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Research Article

IMPACT OF PANDEMIC ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL LEARNING HABITS OF THE STUDENTS

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Abstract: The pandemic has left out everlasting impact on all the sectors, especially in the education sector. To assess the impact of lockdown amidst COVID-19 on undergraduates students pursuing Agricultural Education. A structural questionnaire using Google form link was sent to the students using social media platforms like whatsapp and e-mail. A total 360 students responded and provided information regarding this survey. Then we used simple percentage distribution was used to assess the learning status of the study the socio economic profile and demographic information of the students. During the lockdown, due to the closure of the colleges every student is indulged in the online classes by hybrid mode. Many students used android mobile phones for attending the classes, only few of the students used personal computers and laptop for the online learning. Due to the online classes students faced various problems such as anxiety, stress, poor internet connectivity, unavailability of gadgets and unfavorable study environment at home. Mainly the students from the remote areas and marginalized sections faced many problems and enormous challenges for learning virtually during the pandemic. Professional degree like agriculture concentrate more on practical classes, this virtual mode of learning lack majorly the practical knowledge because it was unable to cover the practical classes, it was an major drawback of the distant learning. This study covers the pros and cons faced by the students pursuing the agricultural and allied studies. Considering the professional courses like agriculture strategies needed to be developed to build a resilient educational system in the state that will ensure to develop the skill for employability and the productivity of the young minds during the crisis period if any in the future.

Keywords: *Education, Agriculture, Physiological Learning Habits, Pandemic*

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Introduction

The COVID-19 Pandemic has been a major problem for the human society since December 2019. The first case was reported from Wuhan, China on 31st December, 2019 and later it became a pandemic disease. In India Covid-19 was first reported in Kerala on 27th January 2020. The pandemic created an economical and social disruption and devastating many millions of peoples at risk of falling into extreme poverty and even many lost their livelihood. It has created a huge impact on our educational system mainly in Agricultural Education, from 2020 it marks a dramatically different childhood experience that these young people will remember for the rest of their lives and a different teaching experience where teachers and students had to rapidly adapt, be creative and shift roles.

This different education service over many months has a potential of having huge negative impact on students skills and economic prospects for the rest of their lives. It has created major impact in Agricultural Education system, because the agricultural education consist of mainly practical and technical knowledge due to distance education system (on-line mode) caused severe lag in practical and technical knowledge, even there was many problems like network connectivity, unavailability of proper teaching tools and unavailability of smart phones also created an major issues in teaching-learning process. In this context, it is planned to conduct a systematic study to know the pros and cons of on-line education system of Agricultural Education.

Data Analysis

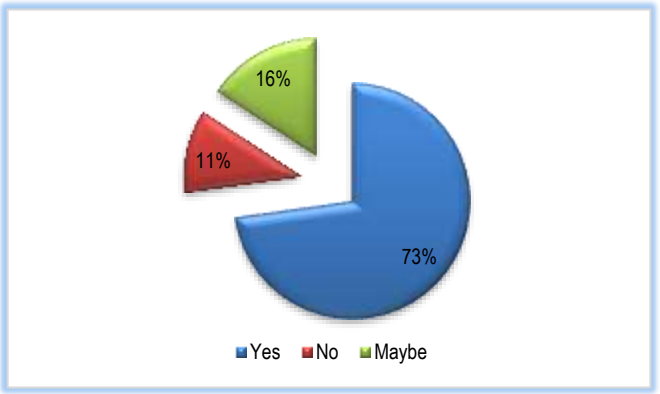
Demographic information of the respondents

We have received a total of 360 responses from the students. From analyzing the data we have received we have came to know that the average age of the respondents is 20.4083, the Male: Female ratio of the respondents is 37.2: 62.8 and average income from the received responses is 2, 42,541.

The medium of education we received is 17.2% is Tamil and 82.8% is English. The Syllabus they have studied we have received a response of 90% is state board, 9.7% is CBSE and 0.3% is ICSE. Around 60.8% of the students are from rural, 23.3% students are from semi urban and 15.8% are from urban.

