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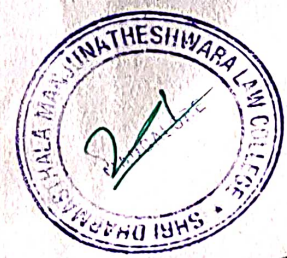
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Online Education during Covid 19 Pandemic and Students' Perspective – An Empirical Study

Dr. Rajashree S Kini *

Abstract

Covid-19 pandemic made the universities around the world to close down their education system abruptly. For some, institutions did not know how to impart education but soon they started online classes trying to reach as many students possible. Obviously internet connectivity and infrastructure were the basic issues faced by the teachers and the students. This paper is an attempt to understand the students' perspective about online classes during pandemic about few aspects. This research is covered U G and P G students. Very few aspects in general is covered here to know the overall perception of the students.

Keywords: Covid-19 Pandemic, Students' Perception, Online Education, General Issues, Content Delivery, Interaction, Assessment, Health Issues, Social Issues.

Introduction

The Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID -19) was declared as pandemic by World Health Organisation in March 2020. This pandemic created havoc in the whole world and led to lockdown of all the businesses and academics throughout the world. Around the world, all the Universities had to close down their campuses and had to continue imparting education through online programmes¹. As a matter of fact, Universities were not ready for the transition from classroom-based physical education system to online E-learning education system, due to lack of infrastructure, expertise, lack of knowledge and due to lack of strategies for E-learning². As there is no other alternative for completing education during pandemic due to uncertainties, institutions, as well as faculties and students accepted and tried to learn through online platform. Over the period, it is found that online learning is easy to use and flexible in different aspects. However, there are disadvantages like social isolation, personal interaction, internet issues, and lack of training in understanding different platforms etc too³.

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¹ Bao, W. (2020). COVID-19 and online teaching in higher education: A case study of Peking University. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, 2(2), 113-115.
² Zhang, W., Wang, Y., Yang, L., & Wang, C. (2020). Suspending classes without stopping learning: China's education emergency management policy in the COVID-19 outbreak. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*, 13(3), 55.
³ (S), M.J.; Serpa, S. The COVID-19 Pandemic as an Opportunity to Foster the Sustainable Development of Teaching in Higher Education. *Sustainability* 2020, 12, 8525.

There is no doubt that online learning is not at all an exact substitution for physical learning (which is formal mode of education worldwide) in any way, there is a need for all the Universities in the world, to explore the E-learning now while proceeding towards new normal away from pandemic.

Objectives

- To understand the teaching-learning process in general.
- To know the adequacy of content delivery.
- To know the process of interaction between the faculty and students in online classes.
- To understand the efficiency of assessment of students by the faculty.
- To know the impact of using electronic gadgets and internet for classes and projects, on health of the students.
- To understand the social impact of E-learning.

Limitations

- Opinion of limited number of respondents may not give accurate results to rely on for further studies.
- Very less time for research.
- Only coefficient of correlation is used as part of analytical analysis, which gives only the bird's eye view of the issue in hand.
- U G and P G students opinion are taken together and not separately.
- Teachers' perspective is not analysed due to time constraint.

Literature Review

There existed proper infrastructure facilities in many institutions before Covid 19 and they were using E-learning materials in classes. But no institution was ready with enough infrastructure and expertise for complete shift from physical classes to online classes⁴. But students were aware that at least they were able to continue their education during pandemic through online classes, though they were not comfortable with it⁵. Teachers were able to gather confidence in conducting online classes gradually over the period but were not able to have proper assessment tools to check the performance of the students⁶. Students always preferred face-to-face interaction with teachers in clarifying doubts as online platform was not so effective for discussion from both the sides⁷.

⁴ Bojovic, Z., Bojovic, P. D., Wujosevic, D., & Suh, J. (2020). Education in times of crisis: Rapid transition to distance learning. *Computer Applications in Engineering Education* In press.
⁵ Mishra, L., Gupta, T., & Shree, A. (2020). Online teaching-learning in higher education during lockdown period of COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Educational Research Open* in press.
⁶ Ibid note 4.
⁷ Patricia, A. (2020). College students' use and acceptance of emergency online learning due to COVID-19. *International Journal of Educational Research Open* in press.



