



CoVid-19: Unmasking the new face of Education

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ABSTRACT

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is a newly discovered infectious disease caused by a virus named "coronavirus." The lockdown due to COVID 19 has largely affected the lives of students as they no more get to interact on a one on one basis with their teachers. This shift in education from traditional classroom learning to computer-based learning might be one of the largest educational experiments to date. As the online teaching-learning process has become more prevalent in India due to COVID 19 pandemic, it becomes particularly important to know its growth and to know whether it's actually helping the students achieve what they expect out of college. The present study was therefore designed to understand the student's perspective, attitudes, and readiness about online classes being conducted at the University level. An Observational, Descriptive study was conducted. The data was collected using a Questionnaire. The present study was carried out amongst 200 students. After analyzing the results, it was found that 74% of the students liked studying through online classes. The most common reason (49%) as to why the students like studying online were that the study time becomes flexible, and they can study anytime they want. Lack of co-curricular activity was the most common issue (34%) of online classes, as reported by the students. Most of the students were found satisfied with the content and procedure of online teaching. About 30% of the students reported that they prefer their lecture being delivered through a PPT with an audio recording. The present study that was conducted among college students revealed that maximum students are in favor of studying through online classes, but they feel that there is a lack of co-curricular activities in the online mode of conducting classes. As the students are in favor of online classes, such classes must be continued with some interventions. Education Ministry must develop certain rules and guidelines wherein certain online activity sessions can be made compulsory along with regular lecture sessions.

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INTRODUCTION

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is a newly discovered infectious disease caused by a virus named "coronavirus." This disease is highly infectious in nature ([World Health Organization, 2020](#)).

As this disease is highly infectious, it can be easily transmitted from person to another via their respiratory droplets and different contact routes like hands, nose, and mouth ([Liu et al., 2020](#)).

Transmission through droplets can occur when the infected person is in close proximity (within 1 m)

with a normal individual. At such a time, the person having some respiratory symptoms like sneezing and coughing can easily pass the infection to a non-infected person with whom he is in close contact. The infection can also be transmitted through objects like utensils and clothes used by the infected person (Ong *et al.*, 2020).

The pandemic has hit around 211 countries of the world, affecting 1282931 people and claiming 72,774 lives across the world (World Health Organization, 2020).

India is not left behind. India reports 5194 cases and around 149 deaths (World Health Organization, 2020).

The government and different communities are working worldwide to control the situation and to limit the spread of this virus. As a result of this, people are advised to do nothing. As social distancing might help in limiting the spread of this virus, there has been lockdown in the country, and people are asked to sit at home.

India has the second-largest education system in the world after China (Cheney *et al.*, 2005).

Different sectors, including the education sector, have seen a setback due to the COVID 19 being at a rise.

The lives of every individual in the country that has been largely affected by various organizations becoming shut after the directions of honorable Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi Ji. As every other individual's life getting affected, the life of a student is no less affected. The schools and colleges have since a lot many years practiced classroom teaching, which includes a one on one interaction of students and teachers. The lockdown due to COVID 19 has largely affected the lives of students as they no more get to interact on a one on one basis with their teachers.

At this time of crisis, it becomes challenging to keep the education continuous and unaffected due to this disastrous pandemic. There has to be a system where there is togetherness between the students and teachers without actually being together.

Distance learning is seen to have become widespread from the past 10 years (Harper *et al.*, 2004).

Various studies have been conducted where it appears that different institutions have been adopting and doing well with this new learning environment (Oblinger and Kidwell, 2000).

In this time of crisis, various educational organizations have come together and developed a variety of

platforms in order to participate in online teaching-learning projects (Dutton *et al.*, 2002; Epper and Garn, 2003). As a result of this approach, more and more students now have the facilities to progress in their educational field while being safe in the home premises (Wojciechowski and Palmer, 2005; Robinson, 1996).

The students already working and having family responsibility can largely benefit from the online learning method as this gives them a greater flexible schedule that they can adapt and learn from (Mansour and Mupinga, 2007).

Apart from the different advantages, there are certain challenges which the online mode of teaching and learning throws at faculty members as well as the students (Palloff and Pratt, 2003).

