THE IMPACT OF ONLINE LEARNING ON STUDENT SATISFACTION – CONCEPTUAL STUDY

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Abstract:

The foundation of online education dates back more than 150 years. Digital literacy gained ground in academia with the introduction of the Internet in 1994, paving the path for online courses. However, COVID 19 has forced its entry, penetrated into the education system and established its reign with a paradigm change from conventional to online learning. This shift has changed the whole dynamics of education provided, leaving every member in a state of urgency and utter confusion. This paper focuses on providing an outlook to students' need in the new norm of an online era an overview to students' satisfaction in online learning, which needs to be upgraded constantly so that each one gets a fair chance in adapting and flourishing with the new system.
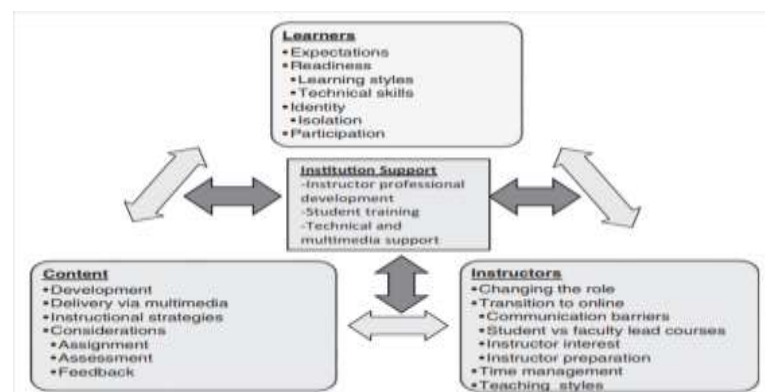
Keywords- *Online Learning, Student Satisfaction, COVID 19, Paradigm Shift.*

Introduction:

Across several economic sectors, the effects of Covid 19 will last for years. Millions of pupils are trapped at home, looking at screens and passively taking part in academic teaching, severely harming education. The closing of schools or other institutions has reportedly had an impact on approximately 1.6 billion children in 190 countries, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). Despite the country's significant digital gap, this unique scenario hastened the opening of the digital education interface. (Tyagi & Malik, 2020) Kebritchi, Lipschuetz, & Santiague (2017) have explored these components in their study by reviewing numerous other studies and had come up with the diagram for a better comprehensive outlook, which incorporates these components at best.

The three major components in an online education environment given by Kebritchi, Lipschuetz, & Santiague (2017).

Objectives:

1. To find the reasons prompting students' satisfaction with online learning.
2. To study the impact of the forced shift in the education system.
3. To project the challenges with online learning with the sudden paradigm shift.

Operational Definition:

Student's Satisfaction: For the purpose of the study, the term 'student's satisfaction' has been operationally defined with respect to online learning in terms of students' engaged learning, assessment and their sense of the agency.

Research Methodology:

The research methodology is descriptive in nature. This study solely relies on secondary data sources, which were gathered from academic papers, journals, presentations, reports, and websites on the internet.

Challenges in Online Teaching and Learning:

Accessibility, cost, flexibility, learning methodology, life-long learning, and educational policy are the fundamental difficulties of online learning. Spending more time on virtual platforms due to online learning may have left youngsters exposed to online exploitation such as cyberbullying, etc. Student assessments are completed online, resulting in a great deal of trial and error, ambiguity, and misunderstanding among instructors, students, and parents. The method used to administer online exams differs depending on the convenience and skill of educators, as well as the compatibility of the learners. Teachers are at a loss as to which internet resources to use and which are the most successful. (Pokhrel & Chhetri ,2021)

The Effect of Covid 19 On Education:

With regards to how badly COVID has had effected the learning section in India, UNESCO has provided the following the graph which shows the approximate percentage of students affected by the pandemic. As the picture clearly depicts, COVID 19 majorly had hit primary and secondary students, closely followed by tertiary students (34.11%) that includes undergraduate degree, post-graduate degree and doctoral degree in the educational sector of India.

Distribution of students affected by COVID 19 in India.

Source: UNESCO
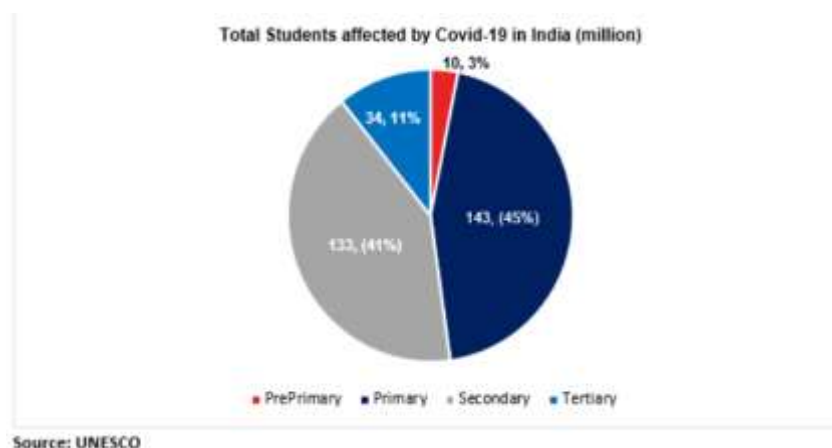
The transition from conventional classroom to virtual classroom can be a completely distinct challenge, both for the students as well as the teachers. (Jena, 2020)