Methodology

The study is empirical, descriptive and analytical. Total of 284 students were responded. Questionnaire method is used for the survey. Students are from KSLU, Mangalore University, Manipal University, NITTE University, Bangalore University, Jain University, VTU, KSOU. The courses covered are LLB, LLM, BBA, MBA, B Com, M Com, BSW and MSW. Students are of the age group above 18 & below 23. A questionnaire is prepared with simple 20 statements under the headings General Issues of online classes, Content Delivery, Teacher-student interaction during the classes, Assessment of students' performance, Impact of usage of gadgets and internet on students' health and other social issues of online classes. Analysis is based on 5-point Likert Scale, where 1 represents "strongly disagree" and 5 represents "strongly agree". The descriptive analysis frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation are used and analytical analysis correlation coefficient is used to understand the relationship between variables.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 was used to analyse the data.

Data Analysis and Result

Table 1: Demographic Background of Respondents (N=284)

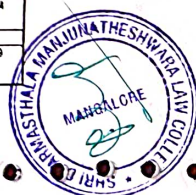
Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	104	36.62
	Female	180	63.38
University	KSLU	160	56.34
	Mangalore University	52	18.31
	Manipal University	20	7.04
	NITTE University	7	2.46
	Bangalore University	6	2.11
	Jain University	15	5.28
	VTU	13	4.58
Course	KSOU	11	3.87
	LLB	108	38.03
	LLM	52	18.31
	BBA	16	5.63
	MBA	32	11.27
	B Com	12	4.23
	M Com	28	9.86
	BSW	10	3.52
	MSW	26	9.15
	Current Level of Study	1st Year	56
2nd to 4th Year		126	44.37
Final Year		102	35.92

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Out of total population (N=284), based on gender, there are 104 (36.62%) males and 180 (63.38%) females. There are 160 (56.34%) students from Karnataka State Law University (KSLU) and 52 (18.31%) students from Mangalore University, and least 6 (2.11%) students from Bangalore University as respondents among other students from other Universities. Among all maximum of 108 (38.03%) LLB students, 52 (18.31%) LLM students and least 10 (3.52%) students of BSW have responded. Out of the total 284 students, 126 (44.37%) students are in 2nd to 4th year of their course, 102 (35.92%) of students are in final year of their course and 56 (19.72%) students in their 1st year of studies.

Table 2: Analysis of Students' Perspective about Online Education during Covid-19

