

Transition from Offline Mode to Online Learning Paradigm: A Study of Ambala Division Students

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ABSTRACT

In today's competitive world, a student must be well equipped with quality knowledge. The educated youth is an aspiration to our globe. When the teachers are conversant with the new ways of teaching that have been developed due to advanced technology, then it gives a ray of hope to the future of the students. This study is to assess the choice of students between traditional learning and online learning. The students of schools and colleges have been targeted for the study. The right type of environment is a must for the students to be well trained. Depending upon the capability and skills of the students, they might have various preferences of learning. Some would prefer the virtual platform and the others might be comfortable with face to face learning methods. Virtual learning helps to connect the physical gap and allows the students to use the latest technology to study and broaden their cognitive aspects towards e-learning. The traditional learning environment can be best described as a deep learning platform where the students and teachers interact and create a vast pool of knowledge.

Objectives

The objective of the study is to assess the 1) the effectiveness of offline learning environment 2) impact of online teaching during COVID-19 3) the preference of offline mode of learning or online learning environment 4) need of blended learning for the students.

Keywords: *Learning, Knowledge, Offline Learning, Online Learning, Blended Learning, COVID-19*

Introduction

To augment knowledge among the students, learning system needs to be adaptive according to the students so that they are able to grab all the available opportunities. The students have different opinions regarding various methods of learning on the basis of learning styles (Akkoyunlu, Buket, et al., 2008). To some, the job of the instructor is to guide and act as a facilitator (Delialioglu, Omer, et al., 2007). Earlier the students used face to face mode of learning and with time, new methods of teaching came

into effect with the dominant use of computers and internet. Combination of both offline and virtual learning gave them proper interaction with the teacher along with online courses. The satisfaction of the students and their experience report the online course material to be more efficient (Singh, et al., 2012). Depending upon the capability and performance level of the students, their preferences for offline and online learning may vary. Many a times, there is an issue of engaging students in online activities and encouraging them to participate. UGC, MHRD and other associations have provided various action plans to overcome hindrances in online learning (Mishra, Lokanath, et al., 2020).

Traditional Learning Environment

The students are well equipped with the face to face learning system and also learn the use of computers in schools, colleges and universities. There are various platforms in traditional learning where the students can participate and involve themselves in many physical activities like sports. They get better understanding of the concept when there is physical presence of the teacher. The results showed the preference of students towards offline learning due to interaction and good understanding (Rachmah, Nurul, 2020).

The analysis of the present study shows that maximum students prefer effectiveness of offline learning environment because of face to face interaction, discussions, blackboard teachings etc. The teacher makes the best of efforts to give clarity to the student by using the blackboard or whiteboard. The students are active when they are physically present during the learning hours and tend to listen to their teachers when they are around. This concept of student centric learning strengthens their behavior to build up good critical thinking skills (Overby, Kimberly, 2011). The students are considered to participate actively in all the activities and do not let themselves to be passive recipients (Thamraksa, Chutima, 2003).

Traditional Learning is a platform where the students from different backgrounds meet and interact with each other. They get a chance to know backgrounds and cultures of various societies that exist. In this way, social barriers are eradicated from the society (Overby, Kimberly, 2011).

Online Learning Environment

The rapid use of computers and internet made it convenient for the students to slowly adapt themselves to online learning. Earlier, there was fear among the students especially students with disabilities to join the online courses due to lack of personal interaction (Wang, Ye Diana, 2014). Online courses gained importance among the students and they started enrolling for such programmes. According to the needs of the students, many online applications emerged. One such example is Testbook.com which launched its first GATE mock test series in January 2014 and further continued its journey with many online live classes and various applications for students of all the streams. There are many online courses for graphic designing and web designing as well. Apart from this, India has opened many platforms for Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) such as NPTEL in 2003, mooKIT in 2012, IITBX in 2014 and SWAYAM in 2016 (Chauhan, Jyoti, et al., 2017). Moreover, National Digital Library of India was launched in 2006 which provides access to learners and researchers of all fields to use the vast knowledge on digital library.

Another online tutoring firm- Byju's was founded in 2011 which gives interactive sessions and takes live doubt classes too. There are many other platforms for online education that include Unacademy, Adda 247, GradeUp, Vedantu which offer numerous subjects to students of different areas of study. The students get so many facilities in just one click without stepping out of their homes and become self motivated to use such platforms.

