

PERCEPTIONS OF VIRTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING AMONGST UNDER-GRADUATE STUDENTS DURING COVID-19

Dr. Rajesh Vishnu Yeole & Ms. Ipsita Vinayak Ghegade

Head, Department of English, Changu Kana Thakur Arts, Commerce and Science College, New Panvel, Raigad

Department of English, Changu Kana Thakur Arts, Commerce and Science College, New Panvel, Raigad.

Abstract:

COVID-19 is a highly infectious disease caused by coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). It has originated in Wuhan city of China. The coronavirus triggered first phase in the form of nationwide lockdown in India which commenced on March 25, 2020. It has globally put, over 1.2 billion children out of the classroom. This situation challenged the educational system across the world and forced educators to shift to an online mode of teaching abruptly. Many academic institutions that were forced to transform entirely to online teaching and learning. Hence, there was distinctive rise in e-learning, whereby teaching is undertaken through digital platforms.

The lack of digital tools is a major drawback amongst students, there is difficulty in understanding, social isolation and poor communication skills. The impact of the virus was so strong that online education became an omnipresent part of education, resulting in no further physical interaction of teachers with students. Due to the lockdown, students have not connected with the outer world resulting in lack of exposure. Since, students have been introduced to virtual platforms it made them well versed with technology with digital identity.

On the other side of education i.e., the teachers, were greatly benefitted by teaching online, in such a way that it has increased their awareness of students' needs and methods to create engaging activities. Few teachers, realised it is easier to teach face-to-face after teaching online, while other teachers disagreed and faced challenges when returning to the face-to-face classroom. The student teacher rapport has been affected very badly as the whole surrounding has drastically changed on account of unprecedented advent of pandemic.

Key words: Covid -19, Perceptions, Virtual Learning and Teaching, Digital identity, creative.

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The advent of Covid-19 has created revolution in all spheres of life. The educational institutions have become digital within a short span of time. Online classes are more effective because it provides study materials, lectures are heard by all students at the sound level of their choice and the journey to class is eliminated. Students can clarify their doubts, by posting queries online on study platforms. Extending the lesson plan beyond traditional textbooks to include online resources, increases the teacher's efficiency. Online lectures

can be recorded, archived, shared for future references and can be attended from the location of choice. Thus, online learning offers students the accessibility of time and place in education. Availability of material online thus creates a paperless learning environment that is more affordable and eco-friendlier. Every student has unique style of learning consisting of visual and audio.

Students without reliable internet access and technology struggle to participate in digital learning. Few Colleges and Governments have been providing digital equipment to students in need. For many, one of the biggest challenges of online learning is wrestling with the screen continuously. Online learning requires teachers to have a basic understanding of using digital forms of learning. However, this is not the case always. Very often, teachers have a very basic understanding of technology. Sometimes, they don't even have the necessary resources and tools to conduct online classes. Teachers had a very less time to prepare themselves to face formidable challenges. Within a short span of time, the teachers were trained for online teaching.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To examine the paradigms of online mode of teaching and learning,
2. To explore the challenges faced by teachers and students in order to adapt to the new methods,
3. To analyse problems related to the availability of technological facilities.

HYPOTHESIS:

E-learning seems to create creative ambiance on the students and teachers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The researcher used both quantitative and qualitative methodologies in order to study the perceptions of stakeholders based on the online teaching-learning process among undergraduate students during covid 19. The researcher has also conducted physical interaction with teachers, students as well as parents, for the purpose of understanding various nuances of online teaching and learning scenarios.

The researcher has specifically constructed a brief questionnaire for students, teachers as well as parents. The questionnaire designed for the students focuses on the conveniences and inconveniences faced by the students during the process of online learning. With regards to teachers, it highlights the challenges in terms of adaptability with the technology, interacting during online sessions, preparation of material for conducting online class along with making the class interesting and effective. The parent's questionnaire is an embodiment of the impact of online learning teaching and learning amongst the students.

