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HURDLES AND CHALLENGES OF ONLINE LEARNING PERCEIVED BY NURSING STUDENTS: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

Nursing

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ABSTRACT

Online education has moved into higher education with new programs being added. Online learning is an excellent resource during the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, it serves as a useful alternative to traditional methods of teaching. Although online learning continues to grow rapidly, while its effects on students' and instructors 'experiences are yet to be fully explored. This descriptive study aims to better understand, Students hurdles and challenges with online 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

Nursing students, online learning, Face to Face learning, Education, Bottleneck, Challenges.

INTRODUCTION

Because technology is becoming more and more important, education has changed in a big way around the world. One of these changes is the use of online learning in both formal and informal, academic and non-academic, and in-person and online learning settings. We started to see schools, teachers, and students use e-learning tools more and more. These tools let teachers teach in an interactive way, share resources easily, and make it easier for students to work together and talk to each other (Elaish et al., 2019; Garcia et al., 2018). Even though the education community has known for a long time that online learning works (Barrot, 2020; Cavanaugh et al., 2009; Kebritchi et al., 2017; Tallent-Runnels et al., 2006; Wallace, 2003), more and more research shows how hard it is to put into practise (e.g., Boelens et al., 2017; Rasheed et al., 2020).

Recently, the education system was hit with a health crisis (the COVID-19 pandemic) that had never happened before and shook it to its core. So, governments all over the world have started emergency plans to make up for the bad effects of the pandemic on education. This response includes, but is not limited to, changes to the curriculum, the provision of technological resources and infrastructure, changes to the school calendar, and policies on how to teach and test. Because of these changes, schools had no choice but to switch to online learning until they could teach students face-to-face. This is a one-of-a-kind situation because it could make online learning even harder because of restrictions on movement and health rules (Gonzales et al., 2020; Kapasia et al., 2020). Given how uncertain things are right now, it's important to learn more about how students learn online during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Literature review also indicates that studies have been done on this topic so far, with a focus on students' mental health (Copeland et al., 2021), home learning (Suryaman et al., 2020), self-regulation (Carter et al., 2020), virtual learning environments (Almaiah et al., 2020), and students' (e.g., Adarkwah, 2021). There are two major differences between this study and the ones that came before it. First, it shows how the pandemic has directly affected the problems that students face in online learning spaces. Second, the current study looks at how students deal with this new way of learning. Taking care of these areas would show how big the problems are that students face in a full online learning space, especially in light of the pandemic.

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. Bottlenecks towards online learning

Table 1: Frequency and percentage of Bottlenecks towards online learning N=100

S. No	Attributes	SD	D	U	A	SA
1	Lack of connectivity	55	27	2	16	
2	Data limit	23	17	8	52	
3	Data speed	10	30	12	48	
4	Little/no face to face interaction	10	21	38	31	
5	Intense requirement for self-discipline	37	25	26	12	
6	Lack of an electronic device	20	13	37	26	4
7	Poor learning environment	29	21	18	32	
8	Technophobia	14	25	24	28	9

* SD- Strongly Disagree, D- Disagree, U- Undecided or Neither Agree Nor disagree, A-Agree, SA- Strongly Agree.

The above table 1 indicates that the Data limit (52%) and data speed (48%) was ranked as the major hindrance in online learning. These give us an insight that if any country wants to move towards online education then as a pre-requisite it should focus on its internet facilities, although 82% of the students did not have the connectivity issue. Lack of traditional way of direct face to face interactions in classrooms is also concern along with those mentioned above in conducting online classes

3. Challenges faced by students towards online classes.

Table 1: Frequency and percentage of Challenges faced by students towards online classes. N=100

Attributes	SD	D	U	A	SA
Technological constraint					
Insufficient data pack to access the material/to attend the class	17	23	8	52	
Interrupted internet supply that makes the learners difficult to learn	8	32	6	54	
Lack of an electronic device	4	17	47	32	
device incompatibility to the applications used for online classes	4	23	16	56	
Online classes that cannot be downloaded or recorded for future learning	8	13	32	32	15
Low quality audio or video; low bandwidth	4	23	20	47	6
No face to face interaction between the learners and teachers	8	13	31	42	6
Adaptability struggle	10	22	22	46	
Data privacy and security	9	13	42	32	4
Data corruption		28	30	42	
File saving & storing issue		17	53	30	
Learning environment					
Lack of congenial learning environment	14	29	26	21	10
Distractions that deviate learner from learning		21	38	32	9
Organization of work processes and time management	10	17	36	37	
Lack of interaction		17	47	36	
Lack of flexibility		30	32	38	
Lack of direct human interaction		21	41	38	
Instructor's competency					
Instructors fear of handling ICT's (Technophobia)	14	19	22	35	10
Poor teaching skills	20	27	14	30	9
Unstructured content	4	37	12	47	
No follow up	8	29	41	22	
Assignment corrections difficulties	10	26	28	26	10
online exams never addresses the queries	19	23	16	32	10
Feeling of students/staff are masked	27	25	22	26	
Learner's attributes					
Indiscipline	10	52	26	12	
Reduction in the number of learner's attending the classes	14	30	38	12	6
The communication with media complicates group work.	9	34	31	16	10
Missing personal contact with Instructor or Tutor	18	23	43		16
Due to the online communication in the course personal relations are neglected.	8	20	62		9
Unmotivated	10	42	22	26	
Insufficient tools for student assessment		29	32	35	4
Insufficient time to clarify the queries	9	29	30	32	
Individual follow up is affected	18	13	41	28	
Health issues					
Difficulty in concentration due to the harmful radiations from device used for online classes	8	25	39	22	6
Deteriorating the already existing health issues due to prolonged online classes	9	8	45	32	6
Text neck syndrome		29	34	31	6
Eye strain/back/neck/shoulder/hand strain		23	35	24	18

