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PERCEPTION OF POST GRADUATE STUDENTS TOWARDS ONLINE LEARNING

Educational Institutions across the world had to standstill due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has severely affected the teaching, learning, research and examinations activities for the ongoing academic calendar year. Almost every school, college, university and other research institutions were taken by surprise and were compelled to suspend their teaching, learning, research and examination work for quite some time. New methods and techniques were explored to somehow continue the overall academic activities. Majority of the educational institutions have shifted to online learning platforms to re-begin and keep the academic activities ongoing.

In this study, we focused on the Post Graduate Business Management student's perception towards online learning during this pandemic. An online survey was conducted through a structured questionnaire for data collection from the post graduate business management students from the geographical region of Baglkot, Karnataka, India. During the research an attempt was made to explore the problems faced by students during their online learning, their proficiency in handling of computer/software for online learning student's preference towards class format, etc in this study.

Keywords: management education, effective teaching, online learning, business management, perception, post graduate student and technology

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ОТНОШЕНИЕ АСПИРАНТОВ К ОНЛАЙН-ОБУЧЕНИЮ

Учебным заведениям по всему миру пришлось приостановить работу из-за пандемии COVID-19, которая серьезно повлияла на преподавательскую, учебную, исследовательскую и экзаменационную деятельность в текущем учебном году. Почти все школы, колледжи, университеты и другие научно-исследовательские учреждения, застигнутые врасплох, были вынуждены на некоторое время приостановить свою преподавательскую, учебную, исследовательскую и экзаменационную работу. Были изучены новые методы и приемы, чтобы каким-то образом продолжить общую академическую деятельность. Большинство учебных заведений перешли на платформы онлайн-обучения, чтобы возобновить и продолжить учебную деятельность.

В статье мы сосредоточились на восприятии аспиранта по управлению бизнесом в отношении онлайн-обучения во время этой пандемии. В ходе исследования была предпринята попытка изучить проблемы, с которыми сталкиваются студенты во время онлайн-обучения, их навыки работы с компьютером/программным обеспечением для онлайн-обучения, предпочтения студентов в отношении формата занятий и т. д.

Ключевые слова: управленческое образование, эффективное преподавание, онлайн-обучение, управление бизнесом, восприятие, аспирант и технологии

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Introduction

The COVID-19 has created health crisis in the entire world. Many countries have closed down schools and colleges. The crisis has severally affected carriers of the graduating students. The students have

experienced interruptions in their learning at the end of their final semester and they are graduating at the beginning of a global recession. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected educational system worldwide. As the face to off line (class room teaching) method is no longer appropriate during this unusual phase of COVID-19 pandemic, the situation led to forced immersion of learners into e-learning during this period of COVID-19 Lockdown. In order to continue teaching and learning practices in educational institutions, our education system has resorted to online mode of learning, which is an imperfect yet quick solution to the crises. Colleges and universities have forced to introduce online education without proper infrastructure facilities required for it. Although e-learning will continue to grow, it still remains at an early stage of development. The teachers who are the deliverers of class they have need to understand how students perceive and react to the online classes.

Objectives of the Study

1. To know the students perception towards online classes.
2. To identify the problems faced by the students during online classes.
3. To know the proficiency of students towards computer/software for online classes.
4. To identify the drawbacks of online classes.
5. To know students preference towards class format.

Limitations of the study

1. The study is limited only to the students studying MBA.
2. Responses were collected through simple random sampling method.
3. The questionnaire was administered through Google forms.

Review of Literature

Abhinandan Kulal & Anupama Nayak in their research on perception of teachers and students toward online classes in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi District find out that Strengthening infrastructure facilities, improvement in Internet connectivity, development of rural areas, bringing changes in the attitude of students and teachers, etc. to be taken care for implementing online classes more effectively. Colleges and other educational institutions are required to provide excellent training and support to both student and teachers regarding the usage of online classes that helps in increasing their comfortability. The research also revealed that e-learning has a more significant role to play in the future, but it cannot be a replacement to traditional face-to-face classroom learning.

Dr. Shruti Nagar in her research on «Students' perception towards e-learning and effectiveness of online sessions amid COVID-19 Lockdown Phase in India: An analysis» find out that majority of the students are using smart phones for attending online classes and the network/internet issues are posing major challenges to success of online sessions in India which also highlights digital divide across the country.

