

Distraction in Classrooms

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ABSTRACT

Distraction is a common element to every classroom. As it applies to the pursuit of education, there are many forms of distraction: life situation, peers, your phone, or even what's out the window. The goal of this experiment is to track the distraction of students in a classroom. Our group members will record the number of people distracted while in class at the beginning and at the end of it. We will also record the type of classroom, it's layout, professor, time of the day, name of the course, and other important parameters. By analyzing this data, we hope to see what parameters affect the student distraction the most. Conversely, we will also find out what helps students to pay the most attention in a class. By doing that we can figure out ways to improve the student attention in a classroom.

INTRODUCTION/OBJECTIVES

Determine the percentage of students distracted in relation to the environment. Discoveries can give insight into better focus in classrooms.

METHODS

Our group members recorded the number of people distracted. This was recorded at the beginning, middle, and at the end of class. We also recorded the type of seating and time of the day. By our definition, a distracted student was a student not participating in classroom activities, notetaking, and/or demonstrating non-verbal cues implying attentiveness.

Average Distraction Throughout Class

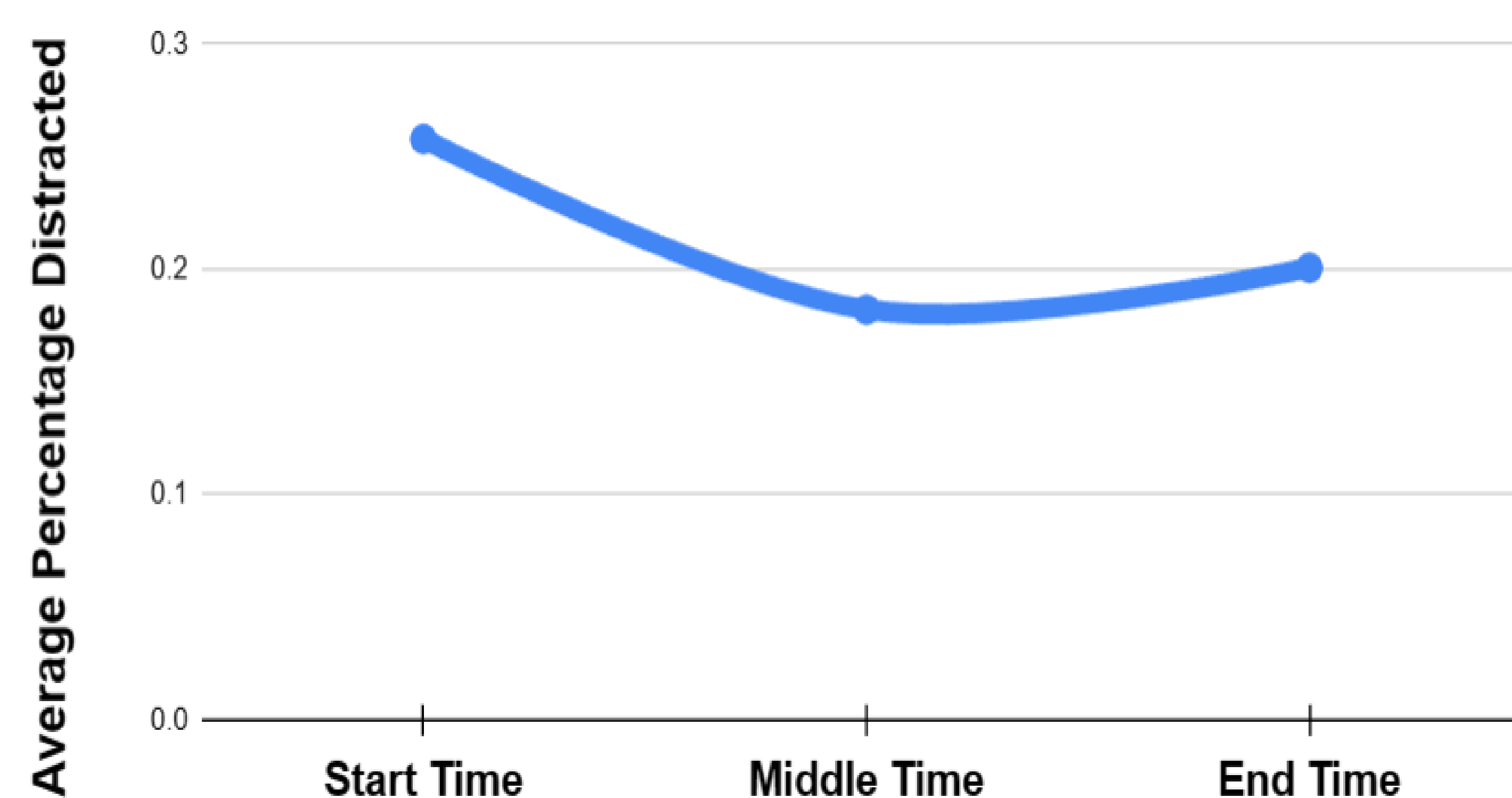


Figure 1.

