

Impact of Online Education on College Students during Pandemic: a Case Study of L.O.K.D. College, Sonitpur District, Assam

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Received on: October 17, 2022 | Accepted on: December 13, 2022 | Published on: December 28, 2022

Abstract

The entire educational system in Assam, from pre-primary to higher education has been collapsed due to the outbreak of covid-19 pandemic. The L.O.K.D. College (Lokanayak Omeo Kumar Das College) along with other various educational institutions in Assam have shifted from traditional to online teaching platform to maintain continuity in academic activities, this effort is obviously accompanied by lot of hindrances. In this study, focuses are given on the understanding of rural college student's perceptions and preferences towards online learning through an offline survey of 100 college students. The findings indicate that majority of student's i.e., 80% students under arts stream and 84% students under science stream are using Google class room/Zoom/ Google meet/Skype etc. to continue their curricula activities. The students opined that flexibility and convenience of online classes makes it attractive option, whereas broadband connectivity issues in rural areas makes it a challenge for students to make use of online learning initiatives.

Keywords: *Online teaching, online learning, pandemic, perception, preferences*

1. Introduction

A new virus that appeared in Wuhan, China in December, 2019, although popularly referred to as corona virus, on February 11, 2020 the WHO announced the official name of the disease: Covid-19. The disease appears to have originated from a Wuhan sea-food market where wild animals, including marmots, birds, rabbits, bats and snakes, are traded illegally. Corona viruses are known to jump from animals to humans, so it's thought that the first people infected with the disease – a group primarily made up of stallholders from the seafood market. In recent times, lockdown is very much common and familiar word indicating to the state of emergency, moving towards fast growing digital universe from traditional “eye to eye” contact system. The direct and instant effect of this

unexpected sudden change on education system is that it has changed entirely into online mode immediately after outbreak of covid-19 from the traditional formal education system. In post covid-19 pandemic period it is also noticed that high dependency on online method of education, e-learning, distance and correspondence courses, Google meet, zoom, webinar etc. are replacing the traditional method to modern techno-based method.

2. Literature Review

Bora G. , Borkotoky D.,2021, The impact of online education on the university students of Assam in covid times , conducted a survey among the University students of Guwahati with the objectives to study the impact, benefit and

challenges of online education , where it was found that online education has its own merits & demerits ,which directly relates to the nature of use of online education.

Senapati C., Choudhary S., 2021,in their paper “Digital Education and Assam: a case study of KKHSOU, NSOU-OPEN JOURNAL” basically focused on using online and mobile based learning before, during and after the covid-19 pandemic situation by KKHSOU so that the educational cycle keeps on moving without any disruption.

Naidu, S., in his book “E-Learning: A Guidebook of Principles, Procedures and Practices”, defied e- learning as intentional use of electronic media and Information and Communication Technologies in teaching and learning process. In general term we can say that, online education requires adoption of scientific and systematic networked data and information in imparting education in a much more flexible and comfort manner.

Goyal S, 2012, in the book “*E-Learning: Future of Education*, Journal of Education and Learning.” Vol.6 (2) stated that E-learning refers to the way imparting classes avoiding the use of traditional teaching learning materials.

Mishraa L., 2020, Online Teaching learning in higher education during, lockdown period of covid-19 pandemic, Elsevier, International, Volume 1, 2020, conducted a survey to understand the opinion and sensitivity students as well as teachers on online education mode and similarly focused on the way or nature of implementation process of online teaching learning modes.

Muthuprasad T. et al. ,2020, Students’ Perception and Preference for Online Education in India during covid-19 Pandemic, focuses on understanding of student’s perception and preferences towards online learning through online survey of 307 agricultural students from different universities in India.

3. Objectives

1. To analyze the impact of online education among the undergraduate students of Lokanayak Omeo Kumar Das College (L.O.K.D. College), Dhekiajuli, Assam.
2. To study the perceptions of the students on online teaching-learning during covid-19 pandemic.
3. To study the benefits of online education and the obstacles faced by students while pursuing online education.

4. Hypothesis

On the basis of the objectives outlined above, following two hypotheses are formed

1. Perception and participation of students in online education are unbiased against stream and gender.
2. Students are in comfort zone in adopting to online teaching learning process during covid-19 pandemic.

Particulars	Bachelor of Arts(B.A.)		Bachelor of Science(B.Sc.)		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Age 16-20 years	12	10	13	13	48
Age 21-25 years	13	15	12	12	52
Total=	25	25	25	25	100

Table 1 Data of Students Respondents with their age and Stream (Source: - Primary Data)

5. Study area & Methodology

The study is based basically on primary and with limited or isolated use of secondary data. The present study covers the L.O.K.D. College, in Sonitpur of Assam. In this college approximately over 4000 students are pursuing their education under three different streams i.e., Arts, Science and Commerce. We selected two streams i.e., Arts and Science and a sample size of 100 students was chosen from two streams equally i.e., 50 from Arts and 50 from science stream, with the help of random sampling method, wherein proportion between males and females are equal. All the students are regular mode students, few female students are in campus and majority is off-campus students. A questionnaire consisting of both structural and unstructured questions was prepared to interview the students. We have used appropriate statistical and mathematical tools and techniques like arithmetic mean correlation coefficient etc. to classify, tabulate and analyze various problems of the study area.