(i) Total responses from students: 354, (Age range: 18-23)

Out of which responses were received from students belonging to the following streams:

- Faculty of Arts 27.7%
- Faculty of Science 45.2%
- Faculty of Commerce 22.3%
- Faculty of Engineering 2.3%

- Faculty of Design 0.6%
- Faculty of Law 0.3%
- Faculty of Medical 0.3% And
- 1.4% from other Faculties.

(ii) Total responses from Teachers: 39, (Age range: 21-50)

Out of which responses were received from teachers specializing in the following study area:

- Field of languages,
- Field of Information Technology,
- Field of Science.

And they had students from the following streams:

- Faculty of Science 46.7%,
- Faculty of Arts 23.3%,
- Faculty of Commerce 10%,
- Faculty of Design 3.3%
- And other faculties 16.7%.

(iii) Total responses from Parents: 116

Out of which responses were received from parents who had the following profession:

- Working crowd 34.5%,
- Home-makers 25.9%,
- People owning a business 16.4%.

PRELIMINARY WORK:

This holistic research begins with a comprehensive comparative study about the available e-learning platforms, followed by a primary data analysis through an online survey of 500 stakeholders from various colleges and institutions. The collected data was analysed to detect bottlenecks in online learning and understand them.

The research was conducted using various methods, and information was put together from sources like interviews, forms, reference books, journals, and research papers. The researchers had interviewed parents, teachers and students in person based on some given data that helped them understand their perspective on learning using online platforms. Since the stakeholders were undergraduates, hence the research was specifically based on their teaching and learning online methods. Many journals, research papers essays and books were referred by the researchers that helped to understand various elements and paradigms of online teaching and learning through online mode. The researcher has also referred various online material for the purpose of understanding the nature and scope of the selected topic.

This study acted as predictive analysis to understand what could be the students, teachers and parent's standpoint and then understand to what extent does it vary from the other. Further, a comparative analysis was



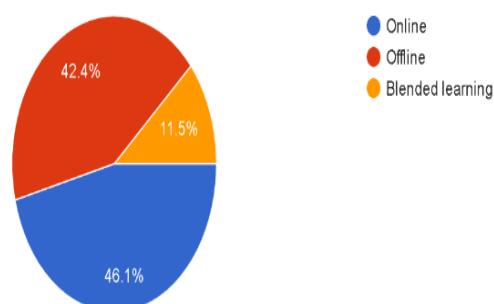
adopted to find the most suitable online survey platform. A survey-based approach was adopted to gauge the perception of the stakeholders on the available e-learning tools. Through the review done above, Google Forms was finalized as the survey platform.

As far as the ethics of the research are considered, all participants gave their informed consent. The questionnaires did not include questions about personal health information or sensitive data, they were strictly research based. The quantitative data were collected through a web survey using google forms.

Results and analysis of the questionnaire for students.

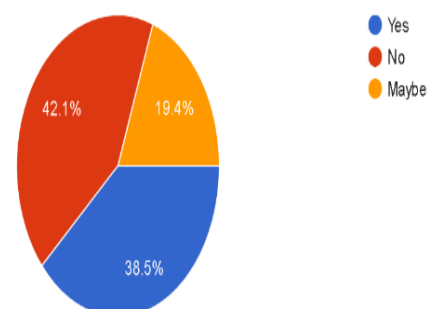
1. Which method do you prefer for learning?

