



A STUDY ON CHALLENGES FACED BY LEARNERS USING ONLINE EDUCATION AMID THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK IN MUMBAI CITY

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has transformed how college students learn. Virtual meetings have replaced traditional face-to-face meetings used for teaching and learning in a range of online learning applications. The article examines some of the challenges online learners encounter in the midst of the COVID-19 outbreak in Mumbai City. For the present study, a descriptive research design has been employed. The information regarding the aforementioned subject was gathered through a survey. The sample size of 290 respondents provided the primary data. Utilizing Microsoft Excel and SPSS Software, the data was analyzed using simple frequency and percentages to draw the conclusion. The survey reveals that distractions, a lack of in-person interaction and technological difficulties were the three main difficulties faced by commerce learners during online learning.

Keywords- Challenges, Covid-19, Online learning

1. INTRODUCTION

Due to the ever-growing impact of technology, the global landscape of education has undergone considerable changes since the 1990s. An unprecedented health disaster (the COVID-19 pandemic) that has affected the school sector has shaken its very foundation. As a result, numerous governments throughout the world have started taking action to lessen the pandemic's negative effects on education. These trends inevitably forced educational institutions to switch to fully online education until face-to-face instruction was permitted. (Barrot et al., 2021) Given the slow pace of improvements in academic institutions, which continue to use traditional lecture-based teaching methods, institutional prejudices, and out-of-date classrooms, this is a bright spot in an otherwise gloomy picture. However, COVID-19 has inspired educational institutions all across the world to pursue innovative techniques in a relatively short amount of time. Most institutions have switched to an online method during this time, using Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Blackboard, and other online platforms. (Muthuprasad et al. 2021)

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In her qualitative study, **R M Simamora (2020)** examined how performing arts education students perceived the difficulties of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. 15 students provided the information that was gathered. The respondents' challenges included the state of the economy, anxiety associated with online learning, the possibility of user data security, the ability to present virtually and the difficulty of locating quality online learning resources.

In their study, **Muhammad Adnan and Kainat Anwar (2020)** addressed Pakistani higher education students' perspectives regarding required online and distance learning courses at universities in the midst of the coronavirus (COVID-19). Surveys of undergraduate and postgraduate students were conducted to learn about their opinions about online education in Pakistan. The study's findings showed that in developing nations like Pakistan, where the great majority of students lack internet connection due to technical and financial difficulties, online learning cannot yield the intended results. Other difficulties raised by college students included the instructor's lack of face-to-face engagement, response times and the lack of typical classroom socialization.

Muhammad Mahyob (2020) identified the difficulties faced by English language learners (EFL) in Science and Arts College, Alula, Taibah University, Saudi Arabia, as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic when the college switched to online learning in the second semester of 2020. 184 students' data was obtained using a survey-based methodology. The main challenges were communication, academic, and technical issues. The findings also showed that students were dissatisfied with their ability to continue their education online.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The principal objectives of the paper are spelled out as follows:

1. To analyse the demographic profile of the respondents.
2. To highlight the challenges faced by learners using Online education amid the COVID-19 outbreak in Mumbai City.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The research design for the study is descriptive in nature. The researcher largely depended on primary data. Using convenient sampling technique, a sample size of 290 respondents was taken into consideration. The respondents were distributed well designed questionnaire consisting of close-ended questions to collect the responses from them. The secondary data have been gathered from published material in various books, journals, newspaper, business magazines and various websites. The relevant data so collected was analysed using simple frequency and percentages by using Microsoft Excel and SPSS Software.

5. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The geographical scope of the present study is limited to the learners dwelling in the city of Mumbai only. The study is confined only to undergraduate students of commerce colleges residing in Mumbai.

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Distribution of the respondents based on their demographic profile is depicted in the table below.

Table 6.1: Gender and Age Wise Classification of the Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	185	63.79
	Male	105	36.21
	Total	290	100
Age	less than or equal to 20	264	91.0
	more than 20	26	9.0
	Total	290	100

Source: Compiled from Primary Data

Inference:

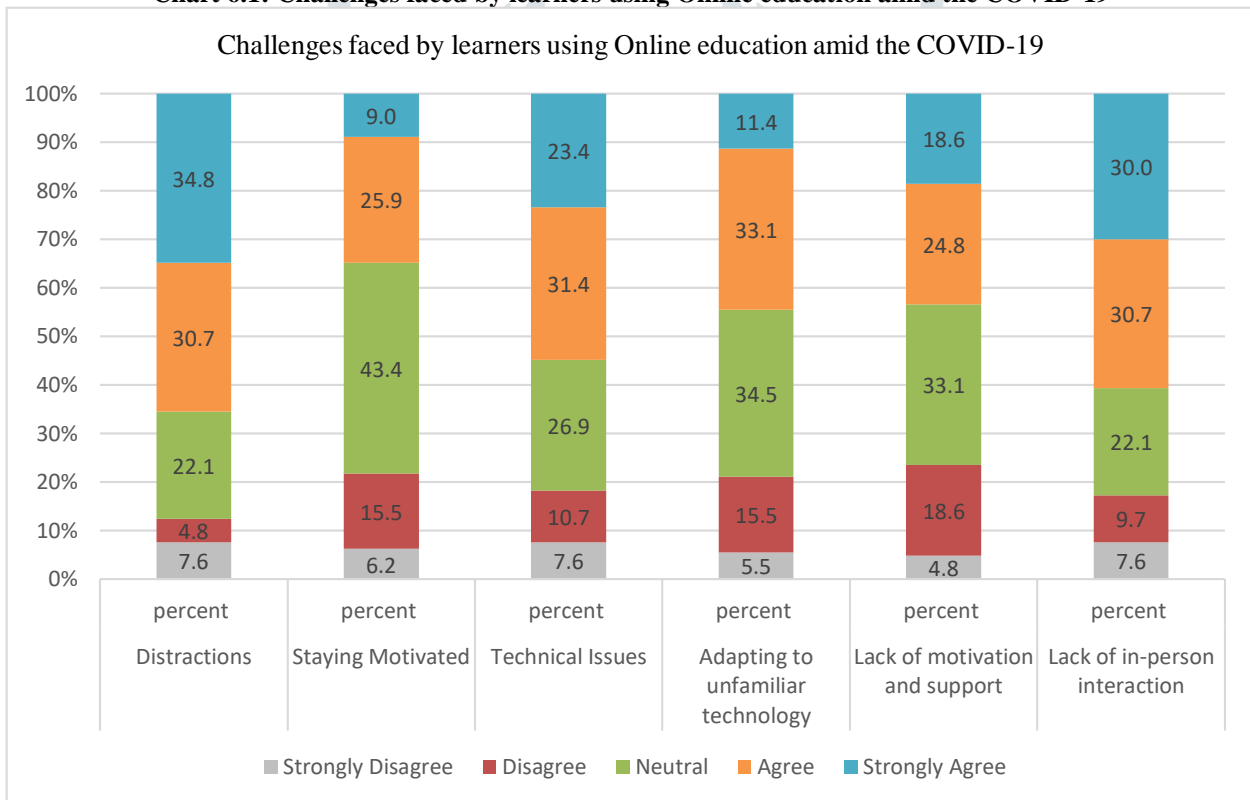
The above table 6.1 represents the result of analysis of the gender and age of the respondents who participated in the study. The gender wise distribution reveals that 185 female and 105 male learners participated in the study. The age wise distribution reveals that 91% respondents were less than or equal to 20 as the study is mainly confined to undergraduates' learners.

Table 6.2: Challenges faced by learners using Online education amid the COVID-19

Challenges faced by learners using Online education amid the COVID-19									
Statements		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total	Mean	Rank
Distractions	frequency	22	14	64	89	101	290	3.80	1
	percent	7.6	4.8	22.1	30.7	34.8	100.0		
Staying Motivated	frequency	18	45	126	75	26	290	3.16	6
	percent	6.2	15.5	43.4	25.9	9.0	100.0		
Technical Issues	frequency	22	31	78	91	68	290	3.52	3
	percent	7.6	10.7	26.9	31.4	23.4	100.0		
Adapting to unfamiliar technology	frequency	16	45	100	96	33	290	3.29	5
	percent	5.5	15.5	34.5	33.1	11.4	100.0		
Lack of motivation and support	frequency	14	54	96	72	54	290	3.34	4
	percent	4.8	18.6	33.1	24.8	18.6	100.0		
Lack of in-person interaction	frequency	22	28	64	89	87	290	3.66	2
	percent	7.6	9.7	22.1	30.7	30.0	100.0		

Source: Compiled from Primary Data

Chart 6.1: Challenges faced by learners using Online education amid the COVID-19



Source: Compiled from Primary Data

The above table 6.2 and chart 6.1 depict the various challenges faced by learners of commerce colleges during covid -19 while using online learning. The major challenge faced by learners was distractions which using online education. The second and third challenge was lack of in-person interaction and technical issues. Lack of motivation and support was another challenge faced by the learners. Adapting to unfamiliar technology and staying motivated were also challenging task for the learners during Covid-19.

7. SUGGESTIONS

Although there are many drawbacks to online learning, we can't overlook its advantages in a situation like this. To overcome these challenges, we can always find solutions. By prerecording video lectures, evaluating the material, and always having a Plan B available, technical issue can be resolved without affecting the

teaching-learning process. Online classes need to be made engaging, interactive, and dynamic. To encourage pupils to be awake and focused, teachers can give them time limitations and reminders. To the greatest extent possible, initiatives should be made to humanise the learning process. Students should receive individualised attention so they can quickly adjust to this atmosphere of learning. It is possible to interact with students through social media and different group forums.

8. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Following are the limitations of the present study:

- 1) The study is limited to undergraduate commerce learners of South Mumbai colleges only; hence the results cannot be generalized to a larger population.
- 2) The study is limited to learners only and teachers are excluded from the survey.
- 3) Data was collected only from 290 respondents using convenient sampling technique due to geographical and financial constraints.

9. CONCLUSION

The Covid-19 pandemic, according to the World Economic Forum, has altered how many individuals acquire and deliver education. We might implement some crucial innovations and change in order to find fresh approaches to our difficulties. Teachers are reluctant to accept any change since they are accustomed to the face-to-face lectures that make up the traditional techniques of instruction. However, given the current situation, our only option is to adjust to the changing circumstances and accept change. It will benefit the education industry and may result in a great deal of unexpected developments. We cannot forget about those students who lack access to all forms of online technology. These students may suffer when classes are taken online since they are less wealthy and come from less technologically advanced homes with limited financial means. Due to the high expenses of digital devices and internet data plans, they can suffer. Inequality gaps could get wider as a result of the digital divide. We have learned through this awful period of fate that nothing is certain and that we must be prepared to meet difficulties. Despite the short preparation window provided by this outbreak, we should learn that planning is essential. (Dhawan, 2020)

The study reveals that the major challenges encountered by commerce learners in online learning were distractions, lack of in-person interaction and technical issues. It is advised that more research be done to comprehend the teachers' perspectives on and experiences with online teaching during the epidemic. Thus, it can be stated that in order to improve its effectiveness and student acceptance, the online framework needs to be modified following the epidemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has permanently changed the educational landscape.

10. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The researcher would like to thank all undergraduate students of commerce colleges residing in Mumbai, India who participated in this study.

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