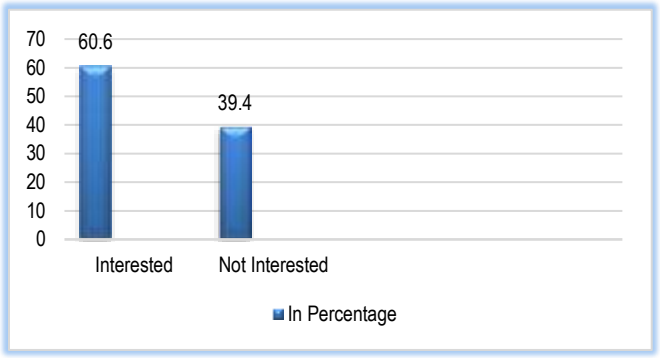
Do you feel that the COVID-19 has created a significant effect in you?

According to the responses received, almost 73 % of the responded claimed that the COVID-19 has created a significant effect in them. COVID-19 has created impact on major number of students who have attended the online classes. Also 16% of the respondent is not sure whether the COVID-19 has created a significant effect in them or not, also it did not create any significant effect on 11% of the students who have attended the online classes. By analyzing the data received from the students it is known that COVID-19 creating more significant effect on the students.



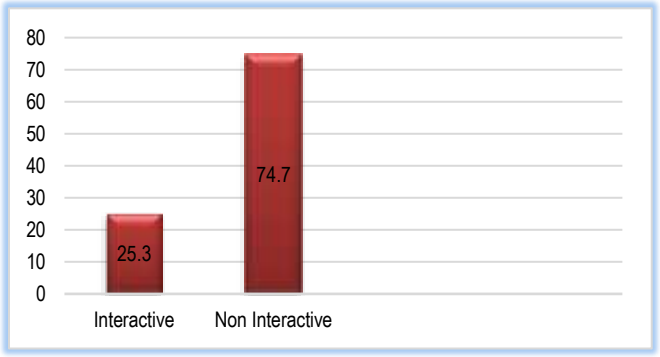
Are you interested in attending online classes?

We have received almost 360 responses from the students. From analyzing the responses we have came to know that, around 218 students (60.6%) are interested in attending the online classes and around 142 students (39.4%) are not interested in attending the online classes. We can conclude that students are interested and feeling comfortable in attending the classes in the virtual mode, beside many disadvantages of the virtual mode of learning.



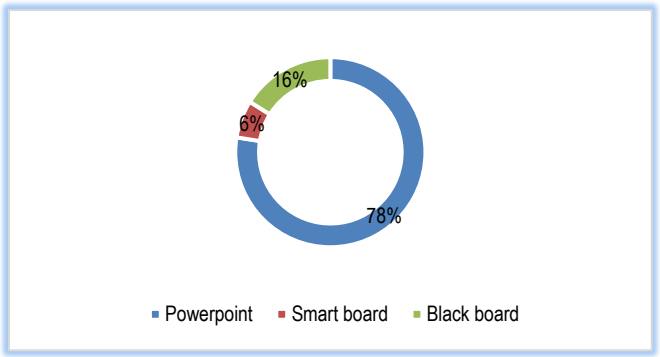
Online system of learning

Since the virtual mode of learning lack face to face communication, to know about the interactivness of the virtual mode of learning. We have interviewed several students based on this aspect, and from the responses. We have received around 91 (25.3%) students have stated that online classes are interactive and around 269 (74.7%) students have stated that online classes are non interactive. So, we may conclude that there is lack of interaction in the virtual mode of learning, some improvements or activities should be made to improve the interaction among the faculties and the students to ensure better learning.



