FACULTY PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS ONLINE TEACHING IN ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGES DURING PANDEMIC PERIOD IN VIRUDHUNAGAR DISTRICT

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INTRODUCTION

COVID -19 -A novel Corona virus disease is spreading around the world, many countries have ordered the closure of all educational institutions. Educational institutions have come to the point where they need to protect their students from the viral manifestations that exist in the highly socializing student community. In early February 2020, schools were closed only in China and some affected countries due to rising pollution. However, in mid-March, nearly 75 countries announced that they were operating or closing educational institutions. As of March 10, one in five student dropouts worldwide due to COVID-19 school and university closures. According to UNESCO, by the end of April 2020, 18.86 countries had implemented nationwide closures, which would affect about 73.8% of the total enrolled students (UNESCO, 2020). Although locking and social distance is the only way to slow the spread of COVID-19 by breaking the spread chain, closing educational institutions has affected a large number of students.

As schools and colleges are closed indefinitely, educational institutions and students are examining ways to complete their recommended curricula within the timeframe set according to the academic calendar. These activities have certainly caused difficulties, but they have also sparked new examples of educational innovations using digital interventions. This is a silver lining in a dark cloud considering the sluggish pace of reforms in educational institutions, which continues with thousands of old lecture-based approaches in teaching, rooted institutionalism and obsolete classrooms. Nonetheless, COVID-19 is a stimulus for global educational institutions to take creative approaches in a relatively short announcement.

During this time, most universities have switched to online mode using Blackboard, Microsoft Groups, Zoom or other online sites.

Educational institutions in the affected areas continue to seek gap solutions for teaching, but it should be noted that the quality of learning depends on the level of digital access and performance. The online learning environment varies greatly from traditional classroom environment to learner motivation, satisfaction and communication. The Community of Inquiry (COI) framework provides a convenient basis for interfering with online teaching and learning. According to the COI framework, the success of web-based instruction is determined by creating a learning team. In this group (similar to the traditional classroom environment), learning takes place through three interrelated components:

    (1) social existence,

    (2) cognitive existence,

    (3) teaching existence.

The enormity of the influence of information technology in many aspects of our lives today cannot be denied; there is no denying its growing popularity and application in the field of education. This role is gaining more importance in the education arena as all educational institutions around the world are being shut down in view of the current COVID-19 epidemic, thus creating many challenges for students at all levels, especially in the educational arena. Emerging innovative technologies and learning management systems for both teaching and assessment have provided the solution for educators and the opportunity for policymakers to use information technology to cover course work on isolated days. Relevant stakeholders, including corporate executives, teachers, and students, are making significant efforts to optimize available technology to continue the educational process and reduce the gaps that may arise as a result of current circumstances.

SAMPLING DESIGN

In this survey, a total of 100 Arts and Science College faculty were participated in Virudhunagar. The selection of the respondents was made to the convenience of the researcher.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

➢ To study the perceptions of teachers and on online teaching during COVID-19 pandemic in Virudhunagar District.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Deepak Jamadar in his research(2021) of Online teaching and learning has become increasingly popular in medical education during this coronavirus disease (COVID)-19 pandemic. Most of the students and faculties have adapted to this relatively new model of online teaching-learning, but many teachers experienced some sort of difficulty in transition to online teaching. The digital technology plays a great role in the interaction of faculty and students through online learning platform. Objective: The objective of the study was to determine the perceptions of medical faculties toward online teaching and learning in the lockdown period at a SVS Medical College, Mahabubnagar, Telangana state, India. Materials and Methods: The study was taken up after the institutional ethical clearance. By non-probability convenience sampling method, the sample size was 107. A predesigned and pretested questionnaire was administered to all the faculties who were involved in online teaching after taking informed consent. A 5-point Likert scale was used in the questionnaire. Data were collected, tabulated, and analyzed statistically. Results: A total of 107 responses were obtained. About 56% of faculties were having very good knowledge about online teaching and techniques before orientation program. Overall 52% of the faculties have positive perception toward online teaching in this lockdown period. Whooping 95% of faculty members expressed that face-to-face teaching is better than online teaching. Conclusion: Online teaching and learning became quite important in the past few months in medical education due to COVID-19 pandemic crisis. The online learning has its own advantages for enhancing students' learning and knowledge and can be considered a potential teaching method in medical education.