Broadly following are the negative impacts as given by Jena (2020) :

- Educational activity hampered: The education system was adversely affected as the schools were suspended, exams were postponed, the admission process got delayed too.
- Unprepared teachers/students for online education: The sudden shift compelled both the parties to adopt to online learning without much practice or exposure. Dealing with online tools, its aspects would have been difficult.
- Mental health, psychological impact was also to a large extent where students have fallen into depression.

Online Learning and Student Satisfaction:

The educational institutions switched from offline to online learning in response to the current worldwide condition (Dhawan, 2020). Online instruction initially began by teachers who were lacking in prior expertise with it (Wang, Zhang, et al., 2020). With this, mankind witnessed the most massive live experiment in the history of civilization in switching from formal to online education (Jones & Sharma, 2020). (Faize & Nawaz, 2020)

Therefore, it is very essential to know how students perceive this online mode of learning with respect to their satisfaction levels. Up until now, various studies have attempted to explore and conceptualize students' satisfaction. According to Elliot & Shin's definition from 2002, satisfaction among learners refers to a person's attitude towards their educational experience and results. According to Carey et al., student satisfaction is the outcome of the corresponding level of experiences and perceived performance of educational amenities.

It is very essential to constantly improve and upgrade as per students' need in the new norm of the online era, which includes dimensions like; peer interaction, teacher-student interaction, course content, accessibility, assessment methods, etc. All these dimensions mentioned; provides an overview to students' satisfaction in online learning, which needs to be upgraded constantly so that each one gets a fair chance in adapting and flourishing with the new system.

The instructional design, the instructor's calibre, the promptness of the feedback, and the requirements of the students are the four main factors that affect learning results and satisfaction among learners during online classes. (Lee,2014)

Therefore, broadly stating the factors that play a significant role in determining satisfaction are:

- Content design
- Learner's engagement
- Learning Assessment
- The Interaction between Teacher and student
- Accessibility to internet connection

To briefly say studies have shown the aforesaid factors affect students' satisfaction with online learning majorly.

The Effect of Online Learning on Students' Satisfaction:

As stated by Allen et al. (2002) and Wang (2003), in any educational environment, a student's happiness may be

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gauged by both his degree of enjoyment and the quality of the instruction he receives. To state very briefly by Malik (2010), following can be accumulated and presented:

1. **Student Factors:** The learner himself is the primary consideration. The student's attitude, their impression, or level of familiarity with utilising ICT technologies is a key factor in determining how satisfied they are with their online education. This factor is highly influenced with computer literacy.

2. **Instructor and Course Factors:** The role of instructor/teacher greatly influence student satisfaction. Factors like the teacher's attitude, aptitude in using ICT tools easily, teaching style, student engagement persuasion of interaction between students and providing quality content plays very important here. Among others, flexibility in accessing content, content framework has been some of the vital reasons that influence student satisfaction.

3. **Technical Factors:** It is essential for technological traits to be of high quality in order to achieve optimal execution and satisfaction among students. In addition to these factors, the quality of the virtual programme and sufficient technical assistance availability have positive effects on students' happiness.

Conclusion:

Expansion of technology has affected global learning approaches. The teaching methods used by teachers and students both constantly change. Learning via online resources in the form of interactive lessons and manuals is a very alluring strategy for students. Students would rather study from online resources than in a traditional classroom. The pandemic has left its aftereffect in the education system in the form of paradigm shift, urgency in curriculum change, implementation to cope with its impact.

To state in crisp manner studies have suggested that students are the main beneficiaries of online learning; if they are not happy, it would be impossible to successfully adopt an online learning environment. The key aspects that contribute to student happiness are those related to the student, the instructor, and technology, the student's attitude or level of virtual learning satisfaction. A learner's contentment will be positively impacted by his favourable attitude towards new technologies. Computer proficiency is a skill that is crucial for enrolling in programmes online. Substantially, computer literacy has impacted learner satisfaction to a great extent. Similarly, the teacher's attitude, style of teaching, course structure is also some of the widely discussed factors that have largely created changes in satisfaction among learners with online learning, especially after COVID 19 that made e-learning the only mode of a transaction.

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