

Perception Of Medical Students Towards Online Teaching: A Questionnaire Study

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ABSTRACT

Background: The COVID -19, a novel coronavirus disease spreading across the globe, most countries including India have ordered the closure of all educational institutions which has put the academic calendar to a functional standstill. The pandemic forced many institutions to shift to online mode using Google meet, Zoom, Microsoft teams, etc. The teaching-learning methodologies have been revamped globally due to the covid outbreak that many schools and teachers around the world are coping with alternative ways for delivery of instructions. In spite of its multiple advantages, there are quite a few limitations faced by online teaching such as lack of student-teacher interaction, social isolation, network connectivity issues, etc. The deviation from traditional teaching to online teaching prompted this study to assess the perceptions of students towards online learning.

Aim: The purpose of the study was to determine the perceptions of medical students towards online teaching during the lockdown

Materials and Methods: After obtaining approval from the institutional ethical committee, the questionnaire-based study was conducted on 150 first-year medical students of Adichunchanagiri Institute of medical sciences, B G Nagara. The data obtained were statistically analyzed and tabulated.

Results: Responses have clearly shown that students prefer the traditional method of teaching such as lecture, discussion, etc. over online classes due to multiple issues faced during online teaching.

Conclusion: Online teaching is the most common method and the best platform to keep learners/students engaged and safe during the lockdown period for Covid-19. Despite being in the technological era, students are still more inclined towards face-to-face teaching rather than e-teaching due to various reasons. Administration and faculty members should take appropriate measures to improve e-teaching quality and help students in better learning.

KEY WORDS: Perception, Students, online teaching

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INTRODUCTION

COVID 19 pandemic has affected all aspects of human life including education [1]. With the

COVID-19, a novel coronavirus disease spreading across the globe, most countries including India have ordered the closure of all

educational institutions which has put the academic calendar to a functional standstill. As the schools and colleges are shut for an indefinite period from march 2020, educational institutions have adopted online teaching to complete the prescribed syllabi in the stipulated time frame. The major concern in online teaching is about the quality of learning which is closely related to designing and executing content. The effectiveness of learning depends on the exhibition of the content in an online environment and also on understanding and addressing the limitations faced by students. The study is even more relevant to consider in India as most of the institutions are adapting online education for the first time [2].

The tough time of covid forced many institutions to shift to online mode using Google meet, Zoom, Microsoft teams, etc. for completing the syllabi. The teaching-learning methodologies have been revamped globally due to the covid outbreak that many schools and teachers around the world are coping with alternative ways for delivery of instructions [3]. Henceforth online classes are likely to be expected in every formal curriculum for education [4].

Several studies have assessed the significance and efficacy of the implementation of online teaching. In spite of its multiple advantages, there are quite a few limitations faced by online teaching such as lack of student-teacher interaction, social isolation, network connectivity issues etc [5].

The deviation from traditional teaching to online prompts this study to assess the perceptions of students towards online learning.

The objective of the study: The purpose of the study was to determine the perceptions of medical students towards online teaching during the lockdown

MATERIALS AND METHODS

After obtaining approval from the institutional ethical committee, the questionnaire-based descriptive study was conducted in a medical college. All questionnaires were validated prior to the commencement of the study. By convenience sampling method, 150 first-year

medical students aged above 18yrs were included in the study. The data obtained were statistically analysed and tabulated.

Inclusion criteria: Medical students aged above 18yrs will be included in the study.

Exclusion criteria: Students who had not given consent were excluded from the study.

RESULTS

A total number of 150 medical students participated in the study. Around 85% of the respondents of the students have already attended online classes before lockdown for many reasons such as Base online classes for NTSE exams, NEET UG teaching, webinars, etc. 15% of the respondents attended online classes for the first time after covid 19 restrictions came into the picture.

Even though most of the students were aware of the online classes, nearly half of the respondents found it difficult to adjust to the newer version of teaching.

Results of the study indicate that studying at their own pace was ranked as the major benefit of online learnings. Online education has offered students the opportunity to study at their own pace and time of their convenience. Hence, flexibility and time saving are major reasons behind the demand for online education.