Different online courses have been developed by various agencies like SWAYAM and MOOCs (Ataizi, 2005; Ministry of human resource development, 2020). And students have been taking up different courses to gain more knowledge. But the system of taking online classes in colleges for regular course completion was never adopted by various institutions. This has led to a more digital system of teaching as well as learning. Digitalization in the learning and teaching process has largely affected the present state of education in our country. The disruption caused by COVID 19 somehow forced the institutions to conduct classes online. As COVID 19 spread like fire in the forest, all educational institutions were shut down as the country followed quarantine policies and lockdown, which could possibly prevent the spread of CoVid-19. This has led to a change of face of education from traditional classroom teaching to technology-based online teaching.

Learning is a continuous process, and amidst the lockdown of 21 days, the government and private institutions transformed from classroom teaching to online teaching to keep the learning process on the go.

Many government and private institutions, including IITs and IIMs, have taken a leap from conventional classroom teaching to digital teaching. They have started teaching their students through online classes so that the global COVID-19 pandemic does not affect the student's education.

The campuses have been shut down, but professors are busy working from home, preparing effective study material for their students so that there isn't any halt in the teaching-learning process. Teachers are working hard and are available for students at all times of the day in order to reduce the hardship and disruption being caused to the students across

the country at this point in time due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

This shift in education from traditional classroom learning to computer-based learning might be one of the largest educational experiments to date.

A teacher's job is not just making their students learn. Their job is to overall groom their students letting them know what is right and what is wrong.

The world of education has been greatly affected by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Learning online through online lecture sessions has a lot of advantages over traditional classroom learning. Online learning involves the use of less paper, and it involves saving time with easy and quick access to a wide source of information. Along with this, it also saves time for traveling. Online learning gives a big advantage to the students as the student can study anywhere and at any time he wants with a few exceptions (Carnevale, 2000; Dutton *et al.*, 2002).

Digital learning has led to a reduction in cost and has taken the impact and reach of resources for students as well as teachers to another level.

However, it has been observed that the things taught through online mode have a lot many challenges for the educator as well as the learner (Howell *et al.*, 2003).

Very shortly, learning digitally will be the new face of Indian education. It will be a very useful and constructive means for both teachers and students in the coming years.

The government is working with various agencies to build up new platforms where students, teachers and parents can closely connect.

There has been a recent acceptance of the online teaching-learning process by the students across the country today. Teachers and students are now largely joining different platforms through which e-learning can be easily done.

As the online teaching-learning process has become more prevalent in India due to COVID 19 pandemic, it becomes particularly important to know its growth and to know whether it's actually helping the students achieve what they expect out of college.

The present study was therefore designed to understand the student's perspective, attitudes and readiness about online classes being conducted at the University level.

METHODOLOGY

An observational, descriptive study based on a questionnaire designed was conducted amongst the students' studying at Graphic Era Hill University, Dehradun, Uttarakhand.

The study population was selected randomly.

The questionnaire was prepared in the form of Google docs and the link was sent to the students through the mail. A total of 200 students participated in the study.

The questionnaire designed for the students consisted of 8 questions regarding the socio-demographic characteristics and questions to assess whether they are like studying online and what are the reasons for their like and dislike about online classes.

The students who part in the study were studying in various departments of Graphic Era Hill University, Dehradun.

The raw data which was obtained through the survey were analyzed using SPSS for statistical analysis and the results were calculated.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

During the study period, a total of 200 students participated in the study.

Out of the entire study population, 128 were males and 72 were women, as shown in Figure 1.

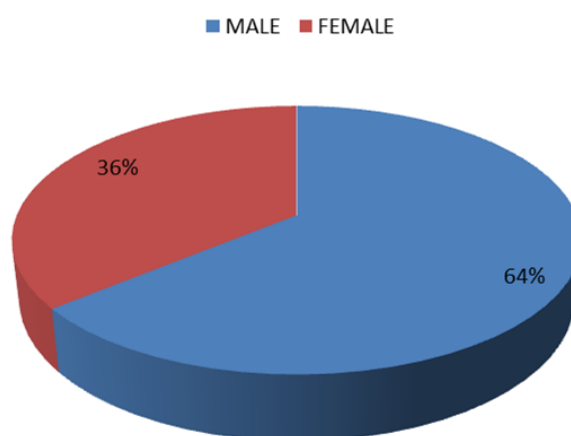


Figure 1: Gender distribution of the study population

The study population was the students enrolled in various courses of Graphic Era Hill University. Maximum respondents were from the age group of 20-22 years (41%) followed by individuals belonging to 22-24 years (32%), as shown in Figure 2.