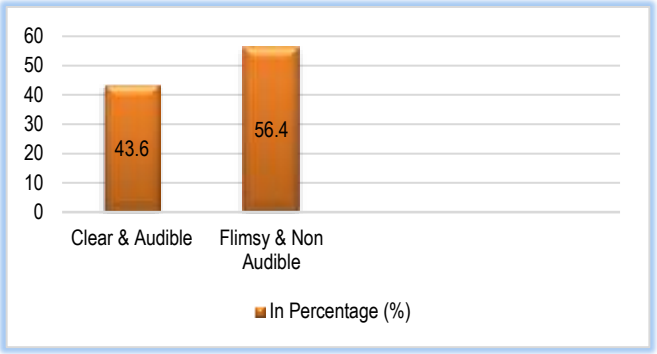
Usage of teaching aids

Several methods of teaching aids are used for teaching in the virtual mode of learning. To know about which method is majorly used for virtual mode of learning we have interviewed several students, in that we have came to know that around 279 (78%) students have responded that they have been learning using power point presentation, 58 (16%) students have be learning by using black board and 23 (6%) students have been learning using smart boards. From the responses we have conclude that an majority of power point presentation has been used as an teaching aid in virtual mode of teaching and it is the most easiest and convenient teaching aid to be used and also preferred by majority of the students.



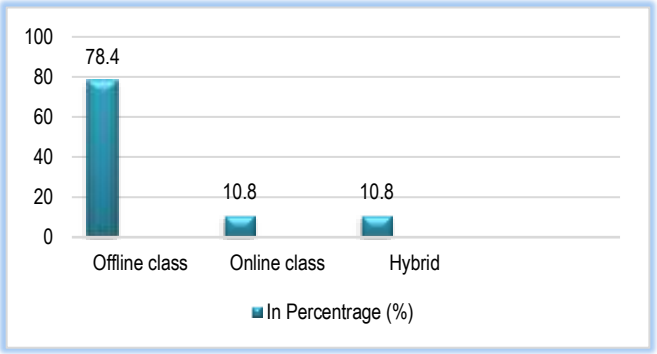
Audibility of online session

Audibility is one of the important factors in virtual mode of learning; it is affected by several factors like internet connectivity, gadgets used, and learning environment and so on. From the responses we have received, 203 (56.4%) students have stated that the audibility of the online classes is Flimsy and Non Audible, 157 (43.6%) have stated that the audibility of the online classes is Clear and audible. We can conclude that audibility aspect of the virtual mode of learning has to be improved, since without clear audibility the lessons cannot be conveyed to the students in the effective way.



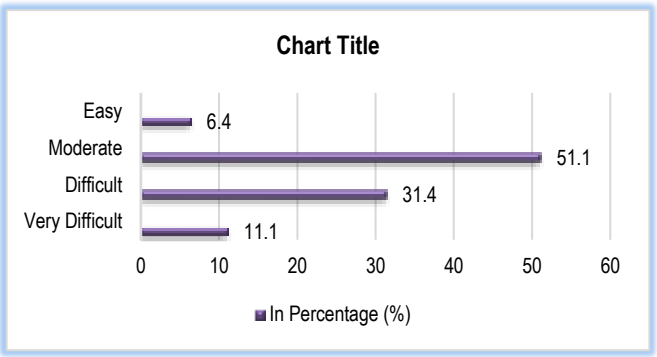
How do you like to be learning right now?

We have interviewed around 360 students to know about the impact of COVID-19 on the Agricultural Education. In that around 282 (78.4%) students preferred offline classes rather than virtual mode of learning, 39 (10.8%) students have preferred online class and 39 (10.8%) students have preferred hybrid classes. We may come to know that students are more comfortable with offline classes rather than virtual mode of education, because offline classes have more advantages, easier and effective method of learning.