330 responses



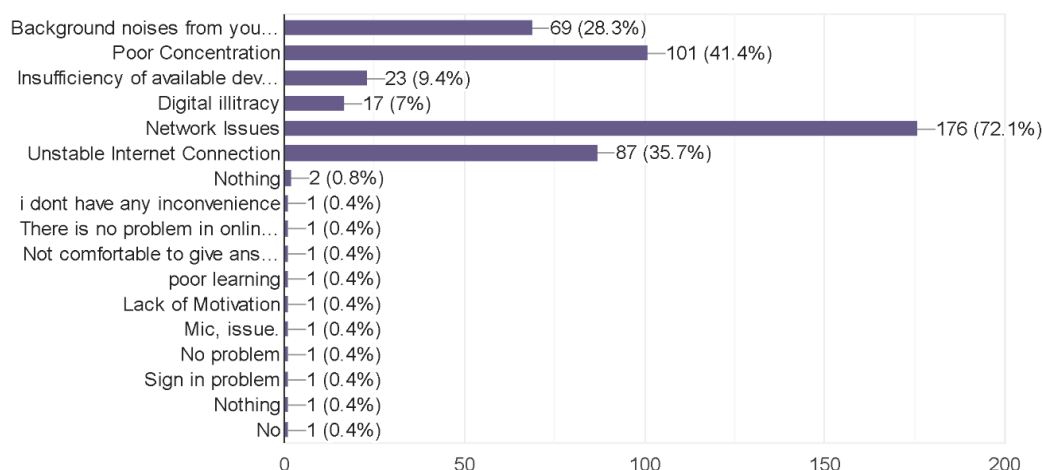
2. Do you face any inconveniences while attending Online Sessions?

330 responses



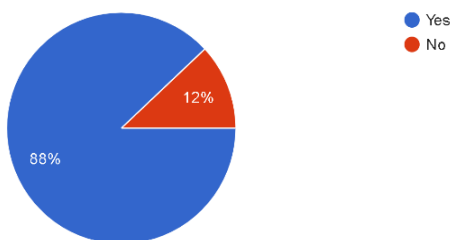
3. If "yes" kindly choose any one of the below inconveniences that you have majorly faced. (Can choose more than one option.)

244 responses



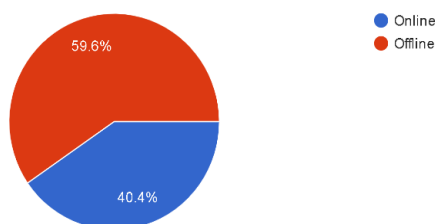
6. Are your Teachers/ Guides available to you when required?

359 responses



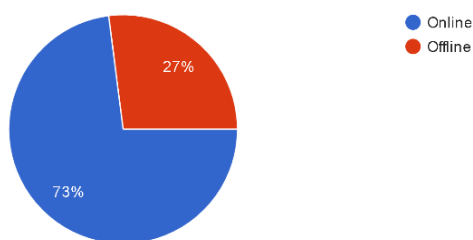
7. Which platform is the most comfortable for you in order to interact with your Teachers/Guides?

359 responses



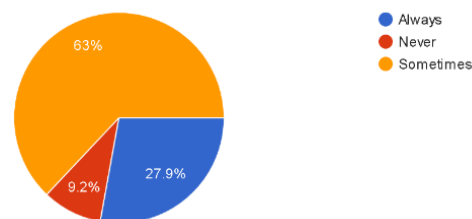
11. Which mode of examination do you prefer?

359 responses



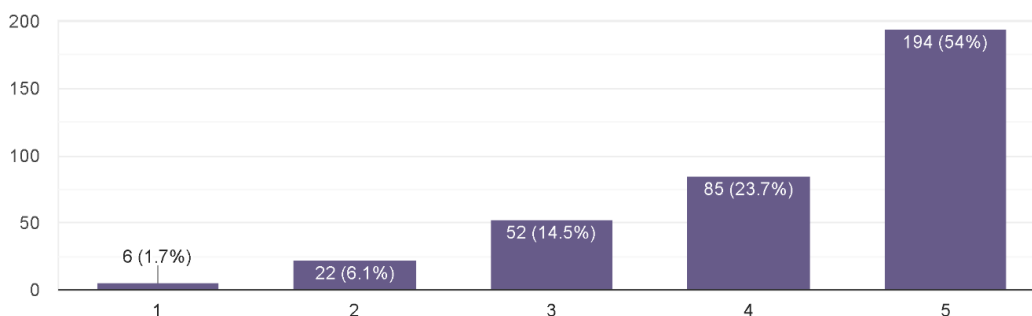
13. Do you give feedback to your teachers during online sessions?