The students were from various departments highest being from the Pharmacy department (59%), fol-

Table 1: Perception regarding online classes

Perception	No. of Individuals*	Percentage**
Like	148*	74%**
Dislike	52*	26%**

* Results show Number of individuals who like and dislike online classes ** Results show Percentage of individuals who like and dislike online classes

Table 2: Reason for liking online classes

Reason	No. of Individuals*	Percentage**
Face to face interaction is limited	20*	10%**
Study time becomes flexible	98*	49%**
Study location becomes flexible	63*	32%**
No need to visit the campus	10*	5%**
Other reasons	9*	5%**

* Results show Number of individuals reason of liking online classes ** Results show Percentage of individuals reason of liking online classes

Table 3: Drawback of Online classes

Drawback	Percentage*
No cocurricular activities	34%*
Not meeting friends	26%*
Lack of two way communication	12%*
Net connectivity Issue	7%*

* Results show Percentage of individuals reason of disliking online classes

Table 4: Choice of the source of online classes

Source	Percentage*
PPT	14%*
PPT with Audio	39%*
Video	30%*
Webinars and Video Conferencing	17%*

* Results show Percentage of individuals choice of the source of online classes

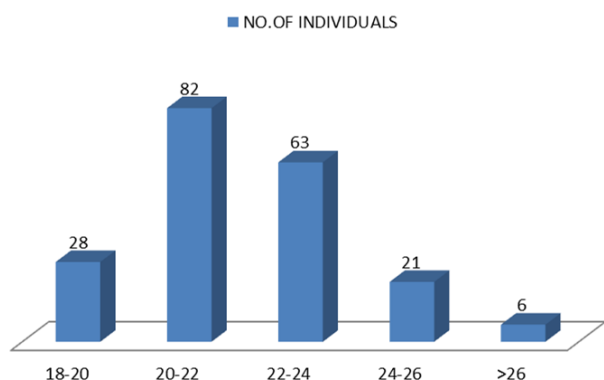


Figure 2: Age distribution of the study population

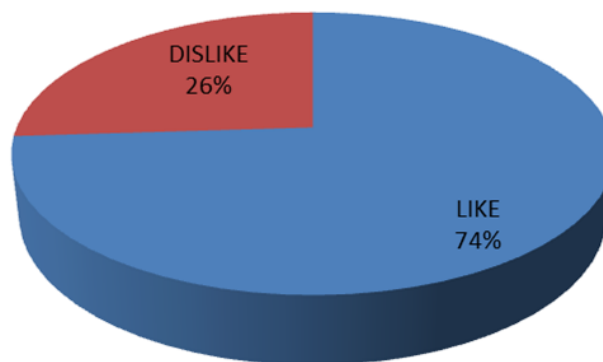


Figure 3: Perception regarding online classes

lowed by Management (13%), Computer Applications (10%) and BTech (8%).