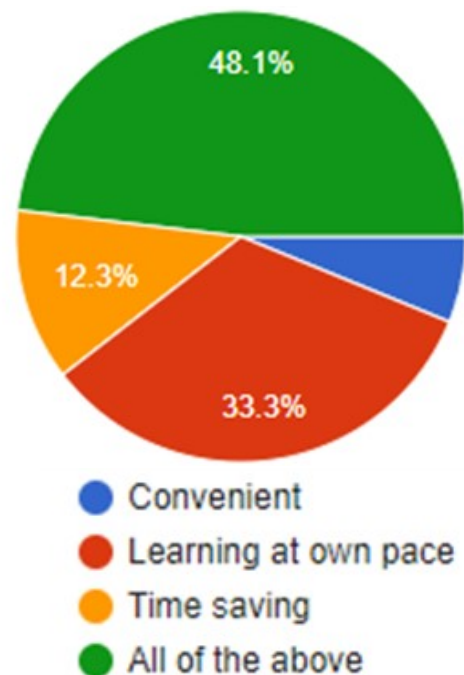


Fig. 1: Benefits of online teaching.

For 65% of the respondents, technical issues were the major hindrance to attending online classes. Except for the major cities in India, other places have a lot of network issues to deal with. Lack of motivation and social interaction are other drawbacks faced by the students.

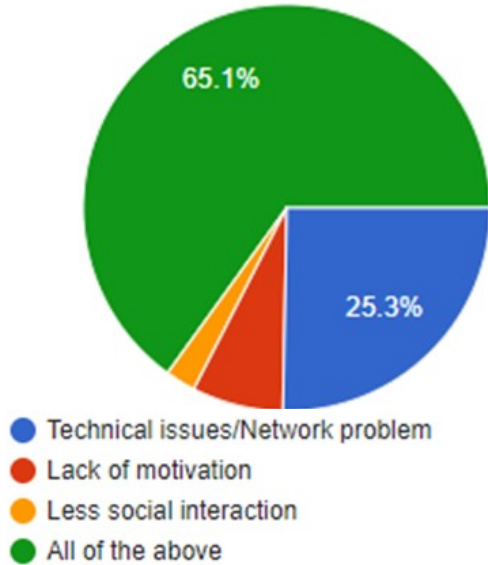


Fig. 2: Drawbacks of online teaching.

According to the study over 85% of the students have faced network issues in India while accessing the internet across locations. Various devices used by the students for attending online classes were smartphone/mobile (75%), laptop (14.3%), tablet (9.5%) followed by desktop.

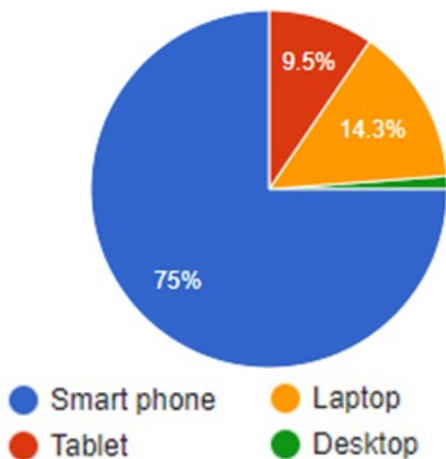


Fig. 3: Commonly used gadgets for online classes.

Only a few around 20% are fine with attending online classes in the future. But most of the students are for the traditional method of teaching such as lecture, discussion, etc. Some of the health concerns in online teaching are stress, eye problems, insomnia, and a sense of isolation. Stress is the most

important health issue faced by the students due to various reasons such as network issues, prolonged screen time, lack of interaction with teachers and friends. In our study for about 63% of students, stress was the major health issue.

Most of them are of the opinion that online classes should not exceed 2 to 3hrs in a day. According to the study, the preferred ideal duration for each class should be less than 45min. The mode of learning which aided students in learning better was both online classes along with textbooks.

Respondents felt that pre-recorded classes were more beneficial as they provide flexibility in learning than live classes. Google Classroom was the most commonly used platform for material sharing during online classes followed by what's app and mail.