* SD- Strongly Disagree, D- Disagree , U- Undecided or Neither Agree Nor disagree, A-Agree, SA- Strongly Agree

In the above table 2, indicates that 50 % of students agreed to technological challenges faced by nursing students towards online classes like Insufficient data pack to access the material/to attend the class (52%)Interrupted internet supply (54%), Lack of an electronic device (32%), device incompatibility with the applications used for online classes (56%)Online classes that cannot be downloaded or recorded for future learning (32%), Low-quality audio or video (47%), No face to face interaction between the learners and teachers (42%), Adaptability struggle (46%), Data privacy and security (32%), Data corruption (42%), But around 50% students agreed that technological constraints are the main challenges towards online mode of learning. Around 70% of students neither agreed not disagreed that there is File saving & storing issue.

Around 43-52% of students disagreed that they face challenges regarding learning environment (Lack of congenial learning environment (43) %.Further to this students 41% Distractions that deviate learner from learning, However, less than 40 % of the students agree that it affects Organization of work processes and time management, Lack of interaction,Lack of flexibility, Lack of direct human interaction . Further approximately 22 to 47% agreed that learning environment and instructor's competency are the challenges faced by students during online mode of learning.

The results on challenges faced by students towards online learning with regard to learning attributes and health issues show that around 45-62% students disagreed that learners attributes are the challenges and around 40% students agreed that health issues like Difficulty in concentration due to the harmful radiations from devices used for online classes, Deteriorating the already existing health issues due to prolonged online classes, Text neck syndrome and Eye strain/back/neck/shoulder/hand strain are the challenges faced but students towards online learning.

DISCUSSION

A study that looks at how students are struggling with e-learning in the wake of COVID-19 and whether or not students are ready to study online (Aboagye et al. 2020). The study's conclusion was that learners should be able to use a method that combines traditional teaching with e-teaching. In, you can read about another study that looks at how students who are familiar with web-based technology use e-learning to improve their self-study skills (Radha et al. 2020). During the COVID-19 pandemic, when all schools were on lockdown, the results of the study show that e-learning became very popular among students.

Online learning was found to be helpful because it gave students more freedom and convenience. Students liked university websites with well-organized content and recorded videos. They also said that the best way to learn was through interactive sessions with quizzes and homework at the end of each class. But most students said that online classes could be harder than traditional classrooms because of technological limitations, slow feedback, and teachers who don't know how to use Information and Communication Technologies well. So, all of these things should be considered when making an online course so that it is more useful and effective for the learner. This includes improving infrastructure, making it easier to connect to the Internet, building up rural areas, changing the way students and teachers think, and so on. Colleges and other educational institutions are required to give both students and teachers good training and support on how to use online classes, which makes them feel more at ease. Colleges and teachers need to do everything they can to change the way students think. Because of this, it's important to know what stops people from accepting online learning and to take steps to fix the problem.

It is evident that online learning has more significant benefits like it fills the gap of literacy rate by reaching to the rural areas (Ritimoni, 2018). Still, to effectively implement in a country like India, certain things have to be taken note of. 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 teachers need to put any effort into changing the mindset of students. To achieve this goal, colleges or government has to take training and development programs to teachers as well as students

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

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 increasing use of technology in the field of learning has improved the quality of education. Both students and teachers have optimistic views about online classes. However, there is always much room for improvement as far as online learning goes. Personalized spatial settings should be considered to satisfy the needs of different groups in order to enhance their preference and visiting desire. However, considerable concerns and problems have developed, particularly as it relates to the quality of online education. Successfully implementing online learning into the curriculum requires a well-thought-out strategy and a more active approach. Apart from this the teacher himself should learn some innovative techniques for the preparation of these learning modules and utilize it in the classroom. Students' also be guided well for the use of technology in their study. The data and concepts related to advance techniques in technology to be utilized for learning can be involved in curriculum. However, there is always much room for improvement as far as online learning goes. 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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