359 responses



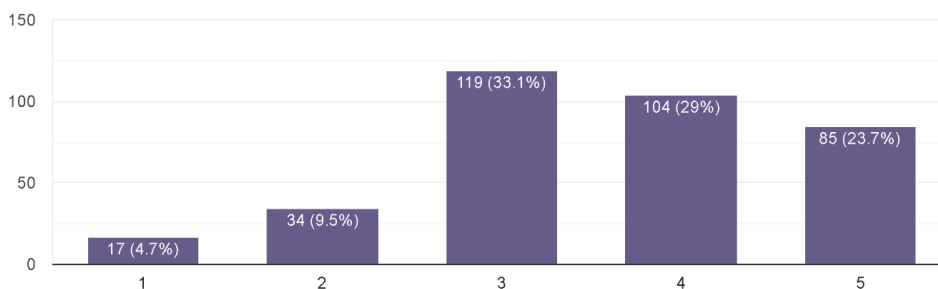
12. As an examinee, how satisfied are you to attend your examinations in the form of Multiple Choice Questions?

359 responses



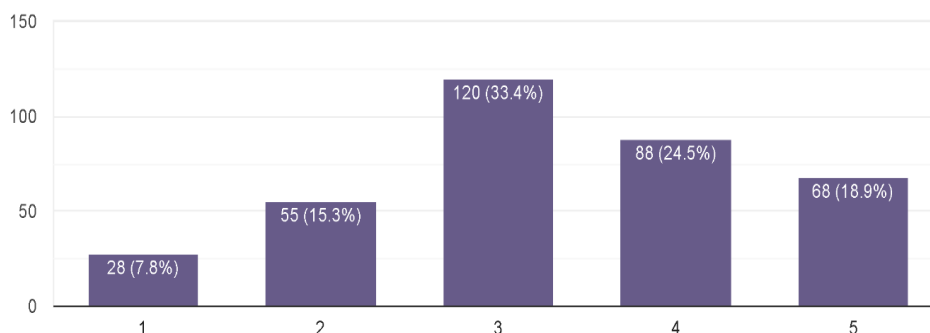
8. To what extent do you understand the lessons taught by your teachers through online mode?

359 responses



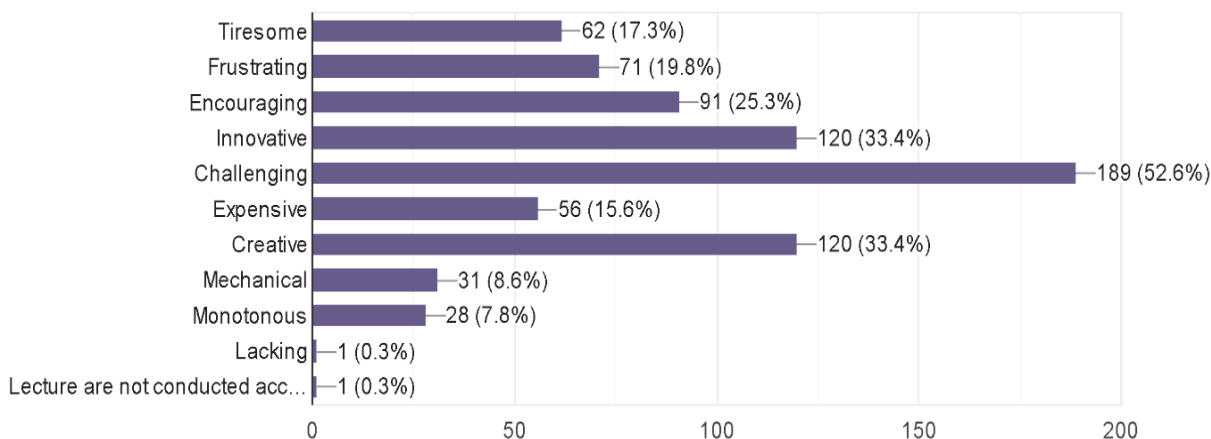
14. To what extent do you believe that your skills are being developed through Online learning?

