



STUDENTS' PREFERENCE TOWARDS ONLINE AND FACE- TO- FACE MODE OF LEARNING: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

Nursing

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ABSTRACT

Educational life worldwide has been shaken by the closure of schools due to the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. Learning process has been one of the important aspects of human life. Hence, this descriptive study aims to better understand, Students' preference towards online and face-to-face mode of learning following the epidemic. Quantitative research approach was used in this study and validity and reliability of the tool were established. Data was collected from 100 nursing students' studying in private college and sample was selected by using Convenience sampling technique. Ethical permission was obtained from the college as well as obtained consent from each participant before collecting the data and confidentiality of data were maintained. Majority of the study subjects (65.3%) prefer to have face -to- face learning in comparison with online learning. From findings it is also evident that students' pointed out the real benefits of face- to- face mode of learning.

KEYWORDS

students', preferences, online learning, face -to -face learning, education.

INTRODUCTION

As change is continual and unavoidable, everything in this world eventually becomes outdated as a result of new discoveries and developments, and intelligence is the capacity to adjust to change. Using technology and network connectivity for teaching and learning is commonly referred to as e-learning. It is also known as a technology-enabled transfer of knowledge and skills to many receivers (Economic Times, 2020). It is among the technological trends in education that is developing the quickest. Because of the Internet and the World Wide Web, educational institutions have had to adapt their teaching methods in order to provide an optimum learning environment for their students (Muthuprasad T, 2020). With the aid of internet-based technologies, an online class is a system where students can learn subjects, communicate with other students about problems, ask questions of the teacher, and share materials and track academic progress. Online courses are already so common that they may soon be included in every official education curriculum.

Due to the growing popularity of online learning over the past several years, more schools and universities are now offering online courses (Beatty and Ulasewicz, 2006; Li and Akins, 2005). In addition, technical development and student demand for online courses have prompted colleges and universities to offer them alongside regular courses (Bennett and Lockyer, 2004; Britt, 2006). The important thing to remember is that schools are not required to use online classes, despite the fact that it is a cutting-edge tool for managing problems that arise during the learning process (Agustina and Cahyono, 2017).

The majority of colleges want to spend money on online education, faculty recruitment, and training (Floyd, 2003; Koehler et al., 2004). According to one survey, online learning will continue to grow dramatically in both business and educational settings over the next few years (Meyen et al., 2002). Due of all these advancements in education, it is thought that online-based instruction is interactive (Johnston et al., 2005). Online instruction also offers situations where students actively engage with the subject matter and learn through practical engagement (Palloff and Pratt, 2013). Also, over the past few decades, online classes have become increasingly significant throughout the world, changing universities' perspectives from "Internet class is an Optional" to "Online class is Necessary" (Larreamendy-Joems and Leinhardt, 2006).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Quantitative research approach was used in this study within a framework of a descriptive cross-sectional research design. The population of this study were nursing students from Mangalore, Karnataka. The target population of this study consists of 3rd year BSc and 2nd Year GNM nursing students from nursing college. The investigator used convenient sample for this study. Samples of this study were 100 students studying in private institutions or colleges participated in the study. Out of which 75% of the students were from 3rd year BSc and 25% were from GNM Batch. Primary data from this study was gathered through Google form via a questionnaire. Domain-wise descriptive statistics of preferences for mode of learning

regarding online and face-to-face mode learning among nursing students' was done. Participants were told that all opinions offered by them will be kept confidential. The data was routinely gathered and reported and then analyzed using version 20 of the Statistical Kit for Social Science (SPSS). Collected data were categorized into demographic and factors wisely.

RESULTS

The data comprising responses on the socio-demographic factors and items measuring the variables were examined using descriptive analysis.

1. Analysis Of Socio-Demographic Characteristics

The data describes, Age wise distribution of the sample shows that the majority of respondents (75%) were in the age group of 20-22 (N=100). Gender-based data distribution indicates that 92% were females and 8% were Males. 75% of students' were studying in 3rd year BSc and 25% of them in 2nd year GNM programme. Approximately 75% of the students had previous experience of online mode of learning. Most of the students' were from rural area (61%) and 77% of the reflected the annual income of the parents were less than 25000.

2. Students' Preference Towards Online And Face- To -face Mode Of Learning:

Table 1: Frequency And Percentage Distribution On Student's Preference Towards Online And Face-to-face Mode Of Learning (N=100)

Attributes	Online Learning		Face- to Face – Learning	
	Yes	NO	Yes	NO
Preference for Course design				
Clarity and explicit structuring of the course and learning contents.	43	57	78	22
Favorable cost–benefit ratio of effort and learning outcomes	24	76	63	37
'Easy to refer the content/ syllabus	58	42	70	30
Interaction with the tutor/teacher/instructor				
Fast feedback from the tutor.	45	55	72	28
Counseling and support of learning by the tutor.	20	80	58	42
Possibility to establish personal contact with the tutor.	33	67	73	26
Have difficulty in understanding the language/slang	26	74	51	49
Easy and fast accessibility to the tutor	43	57	85	15
Interaction with peer students				
Easy and fast exchange of information and knowledge with other course participants.	28	72	86	14

Support of cooperative learning and group work with other course participants.	34	66	52	48
Possibility to establish positive social relations with other course participants	40	60	68	32
Interaction with each other is better	49	51	58	42
Individual learning processes				
Flexibility of learning with regard to time and place.	52	48	53	47
Flexibility with regard to about learning strategies and pace of learning.	36	64	63	37
Opportunities for exercising and applying one's knowledge.	50	50	49	51
Opportunities for monitoring one's learning outcomes.	50	50	62	38
Support for maintaining learning motivation.	29	71	58	42
Learning outcomes				
Acquisition of skills in scientific work procedure	46	54	63	37
Acquisition of conceptual knowledge in the subject matter	26	74	71	29
Acquisition of skills in the application of one's knowledge and of using one's knowledge in practice.	26	74	68	32
Acquisition of skills in communication and cooperation.	31	69	62	38
Acquisition of skills in self-regulated learning	46	54	55	45