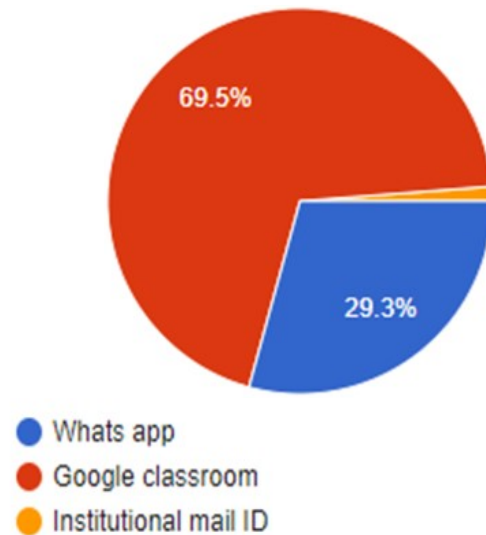


Fig. 4: Commonly used platform for material sharing.

DISCUSSION

Due to covid, many countries have been suffering from disruptions in education. In a country like India, the digital divide can still be considered as one of the substantial risks to the implementation of successful online education, as many still suffer from insufficient educational opportunities [6].

Lockdown during covid time forced many institutions to start and adapt to online teaching. Those students who are attending online classes for the first time found it difficult to adjust. In a study done by Abbasi S, 86% of students felt e-learning has very little impact on their learning. The majority of the

students preferred to face to face, traditional way of teaching over online teaching. The key outcome of the study showed that the students were not yet ready for e-learning [5]. According to the survey, about 30 % of students were unhappy with the delivery of content through online mode and most of the students were getting addicted to mobiles and laptops which in turn has caused a lot of health problems due to the prolonged screen time [7].

As self-directed learning is an important competency to encourage lifelong learning among health professionals, online teaching has helped students to achieve that. The major drawback was to teach psychomotor skills and hands-on sessions such as laboratory and clinical skills. History taking, clinical reasoning, communication skills can be thought through online mode. Sharing recorded videos of laboratory and clinical skills demonstration is also worthwhile through this platform [8].

Mobile phones have become the most popular gadgets used by students for e-learning as compared to laptops and tablets. A study conducted on university students showed that 66% use mobile phones for e-learning, which is very similar to our study that showed 75% of students preferring smartphone/mobile followed by laptop (14.3%), tablet (9.5%), and desktop [5].

Online Learning allows proper utilization of time which keeps individuals safe from the spread of Covid-19. It has a greater approach to experts/specialists nationally and internationally and learners can gain knowledge at their own pace and time [9].

Critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication skills are always required for students no matter whether the class is taught online or offline. Online teaching requires various tasks to be completed in the different phases of planning and implementation [10]. It can be inferred that internet availability and accessibility play a critical role to ensure the success of online learning.

According to a study by Anwar & Wahid, online learning demotivates students' motivation in

learning. This data is supported by many authors through open-ended questions [11]. A study that collected the opinion of 358 students on online education during the COVID-19 Pandemic showed that physical classrooms were the most preferred mode of teaching (65.9%) than online education [12].

The pandemic has taught the institutions to have an alternate plan to deal with any COVID-19 like unexpected situations, which are likely in future. Environmental disasters warrant the institutions a high level of preparedness so as to quickly adapt to alternative modes of teaching [13].

CONCLUSION

Online teaching is the most common method and the best platform to keep learners/students engaged and safe during the lockdown period for Covid-19. Online teaching utilized various applications to help students in learning and interact with one another. Despite being in the technological era, students are still more inclined towards face-to-face teaching rather than e-teaching due to various reasons. Administration and faculty members should take appropriate measures to improve e-teaching quality and help students in better learning.

Author Contributions

Dr. Asharani S K has contributed to the concept, design of the study and intellectual content, in the writing of the manuscript and overall organizing and supervision of the course of the project.

Dr. Ajay N and Dr. Tejaswi H L have done extensive literature review, manuscript editing, formatting and proof reading. Questionnaire design, Data collection, analysis and interpretation of the data have been done by all the three authors

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Conflicts of Interests: None

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