Sl. NO	Particulars	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Standard Deviation
Frequency and Percentages (%)								
1	General Issues							
	Physical classes are better than online classes	36	57	66	80	45	3.14	1.258
	Online classes are better than recorded MOOCs	12.7	20.1	23.2	28.2	15.8	3.27	1.108
	Teachers are well trained for online classes	26	45	63	127	23	2.32	1.547
	During covid-19 pandemic online classes were best suitable platform	9.2	15.8	22.2	44.7	8.1	3.09	1.679
2	Content Delivery							
	Adequate study materials are available online	40	51	129	49	15	2.32	1.547
	PPT presentations make class more understandable	14.1	18.0	45.4	17.3	5.3	3.09	1.679
	Teachers use teaching tools like white board, attendance recorder, notes sharing ways, switching to audio and videos whenever necessary etc., easily	40	16	123	88	17	3.09	1.679
	Interaction Between the Teachers and Students During Online Classes	14.1	5.6	43.3	31.0	6.0	3.09	1.679
3	Interaction Between the Teachers and Students During Online Classes							
	Interaction is better in offline class than in online classes	32	26	159	46	21	2.99	1.002
	Use of digital pen and white board make classes more interactive	11.3	9.2	56.0	16.2	7.4	2.99	1.002
	To make the classes more interactive, teachers and students should switch on videos and show their faces	53	59	126	41	5	2.90	1.006
	If its allowed for students to use chat box to post messages, classes will be more interactive	18.7	20.8	44.4	14.4	1.9	3.08	1.338
4	Assessment							
	Online tests and quizzes effectively evaluate the knowledge of students	25	13	159	34	13	2.99	1.002
	Regular assignments and tests help in the learning process	8.8	4.6	70.1	12.0	4.5	3.08	1.338
5	Health Issues							
	Poor internet connectivity develops anxiety	145	58	60	9	12	1.88	1.105
	Use of digital pen and white board make classes more interactive	51.1	20.4	21.1	3.2	4.2	3.05	1.302
	To make the classes more interactive, teachers and students should switch on videos and show their faces	21	27	170	48	19	3.05	1.302
	If its allowed for students to use chat box to post messages, classes will be more interactive	7.4	9.5	58.9	16.9	6.3	3.05	1.302
	Interaction Between the Teachers and Students During Online Classes	81	28	137	17	21	2.54	1.178
	Assessment	28.5	9.9	48.2	6.0	7.4	3.08	1.338
	Health Issues	51	46	148	33	5	2.83	1.066
	Assessment	18.0	16.2	52.5	11.6	1.8	3.08	1.338
6	Health Issues							
	Online tests and quizzes effectively evaluate the knowledge of students	51	22	152	46	13	2.82	1.054
	Regular assignments and tests help in the learning process	18.0	17.7	53.5	16.2	4.8	3.05	1.302
	Health Issues	95	109	50	9	22	2.13	1.144
	Health Issues	33.5	38.4	17.6	2.8	7.7	3.05	1.302
8	Health Issues							
	Poor internet connectivity develops anxiety	52	32	119	64	17	2.87	1.138
	Health Issues	18.3	11.3	41.9	22.5	6.0	3.08	1.338



Online education leads to overuse/misuse of technologies	127	74	63	17	3	1.93	1.551
Excessive screen time is causing stress and affecting sleep	44.7	26.1	22.2	6.0	1.1	2.55	1.295
Online assessment creates more anxiety than traditional forms of assessment	70	68	84	43	19	1.96	1.102
	24.6	23.9	29.6	15.1	8.7		
	140	57	64	3	20		
	49.3	20.1	22.5	1.1	7.0		
B. Social Issues							
Online education is affecting daily normal life of students	98	93	58	13	22	2.18	1.184
Online education exposes unfair distribution of education to all the students	34.5	32.7	20.4	4.6	7.7	2.84	1.507
	104	25	14	95	46		
	36.6	8.8	4.9	33.5	16.2		

Source: Questionnaire: wileyonlinelibrary.com/journal/tb2

From the analysis of above table, regarding **General Issues**, most of the students felt that online classes are better than MOOCs (Mean=3.27), many students also felt physical classes are better than online classes (Mean=3.14). But students responded that during covid-19 pandemic online classes were best suitable platform to continue their education (Mean=3.09). Students responses were not good as for teachers are well trained for online classes (Mean=2.82).

Regarding **Content Delivery**, most students agreed but not happy about, adequate study materials are available online (Mean=2.99), and about teachers use different online teaching tools (Mean=2.99). But students responses are not so good about PPT presentations make class more understandable (Mean=2.60).

With regard to **Interaction between Teachers and Students during Online Classes**, students agree that use of digital pen and white board make classes more interactive (Mean=3.05), students not so agreed as to, if its allowed for students to use chat box to post messages, classes will be more interactive (Mean=2.63), and as to, make the classes more interactive, teachers and students should switch on videos and show their faces (Mean=2.54). Unfortunately, students do not agree as to interaction is better in offline classes than online classes (Mean=1.89).

As regards the **Assessment of students**, students are reluctant to agree that online tests and quizzes effectively evaluate the knowledge of students (Mean=2.82) and not accepting as to regular assignments and tests help in the learning process (Mean=2.13).

About **Health Issues**, many students felt that poor internet connectivity develops anxiety (Mean=2.87), and as to excessive screen time is causing stress and affecting sleep (mean=2.55). But not agreed to, online assessment creates more anxiety than traditional forms of assessment (Mean=1.96) and as to online education leads to overuse/misuse of technologies (Mean=1.93).

Concerning **Social Issues**, students are not ready to accept that, online education exposes unfair distribution of education to all the students (Mean=2.84) and also to online education is affecting daily normal life of students (Mean=2.18).