359 responses



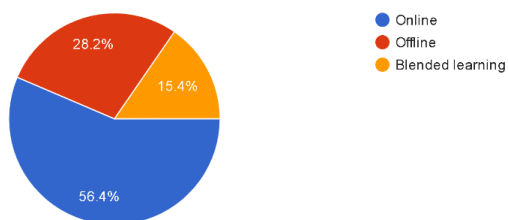
15. What is your overall impression of online learning during Covid? (Can choose more than one option.)

359 responses

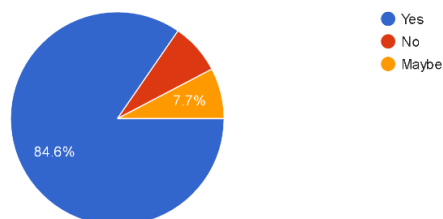


Results and analysis of the questionnaire for Teachers.

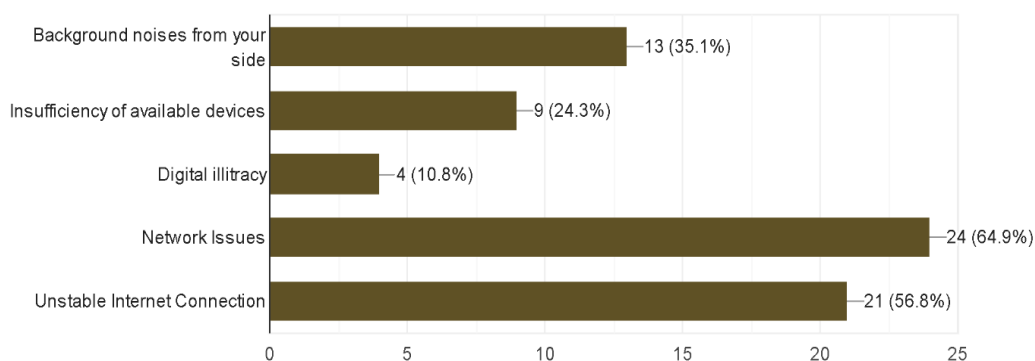
1. Which method do you prefer for teaching effectively during Covid ?
39 responses



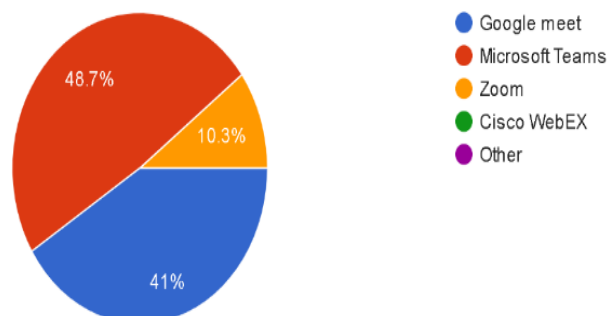
2. Do you face any inconveniences while teaching/conducting online sessions?
39 responses



3. If "yes" kindly choose any one of the below inconveniences that you have majorly faced.(Can choose more than one option.)
37 responses