S. Bali and S. B. Liu in their research article titled «Students' perceptions toward online learning and face-to-face learning courses» the results of the study indicates that face-to-face learning perception was higher than online learning in term of social presence, social interaction, and satisfaction. However, there is no statistically significant difference in learning preference found among level of student and some students were very comfortable in online learning since it led them to the chance to being innovative by using computer technology.

Mr. Anjum Pasha & Jarupla Gorya (2019) conducted a «Study on Student Preference and Perception towards Online Education in Hyderabad City». The objective of the study was to analyze to know the why preference of online education over offline education, why people don't prefer online education and to Study the opinion of students, teachers and parents regarding online education. The data for the study collected through primary data and secondary data and non-probability sampling i. e convenience sampling method was used for collecting primary data. The major findings of the study are most of people in our research are aware about online education but there are certain people who still unaware about online education, people preferred mode of education is online/e-learning/virtual way and only 26 % people preferred offline education and most people think that online education is an effective way of learning and some people prefer offline education.

Karl L. Smart and James J. Cappel in their research paper on Students' Perceptions of Online Learning: A Comparative Study published in Journal of Information Technology Education the research

was done to know more about how we can use technology effectively in the classroom and how students react to it. The study results indicate that participants in an elective course rated the online modules significantly better than those in a required course. Overall, participants in the elective course rated the online modules marginally positive while those in the required course rated them marginally negative.

Mohammed Arshad Khan &, Vivek et al. In their study on Students' Perception towards E-Learning during COVID-19 Pandemic in India: An Empirical Study published in MDPI Sustainability 2021 highlights that reveal students' are positive perception towards e-learning and thus acceptance of this new learning system. It has also empirically demonstrated the significance of e-learning in the time of COVID-19 crisis. In fact, e-learning has emerged as a new way of enhancing the learning process where social media may further improve the learning output. The findings of the study will facilitate educational institutions and policy makers to take this online-learning process to the next level in a better way.

Research Methodology

In this study primary and secondary data sources have been used. The data is collected through self administered, online circulated, structured questionnaire, which has fetched 130 responses from post graduate students. The respondents were MBA students who are using e-learning sources to complete their regular courses during lockdown. The suitable statistical tools have been used to validate and analyse the data.

Data Analysis & Interpretation

The above Table 1 shows the basic details of the respondents. Male students constituted the majority (64) of the sample. Female students constituted the remaining (66).

Fourth Semester students constituted the majority (67) of the respondents and Second Semester students constituted the remaining (63).

Table 1

Gender * Class Cross tabulation				
		Class		Total
		Second Semester	Fourth Semester	
Gender	Male	39	25	64
	Female	24	42	66
Total		63	67	130

The above Table 2 graph shows that 53.8 % of the respondents are using the Airtel network followed by 40.0 % of the respondents using Reliance Jio and the remaining respondents are using BSNL and Vodafone connection for attending the online classes. It clearly depicts that majority of the students are using Airtel&Jio networks for online classes as they feel that compare to other network these two networks provide good connectivity.

Table 2

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Jio	52	40.0	40.0	40.0
	Airtel	70	53.8	53.8	93.8
	BSNL	4	3.1	3.1	96.9
	Vodafone	4	3.1	3.1	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

73.1 % of the respondents are not having Laptop/Desktop and 26.9 % of the respondents are having Laptop/Desktop. The Table 3 clearly indicates that majority of the respondents are not having any Laptop/Desktop for attending online classes and they attend the classes by using smart phones.

Table 3

Availability of Laptop/Desktop with students

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	35	26.9	26.9	26.9
	No	95	73.1	73.1	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

74.6 % of the respondents are facing the problem of quality of internet connectivity and 25.4 % of the respondents are not facing any problem. The Table 4 shows that majority of the respondents are facing the problem of internet connectivity which is the major concern for the students for attending online classes.

Table 4

Problem of quality of Internet Connectivity faced by the students

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	97	74.6	74.6	74.6
	No	33	25.4	25.4	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

77.7 % of the respondents are not facing any problem with the power connectivity and 22.3 % of the respondents are facing power problems in attending online classes. The Table 5 depict that majority of the students are not facing the problem of power in attending the online classes.