The above table depicts that the majority of student's (65.3%) prefer face -to -face mode of learning as the course design like course structure, syllabus is clear and they fulfil the learning outcome. Apart from this students' also feel that in face- to -face there is increase in percentage of interaction with the tutor (72%) and peer student's compared to online learning (45%). Another finding indicated that flexibility, ease of course, convenience, and time-saving influence students' preference for face- to- face learning. Percentage of preferred mode of learning regarding online (52%)and face-to-face mode(53%) learning among nursing student's with regard to the Individual learning processes shows that the flexibility of learning about time and place is almost equal. The data also reveal that ,students' prefer almost equally face- to -face(50%) and online (49%) mode of learning with regard to Opportunities for exercising and applying one's knowledge.

3. Benefits Of Online And Face-To-face Mode Of Learning

Table 2: Frequency And Percentage Distribution On Benefits Of Online And Face-To-face Mode Of Learning

Attributes	Online Learning		Face- to Face – Learning	
	YES	NO	YES	NO
Flexible schedule and convenience	38	62	74	26
More comfortable	6	94	94	6
Improves technical skills	18	82	82	18
More interaction and greater ability to concentrate	10	90	81	19
Self-discipline and responsibility	25	75	71	29

The above table depicts clearly that 74% of student's denoted that face-to -face mode of learning was more flexible and convenient. 94% students' were comfortable with face-to-face in comparison with online learning. Apart from this 82% stated that face-to-face mode of learning improves technical skills and 81% felt in face-to-face there is more interaction and greater ability to concentrate and self-discipline and responsibility was 71%. It is also very evident that the students 'are not comfortable in online learning and they feel that there is less interaction and lesser ability to concentrate.

DISCUSSION

Majority of the study (65.3%) subjects prefer to have face -to -face

learning in comparison with online learning. From findings it is also evident that students pointed out the real benefits of face to face mode of learning. In a study on students' satisfaction with online or face-to-face tutorial support in distance education, students favored face-to-face over online support (Price, Richardson, & Jelfs, 2007). Another study showed a consistent preference for the face-to-face discussion but a small number of students preferred the online setting (Katrina A. Meyer,2013) In a study that was reviewed, it was also noted that the students' primary motivations for enrolling in an online course were "flexibility" and "self-control" within the learning environment, and they also believed that completing an online course would be more convenient than traditional classroom instruction. Here, the phrases "price" and "self-directed learning" are predicated on convenience (Armstrong, 2011) and students who attend traditional schools have opinions about the social aspects of online learning, but online learners have reported positive experiences overall, despite the fact that online courses haven't always lived up to their expectations in terms of learning.

Chen Hui et al (2022) showed that the students' based in Australia expressed a preference for remote learning due to the convenience of attendance and availability of the video recordings. However, students in China had a strong preference for face-to-face sessions, with the lack of prior experience in an English-speaking learning environment and hesitation to speak with the lecturers and engage in the learning activities possible reasons for this.

Nor Hasanah (2021) has done study which aims to find out students' preferences and perspectives toward online learning that has been carried out during the pandemic and face-to-face learning that we used to have. It also tries to investigate whether their perspectives influence their preferences on the learning mode. The results showed that 83 percent of students' preferred face-to-face learning, students gave more positive responses toward face-to-face learning although they also admitted the advantages offered by online learning. Another finding indicated that flexibility, ease of course, convenience, and time-saving influence students' preference for online learning, while interaction and learning experience became some reasons for students to choose face-to-face learning. Most of the students' had internet access to take online classes. However, they still considered face-to-face learning as an ideal class because 87 percent of students' agreed that not all regions in Indonesia had good internet access to conduct online learning

Both groups of students' see face to face as convenient and online learning not always advantageous to their academic success. While online classes are crucial to the learning process, schools and colleges must take their effects into account (Burns, 2013). Although students are a beneficial aspect of an face to face and online class, other participants, such as teachers, have conflicting views on the subject. According to many professors, a faculty development programme can help one become an effective online teacher and develop the best career path possible through mentorship (Billings and Kowalski, 2008). Conrad and Donaldson (2004) also stressed the significance of creating a sense of community in online teaching from the viewpoint of teachers.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

With efforts to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus, the contours of education system are changing with online education becoming the primary means of instruction. Universities and institutions are shifting to online platforms to catch up with the curriculum. The study scrutinized the preference of the nursing students' towards face- to-face and online mode of learning. The study showed that students had not much preference towards online education. Online learning is an exciting new way to learn about almost anything. It has bought a positive impact on the lives of students as well as teachers. The online learning was found to be advantageous as it provided flexibility and convenience for the learners. Students' preferred well-structured content with recorded videos uploaded in university websites. They also indicated the need for interactive sessions with quizzes and assignments at the end of each class to optimize the learning experience. However, most students also reported that online classes could be more challenging than traditional classroom because of the technological constraints, delayed feedback and inability of the instructor to handle effectively the Information and Communication Technologies. Therefore, all these factors should be considered while developing an online course to make it more

effective and productive for the learner. This includes strengthening infrastructure facilities, improvement in Internet connectivity, development of rural areas, bringing changes in the attitude of students and teachers, etc. 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. Colleges and teachers need to put any effort into changing the mindset of students. As such, there is a need to understand the obstacles that come in the way of accepting online learning and take corrective measures to overcome it. Hence this study will prove useful for reimagining and redesigning the higher education with components involving online mode.

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