

Philippine Educational Measurement and Evaluation Association, Inc.

2022 National Conference on Educational Measurement and Evaluation
August 25-27, 2022

Using Self and Peer Assessments in Research Writing Groups: Lessons from COVID-19 Lockdown

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Assessing group work is a challenging and complex practice among online teachers (Forsell, 2020).

Context:

Writing and completing a thesis is not only seen as a major academic requirement among graduating students. It is also perceived as a proof of one's scholarship and excellence. In most Senior High Schools and universities in the Philippines, conducting a research study is usually done in groups.



Perceived Challenges in Assessing Group Research Outputs of Students in Online Setup

1. Assessing the individual's knowledge and contribution within the group's process during group work
2. Ensuring that the group's achievement reflects each individual achievement in a group assessment
3. Lack of methods in helping and guiding teachers in their practice of assessing group outputs

What procedures and strategies did I use to respond to the challenges in assessing group works in an online research class?

Self and Peer Assessments were used in conjunction with the research adviser and panelists' assessments of their individual and group performances in their research class.

Self-assessment activities help student-researchers to be a realistic judge of their own performance and to improve their work.

- Promotes the skills of reflective practice and self-monitoring
- Promotes academic integrity through student self-reporting of learning progress
- Develops self-directed learning
- Increases student motivation
- Helps students develop a range of personal, transferrable skills

Peer Assessment is a student-centered assessment approach that allows students to develop a deeper insight into the quality of their own work through the assessment of peers' work.

Benefits of Peer Assessment

1. Student learning improves when they provide assessment to peers.
2. Active environments offer more opportunities to improve.
3. Peer assessment improves metacognition and increases independence.

Self & Peer Evaluation for a Research Paper Project

Students are required to evaluate the personal productivity of each group member, including themselves. They will rate themselves and their group members on each of the following five categories.

Adapted from: California State University, 2021

Criteria	Self Assessment	Peer Assessment		
		Peer # 1	Peer # 2	Peer # 3
Collaboration				
Participation				
Preparation				
Quality of Outputs				
Communication				
Total Score:				

When our group was *collaborating* together, this person:

- 4- Listens to other's ideas. Gives broad ideas and expands on them or encourages others to do so. Builds on contributions of others.
- 3- Listens well. Contributes ideas but the ideas do not deepen the discussion rather maintain it at current level.
- 2- Listens fairly well but interrupts at times. Rarely deepens the discussion.
- 1- Overbearing. Interrupts. Doesn't allow discussion of ideas other than own and/or does not listen or contribute.

The way in which this person *participated* was:

- 4- Contributes ideas. Actively speaks up. Brainstorms.
- 3- Contributes some ideas but is mainly passive.
- 2- Sits passively.
- 1- Does nothing.

The typical *quality of input* this person provided was:

- 4- Provides extensive accurate information to group members.
- 3- Information is usually accurate and is an adequate amount.
- 2- Mostly misinforms group or provides little information.
- 1- Provides group with no useful accurate information.

This person was *prepared* in the following way:

- 4- Does more than required.
- 3- Does what committed to do.
- 2- Does some of what committed to do.
- 1- Does nothing.

The way in which this person *communicated* was:

- 4- Reliably communicates progress to group. Reachable and regularly checks messages/email. Talks with others in group.
- 3- Stays in fairly good touch with the group, but is occasionally difficult to contact.
- 2- Is unreachable but initiates communication with others occasionally.
- 1- Is unreachable and does not communicate with group members about the project.

Qualitative Self and Peer Assessment

Member	Positive Contributions as a Member of a Group	Areas for Improvement
Member 1 (Self)		
Member 2 (Peer)		
Member 3 (Peer)		
Member 4 (Peer)		

Since there are many issues surrounding assessments of research outputs done by groups of students, self & peer assessments were used to verify and triangulate the assessments made by the research advisers and panelists during oral presentations.

The use of self and peer assessments were proven to be helpful in providing relevant information as to the individual contribution and achievement of each learner in each group, which is usually not measured and assessed in group works.

Thank you very much for your
kind attention!