According to the present survey, technical problems and lack of interaction are the major issues faced by the students in online learning.

Online Learning during COVID-19

Online learning had spread rapidly when the issue of novel corona virus disease had come up. All schools, colleges and universities have coped up with the pandemic by using online tools and methods to reach out to students even in the remote areas. Best online teaching methods have been selected by the institutions. One of the platforms is Learning Management System (LMS) which has a structure well designed for the students so that they can learn even in the absence of physical presence of peer groups and faculty (Sandars, John, et al., 2020).

Online Learning is a platform where the students are able to join the classes with ease. The applications like ZOOM, Google Meet, and Cisco WebEx are used for taking online classes. They also get an option to view the recordings of their live classes even if they missed it due to some reasons. Moreover, they are now conversant with the technical knowledge. There have been numerous online webinars that have been attended by the students during this pandemic. This has led to increased level of awareness among them and has acquainted them to many knowledgeable subjects.

But with the pros to something, there are cons as well. There are certain issues that need to be met before shifting to purely online classes. The students might not like to go to schools even if the disease is under control and would lead to a long term loss to the education system (Mahaye, Ngogi Emmanuel, 2020). Some learners are not able to adapt to this environment due to technical or connectivity issues, which causes lack of motivation among them. They are not able to connect with the teachers due to such issues. After a saturation point, they start feeling exasperated because of lack of social groups, personal attention of the faculty and discussions among the peer groups.

Blended Learning

The potential of the students can be best used by blended learning. Traditional and online learning when used together as Blended Learning, acts as a boon for the students, which is used to enhance their work performance. The online study material provided to the students can be easily accessed by them which can later be discussed in offline sessions. The face to face learning environment may include workshops, case studies, and hands on projects to give them experience. Information technology and human resource are considered to be the two most important factors for good performance of blended learning environment (Poon, Joanna, 2013).

It gives them the opportunity to manage time if they are engaged in part time jobs. It provides the flexibility to adjust to both the learning environments. This is the reason of emergence of blended learning in the education system. Thus, the blended learning has become significant post COVID-19. It is requisite to cover 25% syllabus through online mode and 75% syllabus through offline mode for all the universities (UGC, 2020; Mishra, Lokanath, et al., 2020).

COVID-19- Bane for Learning

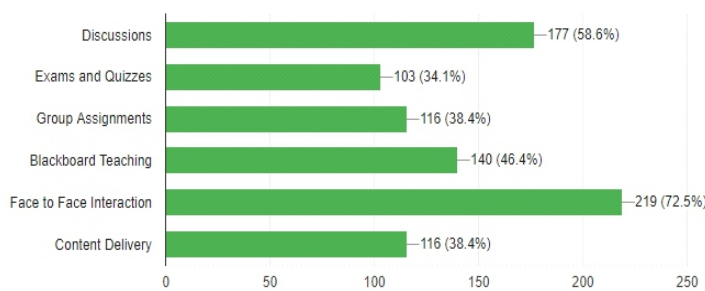
The outbreak of Corona virus Disease (COVID-19) has interrupted the smooth flow of education. Students have no choice but to accept the online teaching tools and techniques. Due to this unruly disease, students have to sit back and use only the virtual platform to study. This has surely made them shirkers. If the situation prevails, it will be disruptive for the youth and the future of our globe too. There is a sudden change in their learning methods along with the widely spread disease. Though the teachers are tremendously working for the students, but there is always a lack of personal interaction

between the two. Many students faced issues regarding the use of smart phones and computers because they were not conversant with these devices (Mishra, Lokanath, et al., 2020). The problem needs to be met at the earliest before it hampers the growth and development of the youth. This has been a real struggle for them as there are various hindrances on the path of online learning. The ubiquitous influence of COVID-19 has been felt by the entire globe.

Results and Discussions

As the chosen topic is related to online and offline learning, data has been collected from school and college students of Ambala Division and on the basis of collected data, following results have been analyzed. One-third data has been collected from school students and two-third data from the college students.