Students Distracted by Seating

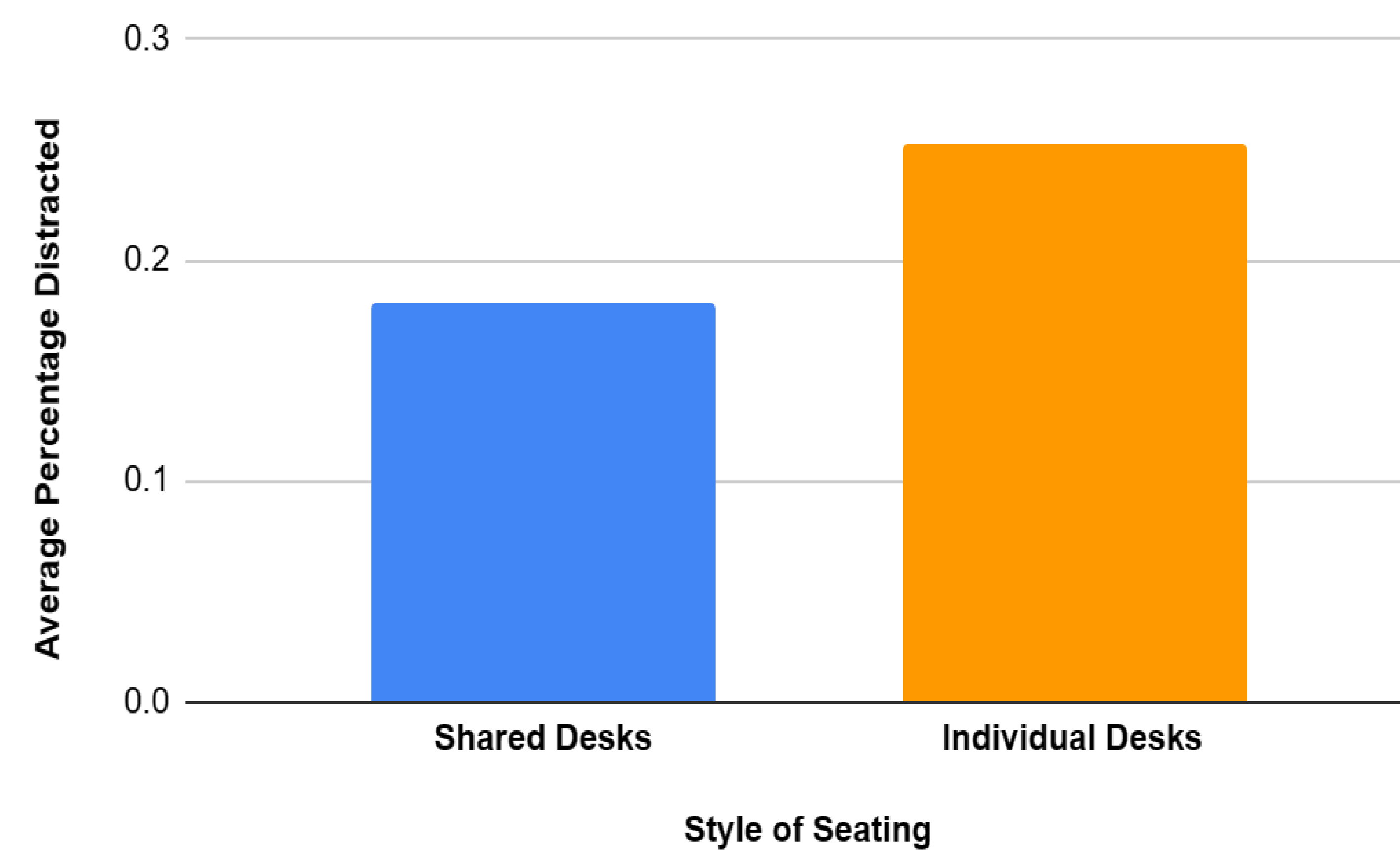


Figure 2.