Table 5

Problem of Power (Electricity) faced by the students

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	29	22.3	22.3	22.3
	No	101	77.7	77.7	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

70.0 % of the respondents are the opinion that their proficiency in the usage of computer/software is good, 19.2 % & 10.8 % of the respondent's opinion that their proficiency in usage of computer/software is fair and excellent respectively. From the above Table 6 we can realise that students are well versed with usage of computers/software's for online classes.

Table 6

Students Proficiency in the usage of computer/software for online classes

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fair	25	19.2	19.2	19.2
	Good	91	70.0	70.0	89.2
	Excellent	14	10.8	10.8	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

56.9 % of the respondents stated that CESCO WEBEX is better software than ZOOM. The above Table 7 depicts that most of the student's preferred CESCO WEBEX software for online classes compare to ZOOM software.

Table 7

App preferred by students for online classes

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	CESCO WEBEX	74	56.9	56.9	56.9
	ZOOM	56	43.1	43.1	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

The above Table 8 & graph depict that majority of the respondents stated that less Social Interaction (76.2 %), problems with internet connectivity (75.4 %), Difficult to ask/get answers to the questions (73.8 %), less Hands on experience and technical issues (70.0 %), are the major drawbacks of online classes. The graph and table clearly indicates that the online classes poses drawbacks like less interaction among the students community, problem of internet connectivity, less hands on experience learning is going to happen, lack of motivation for learning and difficult to ask or get clarifications during the classes.

Table 8

Student Perception about the drawback of online learning

Difficult to ask/get answers to the questions					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	34	26.2	26.2	26.2
	Yes	96	73.8	73.8	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	
Technical Issues					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	39	30.0	30.0	30.0
	Yes	91	70.0	70.0	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	
Less Social Interaction					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	31	23.8	23.8	23.8
	Yes	99	76.2	76.2	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	
Problem of Internet Connectivity					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	32	24.6	24.6	24.6
	Yes	98	75.4	75.4	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	
Harder to be Motivated					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	44	33.8	33.8	33.8
	Yes	86	66.2	66.2	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	
Less Hands on Experience					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	35	26.9	26.9	26.9
	Yes	95	73.1	73.1	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

Ending of the table 8

Harder to Pay Attention					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	50	38.5	38.5	38.5
	Yes	80	61.5	61.5	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

When we see the above graph, only 31.5 % of respondents opinion that online classes offering convenience compared to meeting regularly in a classroom setting, and 31.5 % of respondents opinion that it is somewhat effective in offering convenience and remaining respondents are not in favor. The result of the study reflects that online classes are effective in offering convenience for the students in attending classes (Table 9).

*Table 9***Students view on online classes are effective in offering convenience compared to offline classes**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all Effective	18	13.8	13.8	13.8
	Not Effective	24	18.5	18.5	32.3
	Somewhat effective	41	31.5	31.5	63.8
	Effective	41	31.5	31.5	95.4
	More Effective	6	4.6	4.6	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

The above graph depicts that only 30.8 % of the respondent's opinion that online classes are somewhat effective in meeting individual needs compared to regularly in a classroom setting. 30.0 % of the respondent's opinion that online classes are not effective and 16.2 % respondents opinion that online classes are not at all effective in meeting individual needs compared to regularly in a classroom setting and remaining respondents opine that online classes are effective. Through this analysis we can say that online classes are not so effective in meeting individual learning needs of the students compared to offline classes (Table 10).

*Table 10***Students Perception about the effectiveness of online learning towards individual learning needs**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all Effective	21	16.2	16.2	16.2
	Not Effective	39	30.0	30.0	46.2
	Somewhat Effective	40	30.8	30.8	76.9
	Effective	21	16.2	16.2	93.1
	More Effective	9	6.9	6.9	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

32.3 % of the respondent's opinion that online classes are somewhat effective in contributing to effective communication in the class compared to offline classes. 30.0 % of the respondent's opinion that online classes are not effective and 19.2 % of the respondent's opinion that online classes are not at all effective and only 18.5 % of respondent's opinion that online classes are in contributing to effective communication in the class compared to offline classes. The table depicts that effective communication among the students and teacher was not able to happen in online classes when compared to offline classes (Table 11).

