WEBCAM NORMS IN EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Ever since the COVID-19 pandemic, webcams within university classrooms have become more and more popular. While webcams were used before the pandemic, there has been a high spike in usage of webcams ever since, whether that is with work, school, organizational meetings, etc. The study, 'Webcams in Educational Settings', focuses on how webcams change classroom settings and affect students' learning. The study investigates through surveys online and over Zoom interviews how students feel about learning online and over webcams. Furthermore, the study researches what affects students' learning and attention focus, such as the camera having to be on or off, along with going into the norms that there may be with Zoom, and how they differ from an in-person classroom. We plan to explore webcams in educational settings by going into the data analysis and doing full-text reviews to assess the answers and responses we have gotten so far and find what norms have formed through webcams in the classroom.

INTRODUCTION

Webcams in the classroom have become increasingly popular. "A recent report funded by the Online Learning Consortium (Allen & Seaman, 2013) found that *6.7 million students (about 32% of all college students) were taking at least one online course"*(Dixson, M. 2015). There are options for classes to be fully online or classes that you have the option to sometimes go in person and sometimes attend online. These options have made classes more accessible for those that may not have been able to travel to class every day, along with providing a way for those who might have become sick and unable to attend class to still learn but protect themselves and others. Overall webcams in the classroom have provided many benefits. However, with its increasing popularity, norms have slowly become established for what one should and should not do on zoom. This project explores how norms have formed, the contrast and comparison to an in-person classroom, and whether certain norms should exist or not. This study is important because it explores how college students feel about the use of zoom classes and norms that have begun to form. The motivations behind this research are based on the popularity of online classes, and to help professors discover the best ways to teach and monitor classes.

METHODS

- Participants were recruited **randomly** for the study, but most were **FSU students**. Many of the participants were **female undergraduate students, aged 18 to 2**2
- The study collected **qualitative data** by conducting **interviews** with students, as researchers aimed to explore how students feel about webcams. This method was the best option when exploring how students feel about webcams in a classroom because they provided long and short answers for what they feel and why they feel that way.
- The interviewers used a **structured set of interview questions**, with multiple different sections. These sections included the Background Information, the Online Course Experience, Webcam Preferences and Behaviors, and Webcam Norms. There were **30 questions overall**, and almost all the questions were **open-ended**.
- Before the interview, the participant signed up and filled out a form to consent. During the interview, the interviewers asked for the participants' consent to do the interview and record it; researchers then gave participants an overview of what the interview would look like.
- **Interviews were done over Zoom**, providing an easy way to transcribe them while also allowing researchers to see how they acted while using a webcam.
- Once the interview was finished, the interviewer received the transcript and cleaned it up by deleting filler words like "um's" and "like" and information such as their name or personal information that was unnecessary for the study.
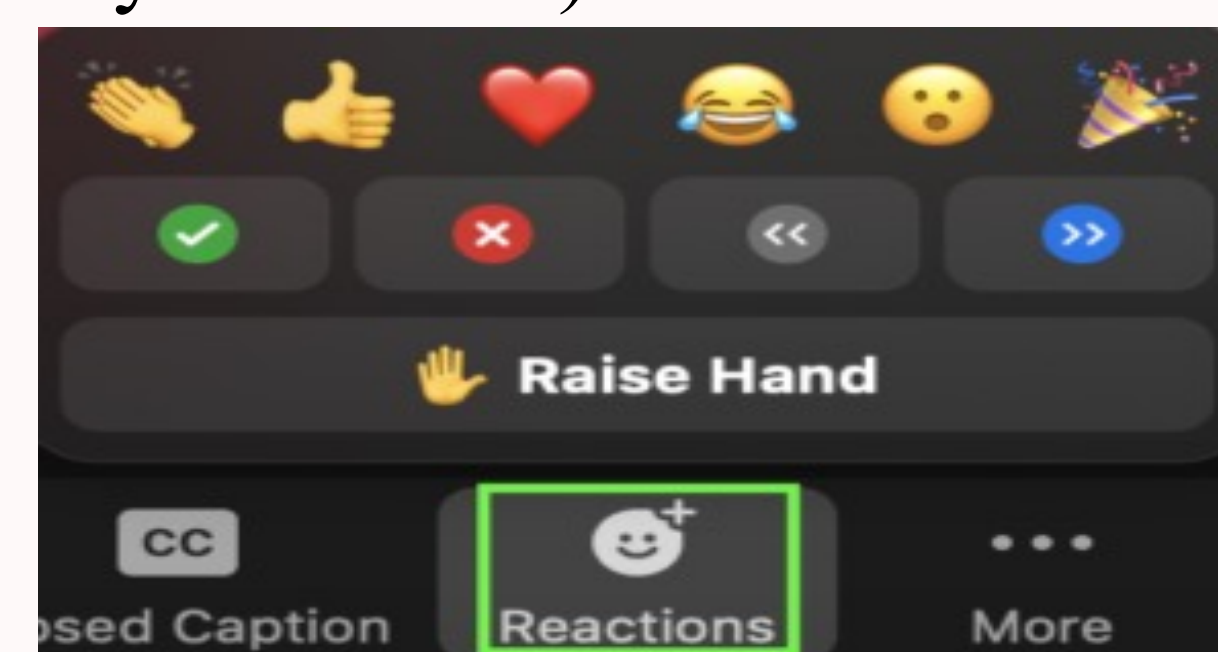
THE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

"I'm going to go through a list of possible behaviors that you might see when people are on webcams, and I'd like to hear your thoughts on them. Are they acceptable? Do you do them? What do you think of people who do them?
a. Eating?
b. Multitasking on the computer (e.g., working in other windows)?
c. Multitasking off the computer (e.g., knitting, cooking)?
d. Walking or driving?
e. Talking to other people in the room?
f. Talking on the phone?
g. Looking at oneself (e.g., as if the camera is your mirror)?
h. Visible pets?
i. Visible children?"

Gallagher, Ryan. Online Image of an Online Class. https://blog.zoom.us/best-practices-for-securing-your-virtual-classroom/

Stanford University. Online Image of the Zoom Features that encourage participant engagement. https://tlhub.stanford.edu/docs/zoom-engagement-tools/

RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

- The study's preliminary findings indicate that college students have developed multiple norms and expectations for online classes.
- The **most important rules** for participants during the interviews were **having cameras on (63.64%)** and **raising hands (45.45%).** In Casteli and Sarvary's article, they state that the best way to implement the cameras-on rule is to **set the expectation early on**, making students more comfortable and willing to keep them on during the class.
- The top 4 **acceptable** norms were: 1. **Visible Pets** (81.82%); **2. Multitasking on the computer (** 63.64%); **3. Looking at self on screen** (54.55%); and **4. visible children (**54.55%)
- The top 4 **unacceptable** norms were: **1. Talking to others in the room** (81.82%); **2. Talking on the phone during class** (81.82%); **3. Multitasking off the computer** (72.73%); and **4. walking/ driving** (63.64%). In Hosszu's article, students stated that if they are multitasking off the computer during class, they are usually **working at a job, working on other projects, or eating/ cleaning/ drinking coffee**.

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