



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Education

EFFECT OF ICT ON THE TEACHING STAFF DURING COVID 19 LOCKDOWN-A STUDY ACROSS COLLEGES IN MUMBAI.

KEY WORDS: COVID-19, Commerce colleges, Lockdown, ICT.

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ABSTRACT

Computer technologies and other aspects of digital culture have changed the ways people live, work, play, and learn, impacting the construction and distribution of knowledge and power around the world. Digital literacy—the skills of searching for, discerning, and producing information, as well as the critical use of new media for full participation in society—has thus become an important consideration for curriculum frameworks.

In many countries, digital literacy is being built through the incorporation of information and communication technology (ICT) into universities. Teachers need specific professional development opportunities in order to increase their ability to use ICT for formative learning assessments, individualized instruction, accessing online resources, and for fostering student interaction and collaboration. Such training in ICT should positively impact teachers' general attitudes towards ICT in the classroom, but it should also provide specific guidance on ICT teaching and learning within each discipline.

INTRODUCTION

As the days pass by with no immediate solution to stop the outbreak of COVID-19, school and university closures will not only have a short-term impact on the continuity of learning for more than 285 million young learners in India but also affect far-reaching economic and societal consequences. However, modern day technology has made it possible to work from home rather than solely relying on “only working from office” practice which is now a thing of the past. Needless to say, the pandemic has transformed the centuries-old, chalk-talk teaching model to one driven by technology. Modern technology is enabling professionals from the education sector to think out of the box, beyond the traditional classroom learning and explore the world of E-content and E-Learning by maximizing the use of online resources. E-content is a very powerful tool of education. E-learning is the new trend of education. The term covers a wide set of applications and processes, such as web-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual classrooms, and digital collaboration.

ICT, or information and communications technology, is the infrastructure and components that enable modern computing. Although there is no single, universal definition of ICT, the term is generally accepted to mean all devices, networking components, applications and systems that combined allow people and organizations to interact in the digital world.

Universities use a diverse set of ICT tools to communicate, create, disseminate, store, and manage information. In some contexts, ICT has also become integral to the teaching-learning interaction, through such approaches as replacing chalkboards with interactive digital whiteboards, using students' own smartphones or other devices for learning during class time, and the “flipped classroom” model where students watch lectures at home on the computer and use classroom time for more interactive exercises. When teachers are digitally literate and trained to use ICT, these approaches can lead to higher order thinking skills, provide creative and individualized options for students to express their understandings, and leave students better prepared to deal with ongoing technological change in society and the workplace. Hence a study was undertaken to find the effect of ICT on the Teaching staff during COVID-19 lockdown in colleges across Mumbai.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research method used was 'Survey method', under which the information would be secured concerning the subject of study from selected number of respondents of the concerned Universe. The research is done to study the effect of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on the

teaching staff of Commerce colleges across Mumbai during lockdown due to COVID-19 pandemic. The total sample size was 75. Data collection was done through a self-prepared, structured questionnaire. The custom-designed questionnaire was sent across to the respondents with a request to answer the questions online and return the completely filled questionnaire. The primary data was gathered by an online questionnaire. For secondary data, findings from the Internet were used.

Limitations of the Study

- The most apparent limitation was that some facts and figures may not be exactly disclosed due to Organizational Rules, Regulations and Policies.
- Time factor: As the research study was conducted within a limited duration of time, a detailed study could not be made.
- This type of research is ideal for finding out numerical data. It would be more useful to conduct interviews and study the atmosphere within the organization. Unfortunately that was not possible for this study, and therefore an online questionnaire was used.
- As the aspirations of humans change with time, they are very difficult to research. Therefore, the Organizational policies too need a careful framing up & periodical review.

Data Analysis

- The data collected was classified & analyzed using Microsoft Excel and statistical method. The data was analyzed to identify the issues.
- Parameters: 1) Familiarity using ICT 2) Work Culture 3) Learning Opportunities 4) Leadership 5) Job Satisfaction.

≤ 60%	Areas of Concern
> 60% - < 80%	Alert
≥ 80%	Strength

RESULTS

- **(1) Familiarity using ICT:** It refers to how comfortable the employees are using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in conducting their activities.
- Familiarity and awareness about ICT: 90% Agreed; 10% Disagreed.
- Ease in using Communication tools like Google forms, Edmodo, etc. to conduct online tests and giving assignments to students: 87% Agreed; 13% Disagreed.
- Effective delivery of lectures using Zoom App, YouTube, and Google Meet etc. for conducting lectures: 75% Agreed; 25% Disagreed.

(2) Work Culture: Work Culture means the environment that an organization has created to facilitate employee growth.

- My organization treats the employees well even in difficult

times (economic crisis, pandemics, etc.): 85 % Agreed; 15 % Disagreed.

- My organization is well prepared and is taking the necessary steps to become an inspiring workplace: 71 % Agreed; 29 % Disagreed.
- My organization facilitates a conducive work environment which supports performance, learning and expression of views at work: 80 % Agreed; 20 % Disagreed.