Table 11

Students Perception towards the effectiveness of communication during the online learning

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all Effective	25	19.2	19.2	19.2
	Not Effective	39	30.0	30.0	49.2
	Somewhat Effective	42	32.3	32.3	81.5
	Effective	24	18.5	18.5	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

36.9 % of respondent's opinion that online classes are somewhat effective, 21.5 % of respondents felt that not effective, 20.0 % opinion that not at all effective and 15.4 % & 6.2 % view that effective & more effective in promoting greater student participation and interaction compared to offline classes. The survey reveals that online classes are not so effective in promoting students participation and interaction to realise quality education when compared to offline classes (Table 12).

Table 12

Students Perception towards the effectiveness of online Learning in promoting greater student participation and interaction

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all Effective	26	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Not Effective	28	21.5	21.5	41.5
	Somewhat Effective	48	36.9	36.9	78.5
	Effective	20	15.4	15.4	93.8
	More Effective	8	6.2	6.2	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

35.4 % of the respondent's opinion that online classes are not effective, 23.1 % of respondents felt that somewhat effective, 20.8 % opinion that are effective and 13.8 % view that not at all effective. In all majorities of respondent's opinion that online classes are not so effective compared to offline classes. When it was asked the respondents overall opinion about online classes, they felt that online classes are not effective in delivering quality education when compared to offline classes (Table 13).

Table 13

Students overall opinion towards online class experience when compared to offline classes

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all Effective	18	13.8	13.8	13.8
	Not Effective	46	35.4	35.4	49.2
	Somewhat Effective	30	23.1	23.1	72.3
	Effective	27	20.8	20.8	93.1
	More Effective	9	6.9	6.9	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

Majority of the respondents (61.5 %) opinion that meeting regularly in a classroom setting rather than completing the course online is good. 31.5 % of the respondents felt that a combination of meeting in a classroom setting and completing the course online is good and 6.9 % of respondents feel that completing course work online rather than meeting regularly in a classroom is good (Table 14).

Table 14

Preferred Classroom learning format by the students

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Meeting regularly in class room	80	61.5	61.5	61.5
	Completing course work online	31	23.8	23.8	85.4
	Combination of Online and Offline classes	19	14.6	14.6	100.0
	Total	130	100.0	100.0	

Findings & Conclusions

For the collection of primary data, the questionnaire was randomly distributed through online form – Google doc. Social networking sites have been a significant source of reaching out to students enrolled in different semesters. 130 valid responses are recorded that qualify for data analysis. SPSS software is used for the analysis of data collected. The demographic profile of the students, the device which the students use for the access of online-learning, and the study reveals that majority of respondents are not having Laptop/Desktop computers and most of the respondents are not having laptop/desktop and it is observed that they are attending the online classes through smart phones. The major findings are:

- Most of the respondents (74.6 %) are facing the problem of internet connectivity while attending the online classes.

- Majority of the respondents (77.7 %) are not facing the problem of electricity.

- Around 70 % of the respondents are well versed with computer/software skills for attending online classes.

- Majority of the respondents (56.9 %) feels that CESCO WEBEX software is good for attending online classes.

- The majority of the respondents stated that less Social Interaction (76.2 %), problems with internet connectivity (75.4 %), Difficult to ask/get answers to the questions (73.8 %), less Hands on experience and technical issues (70.0 %), are the major drawbacks of online classes.

- Majority of the respondent's opinion that online classes offering convenience in attending the classes compared to offline classes.

- Most of the students felt that online classes are not effective in meeting individual needs compared to offline classes.

- Majority of the respondent's opinion that online classes are not effective in communication in the class compared to offline classes.

- Most of the respondents felt that online classes are less effective in promoting greater student participation and interaction among the students compared to offline classes.

- Overall respondent's opinion that online classes are not effective compared to offline classes.

- Majority of the respondent's opinion that meeting regularly in a classroom setting (offline classes) rather than completing the course online is good.

Conclusions

Results of the study indicate that the online education was not so effective when it compare with offline classes. Majority of the respondents expressed that lack of social interaction, good internet connectivity, difficult to interact with faculty and less hands on experience are the major problems faced during online classes. The result of our study was in line with the literature review. The many researchers have also same opinion that online classes are facing with the problem of internet connectivity, lack of infrastructure, less hands on experience etc.

Overall it is interesting to note that, in this study most of the students who have undergone online classes due to COVID-19 are not happy with online classes and felt that online classes will offer convenience in attending the classes compare to offline classes. Some of the respondents are interested in blended learning (combination of online and offline).

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