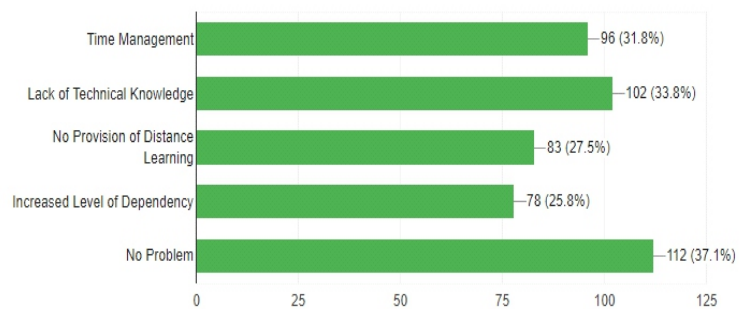
Effective Aspects of Offline Learning
302 responses



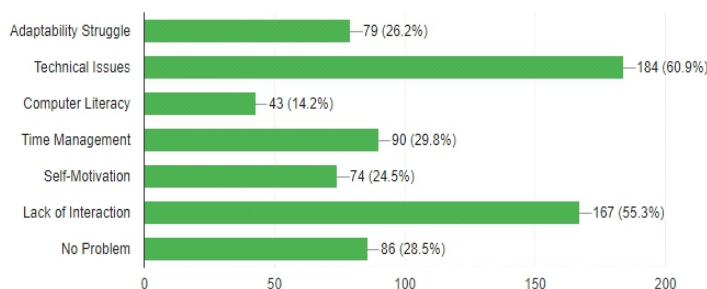
The aspects which are considered to be effective for offline learning include face to face interaction answered by 72.5 % respondents , discussions by 58.6 % and blackboard teaching by 46.4%.

Many respondents do not face any problem in traditional learning which comprises 37.1%; lack of technical knowledge is an issue for 33.8% respondents and time management for 31.8%.

Problems faced in Traditional Learning
302 responses



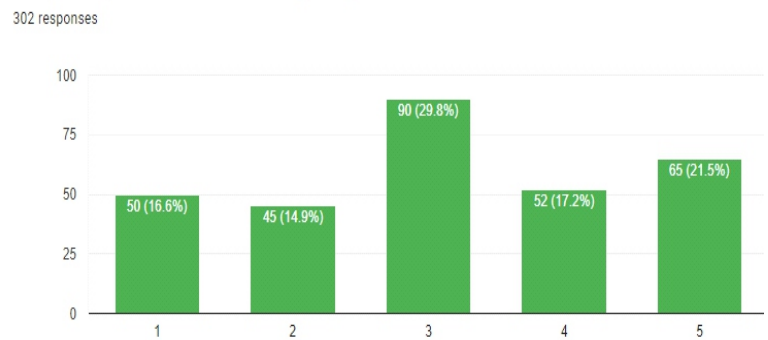
Problems faced during Online Learning
302 responses



There are many problems faced during online learning whereby 60.9% respondents replied technical issues as the major problem, lack of interaction by 55.3% respondents and time management by 29.8%.

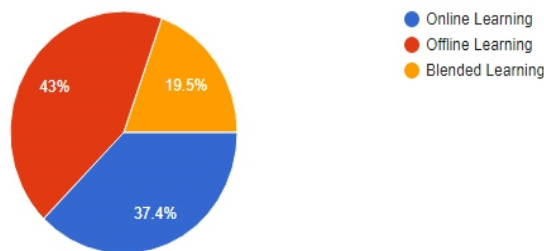
The experience of the students regarding online learning during COVID-19 has been rated on a scale denoting 1 as Worst and 5 as Best. 16.6% respondents consider it as worst and 21.5% consider it as best. The maximum respondents 29.8% rate their experience as moderate.

Rate your experience of online learning during COVID 19.



Which mode of learning would you prefer post COVID 19?

302 responses



43% respondents have chosen offline learning environment as their preference post COVID 19, 37.4% respondents have chosen online learning and blended learning has been chosen by 19.5%.

Conclusion

The use of books, blackboard teaching, discussions and face to face interaction were earlier a part of the students' life. With the passage of time, the students started adopting online courses to due to complexity of issues like lack of interaction and group activities. Virtual learning has provided a platform to master knowledge from any part of the world. With a drastic change in the learning environment during COVID-19, the students have acquainted themselves to the growing need of virtual learning. When the teachers are ingenious enough to overcome the hindrances faced by the students during online learning, then this proves to be helpful. They must have the ability to design the curriculum according to the interests of the students. The content, presentation and concept clarity depicts the excellence of the instructor. On the other hand, a student should be dynamic enough to espouse blended learning. As we say, an inner motivation drives a person to do the best among the others. So if a student really wants to learn, he will make umpteen efforts to get over all the impediments on the way.

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