Correlation

H0 - There is no significant correlation between the two variables.

H1 - There is significant correlation between the two variables.

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Reject the null hypothesis if Sig is less than 0.01

If r is upto 0.30 weak correlation

If r is between 0.30 and 0.70 moderate correlation

If r is more than 0.70 high correlation

Correlation between variables 'Teachers are well trained for online classes' and 'Teachers use teaching tools like white board, attendance recorder, notes sharing ways, switching to audio and videos whenever necessary etc., easily'.

Variable 1	Variable 2	r	Sig	Result
Teachers are well trained for online classes	Teachers use teaching tools like white board, attendance recorder, notes sharing ways, switching to audio and videos whenever necessary etc., easily	.103	.084	Null Hypothesis Accepted

As r is less than 0.30, there is a weak positive correlation between the variables. As sig = 0.084 which is more than 0.01, null hypothesis is accepted. That is, even if teachers are well trained for online classes, they do not use online teaching tools.

Correlation between variables 'During covid-19 pandemic online classes were best suitable platform' and 'Online tests and quizzes effectively evaluate the knowledge of students'.

Variable 1	Variable 2	r	Sig	Result
During covid-19 pandemic online classes were best suitable platform	Online tests and quizzes effectively evaluate the knowledge of students	.047	.427	Null Hypothesis Accepted

Here r is less than 0.30, so one can say that there is a weak positive correlation between the variables. As sig = 0.427, which is more than 0.01, null hypothesis is accepted. Means, students feel that during pandemic online classes were best suitable platform to continue education, but online tests do not effectively evaluate the knowledge of the students.

Correlation between variables 'During covid-19 pandemic online classes were best suitable platform' and 'Online education leads to overuse/misuse of technologies'.

Variable 1	Variable 2	r	Sig	Result
During covid-19 pandemic online classes were best suitable platform	Online education leads to misuse of	.259	.000	Null Hypothesis Rejected

Here, r is less than 0.30 showing a weak correlation between the variables. As sig = 0.000, which is less than 0.01, null hypothesis is rejected. Means there is statistically significant relationship between during covid-19 pandemic online classes were best suitable platform to continue education, but this leads to overuse/misuse of technologies too.



Suggested Measures

Based on the study and analysis of data, few suggestions are noted:

- Teachers are needed to be well trained on technical aspects for conducting online classes.
- Students felt that there are not enough study materials available online and they are required to provide more study materials while conducting online classes.
- Teachers need to use more online teaching tools during the online classes imparting knowledge.
- As students feel that PPT presentations are not making classes more understandable, teachers need to use different teaching methodologies such as for online classes like simulation, role play, interacting with the students, subject videos for better understanding, using technical tools, flipped classroom, gamification etc.
- Teachers should not use chat box as a means of interaction with students. They need to connect directly with students on audio, as students feel connecting through video also is not a good method of interaction.
- As students feel online tests, quizzes and assignments are not effectively evaluate their knowledge, teachers need to find out different ways of evaluating the students like giving some mini projects to do the research on the subject to know the practical application of the subject, giving presentation topics etc.
- As usage of technology for online classes create more anxiety and overuse of the technology, teachers can reduce the number of classes and make it more classes and involve students by trying to give more research based projects for better understanding of the subject. Teachers can counsel the students about proper usage of technologies and also request the parents to keep a check on students' internet usage otherwise than for online classes.

Conclusion

Online education has been going on in most of the institutions simultaneously with physical classes. Many institutions were using E-learning methods and tools for different reasons as a part of their education system. But covid-19 pandemic made it inevitable. This empirical study is to know the students perception about online classes during pandemic on various aspects. Students agreed that online education was a possible alternative to impart education during pandemic. But in the study it is understood that there is a lot of scope for improvement for online classes. As pandemic happened suddenly, government and institutions did not get any time to prepare themselves about the infrastructure and training of the teachers about the online classes. This need to be addressed now as online classes is part of education system in India. Government, IT companies and institutions need to join hands in developing strategies to make online classes easy and interesting considering the health & social issues.

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