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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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PERCEPTION OF COLLEGE STUDENTS TOWARDS ONLINE CLASSES DURING COVID-19 LOCKDOWN-2020

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ABSTRACT

The education system of nations all over the world has seen a tremendous change due to the outbreak of the deadly COVID-19. It has closed the golden gates of educational institutions in the world which has impacted world's student population. In India this pandemic is first and foremost a health crisis now. Now a day the development of information communication technology is contributing to many innovations in teaching and learning both online and offline. In order to continue teaching and learning practices in educational institutions, our education system has resorted to online mode of learning, which is giving quick solution to the crises. We are using various virtual platforms for conducting online classes such as Google Meet, Google Class room, Webex and Zoom by various institutions in India. In this context, this paper shows the students perception about the online learning during this pandemic situation. The findings concluded that the majority of students' perception towards online classes is positive towards online learning during COVID-19 lockdown 2020.

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INTRODUCTION

When the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, governments of all nations imposed nationwide lockdowns. This halted academic activities in most of the educational institutions and it directly affected the instructional activities. In this circumstance, the online learning comes as a savior to continue the teaching learning process. In Tamil Nadu (A State of India) all educational institutions are adopting the best use of this online learning technology. Today it shows the commitment between the teacher and the students as close as possible to the real classroom experience (Sathish *et al.*, 2020). Almost all educational institutions all over the world have evolved new means to reach the students (Rakhi Gaur1 *et al.*, 2020). The institutions not only conducted online classes but also online examinations (Bisaria & Saxena, 2020).

Online education: There is no doubt that ICT has become an integral part of everyday life and has transformed the learning environment to the extent that ICT literacy has become a functional requirement for education. The integration of technology in education has not only changed how students learn but has also changed the teaching pedagogies by promoting collaborative activities (Haddad, 2003). Online learning is a type of instructive method which is delivered to the students via internet using computers, mobiles, laptop, tablet, i-pad, etc. While learning through online classes, the acquiring of knowledge becomes very easy for the learning community.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sathish *et al.* (2020) analysed the study on shift of traditional classroom methods to online teaching methods in higher education scenario during lockdown. In this period, an online survey was conducted from 90 college teachers and they concluded the online teaching is better than the traditional method but it should be a time-consuming affair on the part of the teachers and there is a significant difference exist between the traditional and online teaching methods. Khadijah Mukhtar *et al.* analysed the perception of teachers and students regarding its advantages, limitations and recommendations during COVID-19 pandemic era. They conducted qualitative case study from March 2020 to April 2020. They used maximum variation sampling technique, 12 faculty members and 12 students from University College of Medicine and University College of Dentistry, Lahore were invited to participate. The merits included online learning, comfort, accessibility, while the restrictions involved inefficiency and difficulty in maintaining academic integrity. They recommended that were to train faculty on using online modalities and developing lesson plan with reduced cognitive load and increased interactivities. Finally, they concluded the online learning encourage the student-centered learning and they are easily manageable during this lockdown situation. Based on these reviews, the present study was undertaken for college students.

Research questions: This study examined the following research questions.

1. How did the students prefer hours to access the online learning?
2. What is the intention of students to use online learning in the future?

Objective of the study

- To assess the perception of the students towards online classes during Covid-19 lock down -2020.

METHODOLOGY

The researchers have adopted a quantitative research design based on a survey method through online questionnaire. The analytical, descriptive method has been used. The survey method is employed in this research because it is an efficient way of collecting information from the respondents.

Population and sample of the study: The population of the study consists of second-year undergraduate students from identified Arts and Science colleges. From the population, about 70 students are taken as sample through online survey.

Research tool and data collection: Based on the objectives of the study, the investigators have prepared a Google-form with seven statements related to online classes. The prepared research tool was sent through WhatsApp with requisition. Finally, the researcher received 70 online data. The collected data were tabulated and analysed.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION (Statement-wise)

It is evident from the Table 1 that 58.57% college students attended online classes from rural area when compared to their counterparts (41.43%). From the Table 2, 72.86% of college students are having interest to attend the online classes regularly. Where as 27.14% are not interested to attend the online classes regularly. It is clear from the Table 3 that 42.86% of college students spent more than three hours per day for online learning. Whereas 25.71% of students spent 2-3 hours, 17.14% of students spent 1-2 hours and 14.28% of students spent below one hour daily for online learning. According to Table 4, it is obvious that 42.86% of college students agreed that online classes are useful for deepening their subject knowledge and about 10% of them strongly agreed. 14.28% of students disagreed and 12.86% strongly disagreed that online learning is not useful for them to increase their subject knowledge. The Table 5 indicates that 48.57% of college students agreed that online learning is useful for improving their learning competencies while 7.14% of them strongly agreed. 15.71% of students disagreed and 20% of them strongly disagreed that online learning did not improve their learning competencies. From the Table 6, it is evident that 44.28% of college students agreed that the institutions to which they belong encourage their responses and 11.43% strongly agreed the same. 11.43% and 7.14% of students disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively. Table 7 shows that 38.58% and 10% of college students agreed and strongly agreed respectively that this is the right time to achieve their goals in learning via online. About 10% of students disagreed and 7.14% of students strongly disagreed the statement.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Educational sector has been considered as one among the major beneficiaries of ICT. Educational institutions have realized the importance of adopting e-resources and are now investing in building ICT infrastructure to help both teachers and students in teaching as well as research process. It has become inevitable for both teachers and students to adopt e-Resources for their academic purpose and knowledge betterment.

Table 1. Residential area of students

Response	Frequency (70)	Percentage (100%)
Rural	41	58.57
Urban	29	41.43

Table 2. I have an interest to attend online classes regularly

Response	Frequency (70)	Percentage (100%)
Yes	51	72.86
No	19	27.14

Table 3. Hours spent per day for online learning

Response	Frequency (70)	Percentage (100%)
Below 1 hours	10	14.28
1-2 hours	12	17.14
2-3 hours	18	25.71
Above 3 hours	30	42.86

Table 4. The online learning is useful for deepening your subject knowledge

Response	Frequency (70)	Percentage (100%)
Strongly Agree	7	10.00
Agree	30	42.86
Undecided	14	20.00
Disagree	10	14.28
Strongly Disagree	9	12.86

Table 5. Online classes will improve your learning competencies

Response	Frequency (70)	Percentage (100%)
Strongly Agree	5	7.14
Agree	34	48.57
Undecided	14	20.00
Disagree	11	15.71
Strongly Disagree	6	20.00

Table 6. Institutions encourage your responses in online learning

Response	Frequency (70)	Percentage (100%)
Strongly Agree	8	11.43
Agree	31	44.28
Undecided	18	25.71
Disagree	8	11.43
Strongly Disagree	5	7.14

Table 7. This is right time to achieve your goals in learning via online

Response	Frequency (70)	Percentage (100%)
Strongly Agree	7	10.00
Agree	27	38.58
Undecided	15	21.43
Disagree	7	10.00
Strongly Disagree	14	7.14

Many research studies stated that Online Learning Environment is highly effective and facilitates the comprehensions and assimilation of concepts in various discipline. Undoubtedly, the COVID pandemic has brought about a sea-change in the methodology of imparting education. Online classes have replaced classroom-based education. The findings of the study shows that majority of the college students have positive perception towards online classes during this pandemic situation. It is concluded that the college students are ready to accept the technological supported online classes. Hence, this study recommends the policy makers to integrate online classes along with regular classes and make changes in the curriculum itself.

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