6. Analysis & Discussion

Out breaking of devastating Covid -19 pandemic compelled the public authorities in majority of the countries of the world to shut down their educational institutions for more than two years continually pushing up all the stakeholders of educational fraternity into trouble-water especially in respect of complete their syllabus within the stipulated academic calendar. This sudden disruption in normal process of formal education resulted in temporary stagnation and inconvenience, overcoming or tackling down this unwarranted situation required promotion of innovative method of imparting education through digital intervention. This digital means turned into as the sole ray of hope in all academic institutions in teaching-learning process which uprooted institutional biases, classroom obstacles and also ignited to pursue creative approaches worldwide with infinite geographical jurisdiction in very short notice.

Attributes	No. of students under Arts stream				Nos. of students under science stream			
	Male	%	Female	%	Male	%	Female	%
1, Google class room/Zoom/ Google meet/ Skype	18	72	22	88	19	76	23	92
2. Webinar	15	60	20	80	18	72	22	88
3.You Tube videos	4	16	6	24	10	40	11	44
4.You tube/Face book streaming	4	16	4	16	5	20	6	24
5.WhatsApp/Telegram	14	56	16	64	18	72	19	76
6.Telephonic conversation	8	32	10	40	12	48	14	56
7.Email	00	00	00	00	1	4	00	00
8. Neither any of the above	4	16	3	12	00	00	00	00

Table 2 Different modes of online teaching methods used by the students (Source: Survey)

The table-2 depicts the different modes of online teaching-learning methods being used by the students and teachers while imparting lecture and interaction during the lockdown period. The LOKD College developed its own digital system wherein all the teachers mandatorily upload study materials, clear doubt and students can put queries. Despite other various modes of online teaching learning methods, Google class room/Zoom/ Google meet/Skype is being used by 72% male students and 88% female students under Arts stream, whereas 76% male students and 92% female students under science stream. It is also found those 60% male students in Arts and 72% male students under science stream using webinar but in respect of female students under science stream using webinar comparatively much higher rate i.e., more by 8%. Interestingly, 16% male and 12% female students under arts stream are not using any of the above cited seven methods of online teaching learning methods. As

revealed in table-2, in on hand, female students under both the stream are using relatively more online modes of teaching learning methods than the male students under both the stream, on the other hand science students are much ahead than the arts students in respect of digital education i.e., adoption of various modes of online teaching learning education. Hence, it is clearly established that Perception and participation of students in online education are biased against stream and gender. As far as comfort zone is concerned it refers to a situation where one feels safe or at ease i.e., a settled method wherein students are not facing any challenges to adopt online education and reaping optimum benefits as per expectation.

Attributes	Positive Answer	Negative Answer	Rank
1. Is the schedule of online learning more flexible and convenient?	74%	26%	1
2. Is it more comfortable environment?	57%	43%	2
3. Does online learning improve your technical skill?	51%	49%	3
4. Does online learning ensure more interaction and concentration?	46%	54%	4
5. Does online learning make you self-disciplined and responsible?	45%	55%	5

Table 3 Benefits of online learning (Source: Survey)

It is clear from table-3 that the major benefit of online learning is that it is more flexible and convenient where 74% students favor online learning. So, flexibility and convenience are the two major factors behind the demand of online learning. But others attributes like comfortable environment, enhancing technical skill, more interaction and concentration, self-disciplined and responsible are ranked two, three, four, and five, as shown in table-3.

It is clearly evident in table-4, that lack of internet connectivity is major problem towards online learning in this area, perhaps as this region is located in remote border area of Arunachal Pradesh. Data limit and data speed, face to face interaction, Technophobia, lack of device etc. are ranked as two, three, four and five respectively.

The biggest challenge of online learning is lack of internet connectivity or slow connection, which have been excluding some of learners from attending online classes. Online classes will be successful only if internet facility is provided to all equitably and affordably. It is also challenging to create a comfortable environment for learning or sense of community in the online environment. So, these give us an insight that if we move from traditional to online learning than as prerequisite internet connectivity in overall the country must be developed and should be made accessible. Therefore, it would be illogical to argue that students are in comfort zone.

Questions	Yes	No	Rank
1. Do you suffer from lack of internet connectivity?	58%	42%	1
2. Are you facing problem regard to data limit and data speed?	56%	44%	2
3. Is there little or no face-to-face interaction?	55%	45%	3
4. Are you suffering from Technophobia?	48%	52%	4
5. Do you have sufficient online devices like smart phone, laptop, desktop etc.?	46%	54%	5
6. Do you face poor learning environment?	45%	55%	6

Table 4 Challenges of online learning (Source: Survey)

7. Conclusion

With the objective to overcome the immediate negative impacts of pandemic on educational sector, this sector transforming from traditional to online system. The findings of this study reveal that majority of college students have favorable attitudes towards online learning during pandemic period. They also prefer online classes as it is more flexible and convenient. However, most of the students opined that online classes are more challenging than traditional classes due to technological constraints. It is apparent that replacement of traditional formal education system by online education is accompanied by serious adverse demerits like shorter and non-longer lasting impacts on the learners as well as followed by series of benefits. Perceptions of majority of the students towards online education is that actual benefits and fruits of classroom education cannot be reaped by online education so they opined that formal classroom education system also should be followed simultaneously.

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