(3) Learning Opportunities: Each Organization works towards providing learning and development opportunities to their employees to enhance their capabilities and competencies.

- The organization has provided me sufficient training in using ICT for personal and professional development: 72 % Agreed; 28 % Disagreed.
- The organization encourages me to undergo more trainings and certifications: 90 % Agreed; 10 % Disagreed.
- I feel the organization has provided me equal and enough training opportunities as compared to other organizations: 80 % Agreed; 20 % Disagreed.

(4) Leadership: Leadership is the process by which the top management leads an organization and manages their employees. Leadership is a key to make the employees feel well informed and belonged to whatever is happening in the organization.

- The top management demonstrates leadership and takes timely and fair decisions for their employees: 90 % Agreed; 10 % Disagreed.
- I am well informed about the institutional decisions that impact my work: 85 % Agreed; 15 % Disagreed.
- The top management inspires and motivates employees by providing timely feedback and guidance: 79 % Agreed; 21 % Disagreed.
- The institutional policies are well-communicated at all levels: 91 % Agreed; 9 % Disagreed.

(5) Job Satisfaction: Job satisfaction refers to how satisfied the employees of an organization are.

- I am encouraged to think differently & focus on improving processes & systems (by introducing online lectures, preparing presentations, E-content and E-learning resources for the students): 89 % Agreed; 11 % Disagreed.
- My job gives me an opportunity to contribute to the success of the organization as a whole: 90 % Agreed; 10 % Disagreed.
- I am happy with the job responsibilities assigned to me and feel enriched and excited: 85 % Agreed; 15 % Disagreed.

• Interpretation

(A) Strengths: (Includes the Parameters which have the Satisfaction Score above 80 %).

- Familiarity using ICT: satisfaction score 84 %.
- Learning Opportunities: satisfaction score 80.67 %.
- Leadership: satisfaction score 86.25 %.
- Job Satisfaction: satisfaction score 88 %.

(B) Areas of Improvement: (Includes the Parameters which have the Satisfaction Score between 60 & 80 %).

- Work Culture: satisfaction score 78.67 %.

(C) Areas of Concern: (Includes the Parameters which have the Satisfaction Score ≤ 60%)

- None of the Parameters scored ≤ 60%.

DISCUSSION

The rapid development in the computer technology, together with the use of computers by the teachers, paved the way for the introduction of computers in teaching and learning. With the advancement of technology, the computer has become more user friendly, so the teachers can attempt to develop E-content while working from home.

The education sector of the economy happens to be one part of society that has undergone radical changes and transformations as a result of the increasing presence of ICT. The implications that ICT has on learning and teaching are significant. ICT brings new possibilities to the classroom due to the very nature of it being innovative. For UNESCO, ICTs has “great potential for knowledge dissemination, effective learning and the development of more efficient education services” (Semenov, 2005, p. 4). It is their belief that the challenge for the education systems that exists lies in “how to transform the curriculum and teaching-learning process to provide students with skills to function effectively in this dynamic, information rich, continuously changing environment” (Finger et al., 2007, p.34).

Integrating ICT into the curriculum for teaching and learning is simply about being able to understand and exploit the potential of ICT in education (Sutherland & Sutch, 2009). For this to occur, teachers need to take the initiative and start the transformation process as they are the key (Sutherland & Sutch, 2009; Finger et al., 2005). The young people of today are already familiar with the new technologies that exist, teachers need to take a risk and imagine the potential of these new technologies in the classroom (Sutherland & Sutch, 2009). However, as these risks are associated with integrating ICT in schooling, it is important that school leaders provide their teachers with professional development support services throughout the entire process.

CONCLUSIONS & SUGGESTIONS

Among the satisfaction scores for all the parameters, the parameter 'work culture' needs improvement. The actions that educational institutes need to take into account are as follows:

1. Provide training courses for the staff by encouraging them to register for more online courses, attend more workshops and familiarize them with the latest technology.
2. Arrangements should be made to provide employees with the necessary resources like laptops, internet connectivity, etc.
3. Promote a culture of learning and making maximum utilization of online resources and be updated with the latest technology.
4. Communication can be made more efficient by organizing virtual meeting at least once a week so that proper feedback system is enabled and to ensure that all the processes are on time.
5. Open-source digital learning solutions and Learning Management Software should be adopted so that teachers can conduct teaching online eg. The [DIKSHA platform](#).
6. Inclusive learning solutions, especially for the most vulnerable and marginalized, need to be developed. With a rapid increase of mobile internet users in India, which is expected to reach 85% households by 2024, technology is enabling ubiquitous access and personalization of education even in the remotest parts of the country.
7. It is also important to reconsider the current delivery and pedagogical methods in higher education by seamlessly integrating classroom learning with e-learning modes to build a unified learning system.
8. Indian traditional knowledge should be integrated with a present-day mainstream university education to serve the larger cause of humanity.

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