners, dance-mates, or team-mates in PE such as in their own families, neighbourhoods, or communities to fulfil. In the case of Music, students had to record their recitals or synchronize their choir performances individually

recorded using technological applications with their classmates and friends. All these situations necessitated engaging with others as well as persistence and resourcefulness.

The findings are similar to the study of Nusseck and Spahn (2021) who found that Music students developed certain social emotional skills such as self-regulated learning skills during the pandemic lockdowns as they found ways to continue with their musical learning despite the adverse situation. OECD's (2018) theory, the big five or the five-factor model includes task performance, emotional regulation, collaboration, open-mindedness, and engaging with others. Creativity is under open-mindedness while persistence is under task performance. Under engaging with others are sub-domains of sociability, assertiveness, and trust. Indeed, in the task performance of students in the emergency remote teaching on skills-based courses, i.e., PE and Music, when they had to engage with others, they needed to be sociable, assertive, and trustful with others to succeed in fulfilling their requirements using new technologies they had not used before. Furthermore,

On the part of the instructors handling Music and PE, they learned to stay calm and to be more open-minded adverse situations like the pandemic when they had to shift to emergency remote teaching to sustain not only their jobs but also to still transfer learning as necessary. In OECD's (2018) big five model, staying calm even in challenging situations is part of self-control under self-regulation and task performance. In performing their responsibility during the pandemic shifting to ERT, the faculty teaching skills-based courses not easy to teach unlike theoretical ones, they modelled to their students staying calm in trying situations and being flexible or open-minded to perform their jobs successfully.

## **5. LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

This study would have included visual arts, apart from Music and PE, as the College of Arts and Humanities in the research setting has Fine Arts which also successfully carried on virtual emergency remote teaching during the pandemic. It could have also added to the body of knowledge as to how the Fine Arts not just transferred skills during the pandemic but also social emotional skills. Nevertheless, the findings of the study have contributed to the current literature particularly on how social emotional skills are developed or further developed amid challenging emergency remote teaching, both by teachers and students using innovative strategies necessary to transfer learning. Moreover, this study's utilization of participatory action and reflection research or PAAR, which is rarely used as it is relatively new, will contribute to research methods having the researchers as participants of the study using their personal reflections and insights focusing on their achievements or positive attributes to improve teaching practices in their fields of expertise.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

This qualitative study using PAAR or participatory and appreciative action and reflection approach to explore how students' social emotional skills students were developed from innovative emergency remote teaching of Music and PE, both performance-based courses, during the pandemic. Findings reveal that students developed creativity and resourcefulness, persistence, and engaging with others. Skills-based faculty reflected that educators need not panic even in most challenging situations like the unexpected pandemic which required sudden changes in teaching strategies. They themselves have become more creative and resourceful to quickly shift to ERT and respond to students' needs, realizing that they have to be more open-minded and flexible to cater to students in varying time zones with unique challenges that needed to be addressed in virtual learning at a multicultural international setting. Many students went home to their countries such as in the US, China, Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, African

countries, etc. during the pandemic which made the teachers even more innovative and open-minded particularly in catering to widely different time zones which required innovative strategies relevant to ERT. Perin (2021) emphasized that as their students are from around the globe, their most urgent need during the pandemic in China was to bring a sense of community using technology to relieve their isolation recognizing the different needs of students. These important aspects in ERT, building connectedness amid isolations brought about by the lockdowns during the pandemic and employing appropriate technologies to maximize learning especially in skills-based courses that had been thought to be difficult to teach at ERT, were all found relevant in this study. Also, by using PAAR, seeing from the lens of appreciative inquiry to bring out positive attributes and potentials of the action researcher participants to thrive in adverse or emergency educational situations, this study hopes to further improve teaching practices not just in skills-based disciplines but also in other applicable areas to improve learning and develop social emotional skills.

As previous literature on emergency remote teaching mostly focused on how ERT has been implemented during the Covid-19 pandemic such as by Al-Azawi (2021), Ferri et al. (2020), Hodges et al. (2021), Mohmmmed et al. (2020), Tabudlong (2020), Trust and Whalen (2020), etc., the results of this study using PAAR extends knowledge on ERT particularly on the social emotional skills development related to OECD's (2018) big-five model. Social emotional skills are essential in the success of learners not just to survive in the challenging educational settings particularly during the pandemic but most especially to be responsible and productive individuals in the workplace, an important goal of all HEIs globally.

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