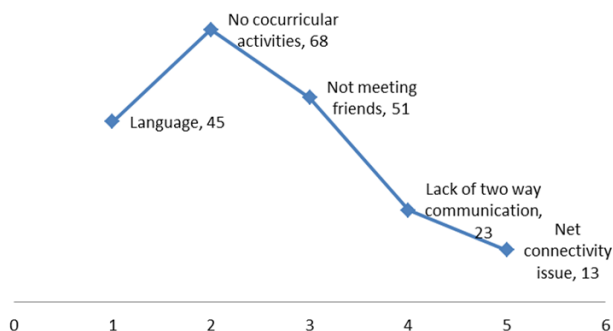


Figure 4: Drawback of online classes

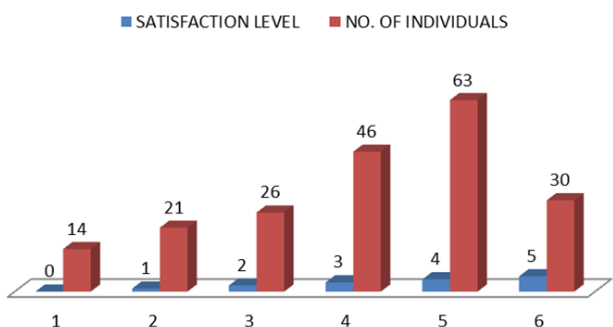


Figure 5: Satisfaction of students with online classes

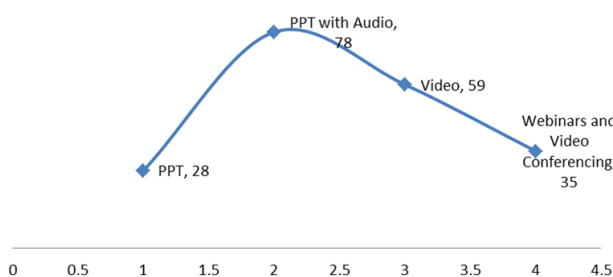


Figure 6: Choice of the source of online classes

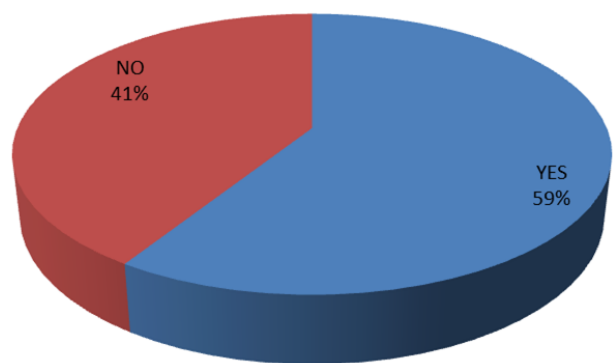


Figure 7: Response on continuity of online classes

From the data collected, the study population reported that maximum students like studying through online classes. A large bulk of 74% of students reported that they enjoy e-learning, as shown in Figure 3 and Table 1.

“Study time becomes flexible” (49%) with online classes was the most common reason found of students liking online classes. The above-stated reason was followed by “Study location becomes flexible” (32%), “Face to face interaction becomes limited” (10%), “No need to visit the campus” (5%) and other miscellaneous reasons (5%). The result has been depicted in Table 2.

Certain reasons were identified, which could possibly play a negative role for students when it comes to online classes. The most commonly stated problem with online class was “A lack of co-curricular activities” (34%), followed by “Not meeting friends” (26%), “Language issue” (23%), Lack of two-way communication” (12%) and “Problems with net connectivity” (7%). Table 3 and Figure 4 clearly describe the above-stated reasons.

The satisfaction level of the students was rated on a scale of 0 to 5. 0 being “completely unsatisfied” and 5 being “completely satisfied,” with 1 being “mostly unsatisfied,” 2 being “somewhat unsatisfied,” 3 being “somewhat satisfied” and 4 being “mostly satisfied.” After analysis of the result that 35% were “mostly satisfied” 23% were “somewhat satisfied,” 15% were “completely satisfied,” 13% were “somewhat unsatisfied,” 11% were “mostly unsatisfied,” and 7% were “completely unsatisfied” as shown in Figure 5.

There are different means available through which online teaching can be effectively carried out. After analyzing the results, the most common source of the online classes mentioned by students was “PPTs with Audio” (34%), followed by “Videos” (26%), Webinars and Video conferencing (23%) and PPTs (6%) as clearly described in Figure 6 and Table 4.

From the data collected, it was reported that a good amount of students (59%) prefer the online continuity mode of teaching and the same is depicted in Figure 7.

CONCLUSION

The present study revealed that maximum students are in favor of studying through online classes, but they feel that there is a lack of co-curricular activities in the online mode of conducting classes. The universities should design a plan, so that along with studying their regular course, students also get to participate in some fun-loving activities so that they

wholeheartedly continue to have an interest in the online lectures.

Future Scope

As everyone knows that when talking about surveys so larger, the sample size more precise will be the result. Keeping this point in view, the study can be carried out in a larger group of students so as to understand their beliefs and perception about online classes.

At this point in time, where the entire nation is fighting to win over Corona, it is very important to keep an effective education process continuous, which the students enjoy and gain from.

Such a study would help the Education Ministry develop certain rules and guidelines wherein certain online activity sessions can be made compulsory along with regular lecture sessions.

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