RESULTS

- Before 12:00 PM 24.38%
- After 12:00 PM 21.28%
- Shared Desks 18.01%
- Individual Desks 25.27%
- Start Time 25.78%
- Middle Time 18.21%
- End Time 20.06%

Students Distracted Before & After Noon

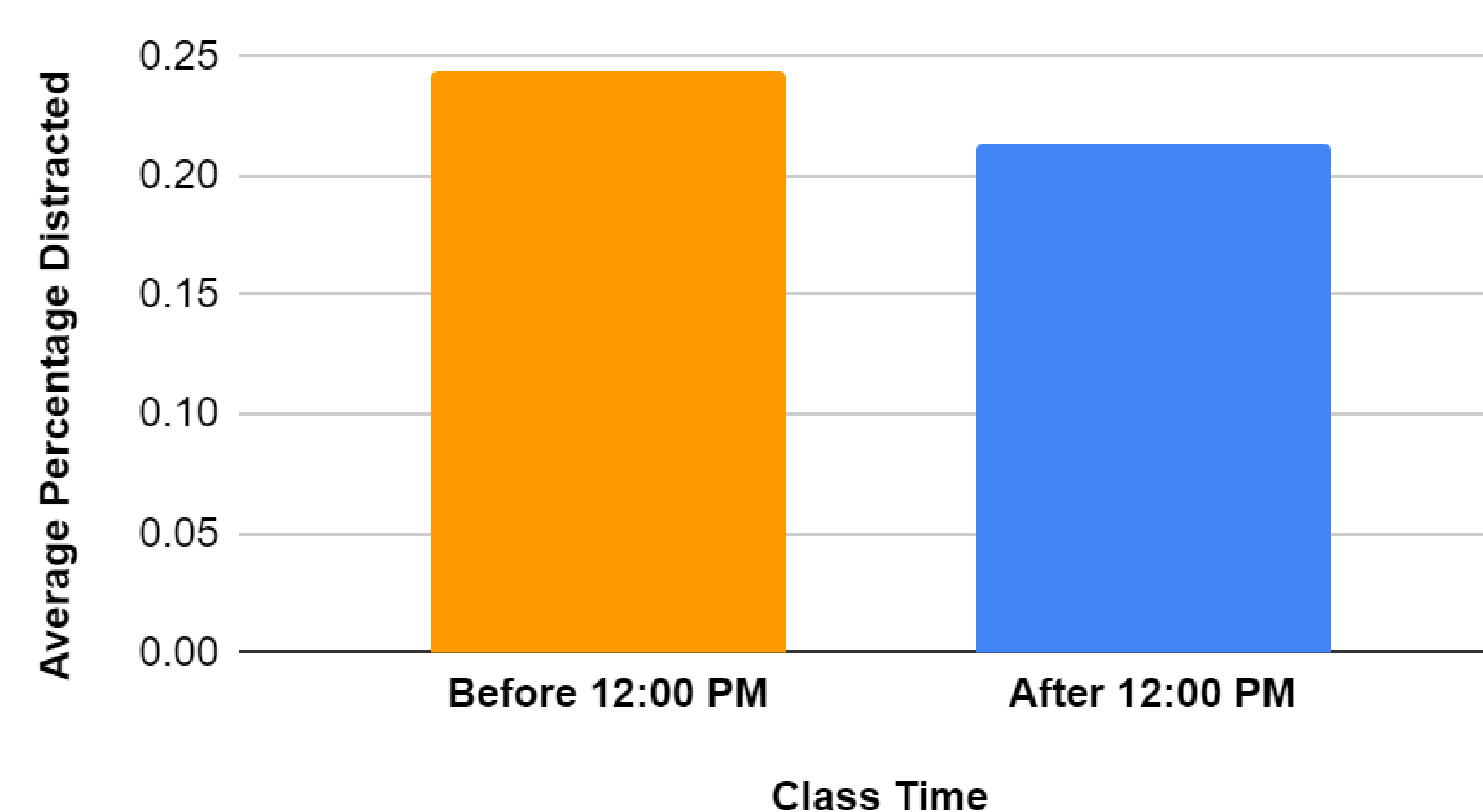


Figure 3.

DISCUSSION/FUTURE WORK

As we gathered data, several ideas emerged for future plans to improve the observation of distraction levels among participants in any given course curriculum. When the students arrive late or depart early, it affects the denominator of results regarding student distraction.

Additionally, we collected data on whether factors such as windows, the professor, and the course itself to see how it influenced distraction in each class. Moving forward, if we could collect data from all courses, this would enable us to identify which ones require the greatest attention.

Surprisingly, students in classrooms with shared desks were more focused than individual desks. This is possibly due to many of our shared desk classes taking place computer labs. Thus, students retain focus on their individual computers despite sharing a desk.

CONCLUSIONS

Our findings demonstrate a significant variance in student distraction levels across different times and classroom setups. In particular, there is an easily discernable pattern between distraction levels and classroom setup. Additionally, we discovered that distraction levels were higher near the commencement of a class and lowest during the middle. Furthermore, we noticed that classroom distraction levels were higher prior to 12:00 AM.

References

- Goundar, S. (2014). The distraction of technology in the classroom. *Journal of Education & Human Development*, 3(1), 211-229.
- Ahrentzen, S., & Evans, G. W. (1984). *Distraction, privacy, and classroom design. Environment and Behavior*, 16(4), 437-454. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013916584164002>

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