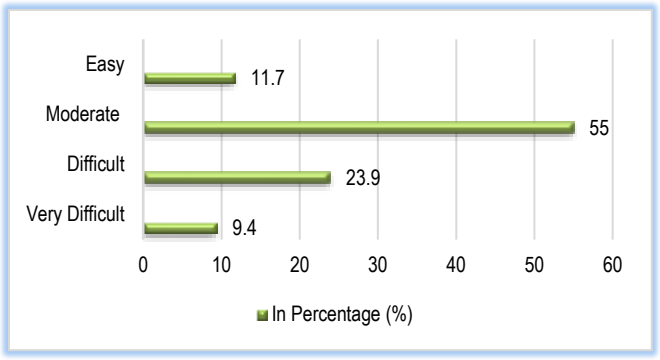
Is distant learning technology difficult or easy?

Since this virtual mode of learning is completely a newer method of learning for many of the students, the technical feasibility of the virtual mode of learning is a big question. From the received responses many students preferred that the distant learning technology is moderate for them, neither hard nor easy. Around 31.4 % of the students also preferred that the distant learning technology is difficult for them. We may conclude that for many students the distant learning technology is moderately hard for them to adapt and to undergo their studies.



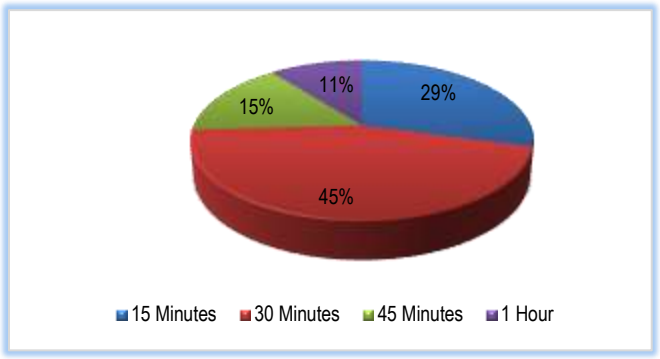
How about the access to internet for online classes?

Since the distance learning is dependent on network connectivity, the internet access is the major factor to be considered. The major drawback of the distant learning is the internet access, from the responses of the students we have came to know that majority of students are equipped with less and moderate internet access. Since the internet access is a major factor we have to work on it. We should concentrate more on access to internet connectivity of the students. Distant learning will be a successful method of learning if provided with a good internet connectivity.



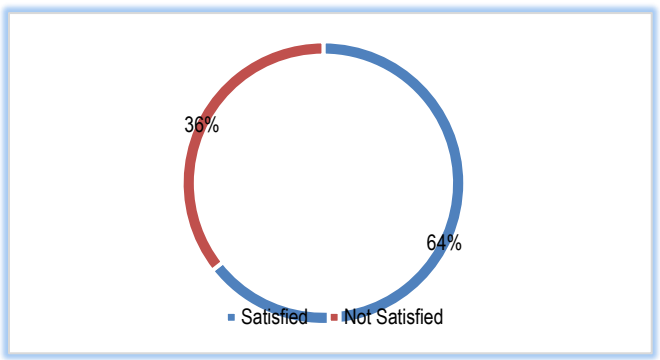
Your receptivity time for online classes

Since online classes using many gadgets for learning, students cannot continuously look onto the screen of the gadgets, because it may lead to headache, eye irritation and several other problems. Since attending the classes from the home, there will be many distractions which lead to reduction in the receptivity time of the classes. From the responses received almost 45% of the students stated the receptivity time of 30 minutes. So scheduling classes accordingly by reducing the class time with series of breaks will help in improving the receptivity of the students and they can acquire more amount of knowledge.



Have you been satisfied with your university's response to the Covid-19 crisis?

