



## Research Article

# ONGOING EXPERIENCES OF STUDENTS ABOUT ONLINE LEARNING DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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**Abstract:** The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the entire educational system. It results in shut down of schools all across the world. This dramatically changed the entire educational system, with the rise of e-learning, where teaching is undertaken on digital platforms. And these drastic changes make many online learning platforms to offering free access to their services. This unplanned and rapid move to online learning without any training, insufficient bandwidth, and no preparation will put challenges in educational process. Many learners without reliable internet connections and/or technology struggle to participate in e-learning. So, it is a need to find out the positive and negative points of digital learning platform and present suggestions for its improvement. Thus, to know the experiences and challenges faced by the students in digital platform during learning this study was conducted. For this study, questionnaire was digitalized on GoogleForms and link was shared via Whatsapp, facebook, sms and through electronic- mails. In this way, data of 150 respondents was received and were consider as ultimate sample size.

**Keywords:** E-learning, COVID-19, Students' experiences, Digital platform

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## Introduction

Now a days online learning is the most popular and newest form of distance education. During the last decade, online learning had a remarkable growth and had a major impact on higher education. According to a survey of more than 2500 institutions, it was found that in 1998, only few students were attending online lectures, while in 2009, more than 5.6 million students were taking an online course [1].

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected the normal life an individual to a great extent, especially creating obstacles for school and college going students. As a result, the various institutions (schools, colleges and universities) have been forced to conduct lectures through online mode instead of taking traditional classes as they found it the only way of imparting knowledge.

Online classes involve the use of internet, computers, networking and multimedia technologies to create a virtual classroom, where teacher and students can communicate. Online learning has led to the full exploitation of IT in improving the teaching and learning ways, along with delivering learning programmes to more students at a low cost [2,3]. There have been various debates and thorough studies on the positive aspects and strategies of online learning and teaching process and pros and cons of online learning, which is not the focus of this study. Instead, this study's focus is on examining the effectiveness of online learning platforms and to know the perceived experiences of the learners.

## Material and Methods

In this study, data was collected on online learning experiences of learners. Colleges and Universities going students were targeted for the data collection. For data collection, an open-ended questionnaire was constructed by viewing the available literatures. Prepared questionnaire was digitalized in Google Forms. Link of Google form was created and disseminated among the students through email IDs, whatsapp groups, and through SMS. Contact learners were asked to share the link of with other learners also. In this way, data of 150 respondents was received and were consider as ultimate sample size.

## Results and Discussion

Students' age range was from 18 to 40 years. Most students' age ranges were between 19 and 27 years. The average age of the students were 22.64 years. Survey responses indicated that 52 per cent of the students were pursuing graduation followed by 30 per cent pursuing post- graduation and 18 per cent were the research scholars [Table-1].

Table-1 Education status of respondents

Parameter	Total
Age (in years $\pm$ S.D.)	22.64 $\pm$ 3.20
Education (% students)	
Graduation	52
Post-Graduation	30
Doctor of Philosophy	18

From [Table-2], it is revealed that majority of the students (88%) had experience of less than three months in attending the online lectures while only one per cent of the students were engaged in online education since a long duration.

Table-2 Online classes experience

Online classes experience (% students)	Total
Less than 3 months	88
3 to 6 months	11
More than 6 months	1

Figures are percentages and rounded to the nearest whole number

Data thus collected, revealed that majority (67 percent) uses Zoom application followed by 39 percent Whatsapp, 32 percent Google classroom, 17 percent used Google Meet, 16 percent used Google Duo, YouTube (11%), Microsoft Team (8%), Vedantu (4%) and Google Hangout and Coursera both one percent each.

## Conclusion

From the above findings it was concluded that students felt that they learn better in physical classrooms, online education is stressful and affecting their health. Students also reported that online assessment methods lead to cheating and copying. This COVID-19 pandemic has led to a widespread adoption of online education.

Table-4 Experiences of online learning

Statements	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Online lectures have similar discipline as one has in face-to-face/ physical classes.	29	32	39
Exam pattern is similar in both physical and virtual (online) classes.	17	30	53
Physical class brings in more interaction between students and teachers.	81	12	7
The queries get easily resolved in online classes than physical classes.	24	30	46
Students act more competitive during online lectures as compared to physical lectures.	21	23	56
The course completed through online lectures has more recognition in the job market when compared to physical lectures.	21	33	46
Assignments and presentations are taken more effectively in online classes as compared to physical classes.	40	28	33
Students are more attentive and participative during online lectures as compared to face-to-face lectures.	24	23	53
Discussion and idea sharing is more intense during online lectures as compared to physical lectures.	28	28	44
Online classes are more viable considering the time availability with the students as compared to physical classes.	49	26	25
It is easy to attend online classes simultaneously with other activities like job or business.	71	14	15
Online courses are budget friendly for the students.	61	25	14
Online classes offer the benefit of attending the lectures at any convenient place which is not possible during physical lectures.	85	10	5
Online classes offer the flexibility of doing multitasks which is not offered by physical classes.	74	16	10
Students are able to attend online lectures even when they are sick which might not be possible in physical class.	88	8	4
Online course is more time consuming as compared to physical classes.	28	28	44
Exams (quiz/ mid-term) conducted through online platform are more effective when compared to offline mode of examination.	27	27	46
Online examination has more potential for cheating when compared to offline mode of examination.	48	27	25
Low speed internet acts as an obstacle for attending the classes online.	95	4	1
Attending the lectures online for a longer duration may result in weak eyesight and other health related issues.	73	18	9
It is easy to include students from other institutions in an online class which is not possible in physical class.	83	9	8
Online classes help in improving the technical (computer/ internet) skills.	72	19	9
Online classes make it possible to cater to individual needs.	38	34	28
Students lack self-motivation during online lectures.	48	29	23
Online lectures enable students to reflect and think critically.	37	35	28
Online class offers more innovative way of learning.	57	26	17

Figures are percentages and rounded to the nearest whole number

Table-3 Applications used for attending online lectures

Name of Applications (% students)	Total
Google Classroom	32
Whatsapp	39
Zoom	67
Google Hangout	1
YouTube	11
Facebook	2
Byju's	2
Google Meet	17
Google Duo	16
Vedantu	4
Microsoft Team	8
Coursera	1

\*Multiple responses, Figures are percentages and rounded to the nearest whole number

[Table-4], mentioned the experiences in term of agree, neutral and disagree with the statements regarding their learning through digital platform.

**Application of research:** Teachers should try to make online education better acceptable among students. By using innovative methods of teaching like power point presentations, animations, videos, case studies, simulations, discussion and many more.

**Research Category:** Agricultural Extension Education

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**Cultivar / Variety / Breed name:** Nil

**Conflict of Interest:** None declared

**Ethical approval:** This article does not contain any studies with human participants or animals performed by any of the authors.  
Ethical Committee Approval Number: Nil

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