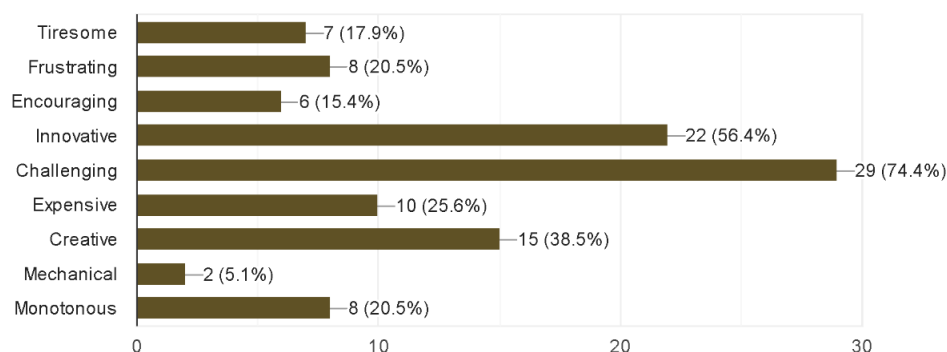


8. Which technological application is the most convenient for you in order to interact with your learners?
39 responses



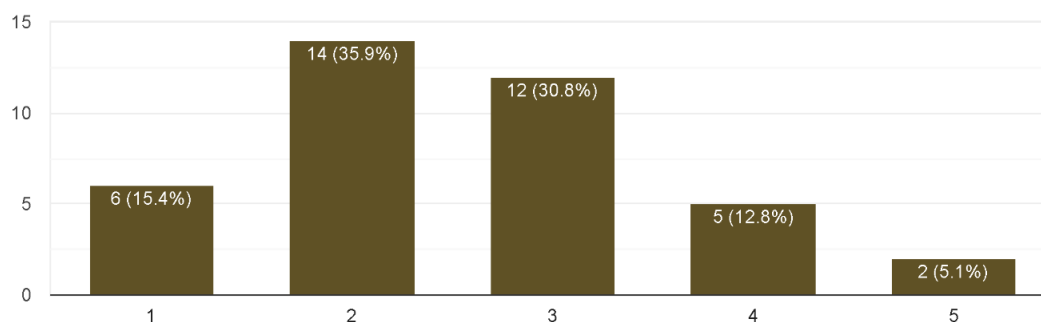
10. What is your overall impression of online teaching during Covid? (Can choose more than one option.)

39 responses



14. To what extent do you believe that students skills are being developed through Online learning?

39 responses



BENEFITS TO THE SOCIETY:

Online education is 53% economical than offline education. Through it, you can gain a proliferation of effective information while sitting at home. Physically disabled people can procure degrees and build their career through online learning effortlessly. Online education offers live query solutions like chat rooms, online forums, and e-mails. Through online diploma courses, students can increase their qualifications and enhance their career opportunities.

- **Flexibility** – Online learning provides you with the privilege of learning from any given place and time. You can have access to the online education platforms in any devices at any available time and at your own convenience.
- **Maximise your learning** – You can tailor your schedule to maximise your learning, it means if you work better in the morning, you can study in the morning and then use the rest of the day for something else.
- **Makes education accessible** – Online learning gives you access to education later on in life. It allows you to both gain an education without having to quit your job or shuffle between them.

- **Different way of learning** – Few students find it difficult to thrive in classroom surrounded by other students. Not having the pressure of being surrounded by peers can often help people to absorb information better.
- **Digital Identity** – Digital identity is the need of the 21st century for both the teachers and the children.
- **Career Opportunities-** Online learning teaches you to be independent, you are solely accountable for your learning and it therefore forces you to improve your time management skills because you have to co-ordinate your own study time.

FUTURE SCOPE:

E-learning is boon to people who face obstacles in getting traditional education. In this era of digitalization, online education has improved the quality of education and it has become easier for students, teachers and institutes to teach creatively without needing a classroom interaction. Universities started to prefer virtual learning platforms. Therefore, if universities are already incorporating this into a traditional education, online learning will continue to grow and become popular amongst students. With the continual development of technology, it will only go on to improve. Effective vocational training targeted at developing industry-related skills and expertise will be mandated to help students achieved their dream job.

Students will have become more familiar with many online resources during this period, hence opening up the possibility for more classes being held online in the future. If so, the students would encounter fewer difficulties, as they are already familiar with this mode of education. Virtual learning continues to be an extremely useful classroom teaching tool as well as self-study platform in future.

CONCLUSION:

Covid has brought crisis upon the education system in India. But noticeably everyone must learn to live and survive with the present crisis, as it is the beginning only; in the long run, no one can afford the negligence towards digital transformation. This research helps us understand the perspective of the stake holders and their take on this new way of learning. The given data proved that this mode of learning is creative and has helped individuals advance their skills. The stakeholders prefer online mode of learning as it is comfortable and accessible. The classroom is gradually becoming interactive during online sessions as the students and teachers are in their own comfort space. In this way, an attempt has been made to analyze perceptions of Virtual Teaching and Learning amongst Under-Graduate Students during Covid-19.

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