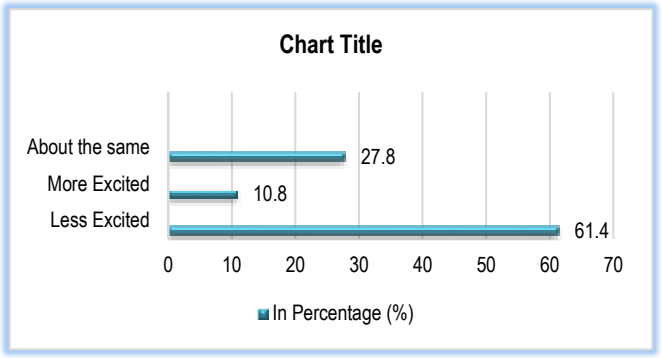
Since the distance learning technology is a newer method for students and teachers, earlier it was difficult for them to adapt to the newer method of learning and teaching. They used various teaching aids for teaching, like power point presentation, smart boards, mock test in using Google forums and using Google classroom.



Connecting every students and ensuring that every students attend the classes was the major problem for the universities. Beside many problems they took several steps to continue the education programme. From the responses we came to know that students are satisfied with the university's response. The major drawback was they were unable to cover the practical classes. Since Agriculture is a professional degree mainly concentrated on practical experience suffered a lot.

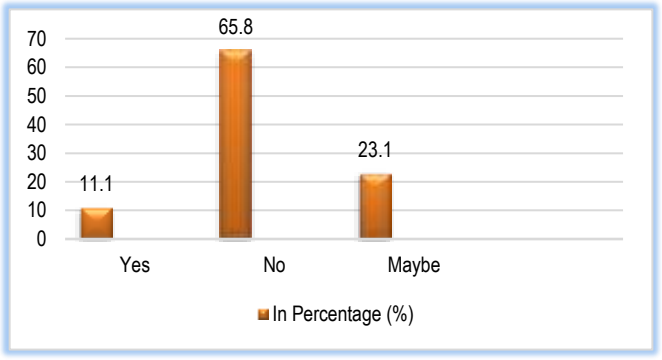
Excitement about distant learning?

Since the virtual mode of learning is newer one, the excitement level of the students has been studied. From the responses we have received around 221 (61.4%) of the students stated that they are less excited about the newer method of learning, not much more excited about the online classes, 100 (27.8%) students stated that they did not find any difference and about the same in the newer method of learning and 39 (10.8%) of the students stated that they are much more excited about the virtual mode of learning. Many students were not excited and not interested about the distant learning.



Do you think the virtual education provided the right amount of theoretical and practical experience?

Distant leaning only covered theoretical knowledge and lacked practical knowledge. The online classes did not cover practical classes more effectively. Since Agriculture is a professional degree mainly concentrated on practical classes, and online teaching does not provide right amount of practical knowledge to the students, Professional degree students suffered a lot without practical knowledge. Unable to give practical exposure is one of the major drawbacks of the virtual mode of learning.



Findings

From the study it becomes evident that in order to provide quality education to students during COVID-19 lockdown, the online education has been provided to students. The online education has both benefits and its own limitations. The results of the interview among students, teachers, and parents put forth a similar perception on online education among both gender groups and the impact of online education was also assessed.

Conclusion

The lockdown amidst COVID-19 has made significant disruptions in academic activities. The present study assessed the learning status of undergraduate agricultural students during this pandemic.

Although a substantial proportion of students are using digital platforms for learning, many of them face huge challenges in online studies. Mainly as agricultural studies concentrate on practical knowledge, virtual mode of education does not cover practical classes it is a major drawback in the distant learning. There should be made a uniform academic plan for the universities and colleges and also initiate a proper education continuity plan to continue the learning process during this pandemic. At this critical period, the open-sourced digital learning and learning management system could be adopted by the institutional teachers to conduct online learning. Finally, the vital multi-prolonged strategies are urgently needed to build a resilient education system in the state that will ensure to develop the skill for employability and productivity of the young minds.

Application of research: A systematic study to know the pros and cons of on-line education system of Agricultural Education

Research Category: Expost factor research design, Agricultural Extension

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Study area / Sample Collection: Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore, 641003, Tamil Nadu, India

Cultivar / Variety / Breed name: Nil

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Ethical Committee Approval Number: Nil

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