Leslie Hussey in her project (2021) Online education programs in nursing are increasing rapidly. Faculty need to be competent in their role and possess the skills necessary to positively impact student outcomes. Existing research offers effective teaching strategies for online education; however, there may be some disconnect in the application of these strategies and faculty perceptions of associated outcomes. Focus groups were formed to uncover how nursing faculty in an online program define and describe teaching effectiveness and quality indicators in an asynchronous online environment. A semi structured interview format guided group discussion. Participants included nurse educators from an online university with an average of 15 years of experience teaching in nursing academia and 6 years in an online environment. Teaching effectiveness, indicators of quality, and student success were three categories that emerged from the analysis of data. What materialized from the analysis was an overarching concept of a "dance" that occurs in the online environment. Effective online teachers facilitate, connect, lead, and work in synchrony with students to obtain indicators of quality such as student success

Maria Assuncao in his research paper (2020) The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted education at all levels in various ways. Institutions and teacher educators had to quickly respond to an unexpected and 'forced' transition from face-to-face to remote teaching. They also had to create learning environments for student teachers doing their preparation in the light of the requirements of teacher education programmes and the conditions in which both universities and schools had to operate. This paper provides a review of the literature on online teaching and learning practices in teacher education. In total, 134 empirical studies were analysed. Online teaching and learning practices related to social, cognitive and teaching presence were identified. The findings highlighted the need for a comprehensive view of the pedagogy of online education that integrates technology to support teaching and learning. The implications of this study for the development of online teaching and learning practices are discussed. Suggestions for further research are also examined.

Jinyoung kim in his article (2021)Online learning is an educational process which takes place over the Internet as a form of distance education. Distance education became ubiquitous as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic during 2020. Because of these circumstances, online teaching and learning had an indispensable role in early childhood education programs, even though debates continue on whether or not it is beneficial for young children to be exposed extensively to Information and Communication Technology (ICT). This descriptive study demonstrates how a preservice teacher education course in early childhood education was redesigned to provide student teachers with opportunities to learn and teach online. It reports experiences and reflections from a practicum course offered in the Spring Semester of 2020, in the USA. It describes three phases of the online student teachers' experiences–Preparation, Implementation, and Reflection. Tasks accomplished in each phase are reported. Online teaching experiences provided these preservice teachers with opportunities to interact with children, as well as to encourage reflection on how best to promote young children's development and learning with online communication tools.

PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

The profile and opinion of 60 sample respondents which were collected through the sample survey are presented in this chapter. It covers age, gender, College teaching experience, marital status, Education qualification, College name,Designation, Discipline, monthly income of 60 college faculties in virudhunagar

TABLE 1

Profile of the respondents

Profile	No. of respondents	Percentage
GENDER		
Male	24	40
Female	36	60
Total	**60**	**100.0**
AGE		
up to 30 years	10	17
31-40 years	16	27
41-50 years	24	40
Above 50	10	16
Total	**60**	**100.0**
MARITALSTATUS		
Married	42	70
Unmarried	18	30
Total	**60**	**100.0**
EDUCATION QUALIFICATION		
PG/ M.Phil with SET NET	12	21
M.Phil	14	23
Ph.d	34	56
Total	**60**	**100.0**
DESIGNATION		
Assistant professor	45	75
Associate professor	12	20
Head of the – dep	3	5
Total	**60**	**100.0**
COLLEGE TEACHING EXPERIENCE		
Below 5 years	5	9

5 – 10 years	16	26
11 – 15 years	26	43
16 – 20 years	8	13
Above 20 years	5	9
Total	**60**	**100.0**
WHICH STREAM YOU BELONG TO		
Regular	30	50
Self finance	30	50
Total	**60**	**100.0**
DISCIPLINE		
ARTS	30	50
Science	30	50
Total	**60**	**100.0**
MONTHLY INCOME		
Below 25000	11	18
25000 – 50000	14	25
50000 – 75000	13	21
Above 75000	22	36
Total	**60**	**100.0**

Sources: Primary Data

From the above table it reveals that most (60%) of the respondents are female (40%) of the respondents are falls in the age between 41years and 50 years. Majority (70%) of the users are female respondents. Majority (70%) of the respondents are married. Most (56%) of the respondents are Ph.D holders. Majority (75%) of the respondents are assistant professor. Most (43%) of the respondents having 11 years to 15 years teaching experience, most of (36%) of the respondents monthly earnings are Above 75000.

ADVANTAGES GAINED FROM ONLINE CLASS DURINGPANDEMIC PERIOD

The current pandemic has triggered new methods of carrying the teaching-learning process online. While for some faculty, it was a small change, but for the others, it was a significant change. College faculty have equipped themselves with the new trend by adopting the latest technology for carrying out educational processes. With the benefits of online education during pandemic, learning seems to have become easier and safer for students from

all over the world.

During the survey it was observed that the sample respondents gained advantages from online class during pandemic period. The respondents gained the following advantages

- ➢ Working from the comfortable environment
- ➢ Able to give creative assignments to students
- ➢ Maintain the health property
- ➢ Develop technical skills
- ➢ Multitasking (Flexible Timing).

TABLE 2

ADVANTAGES GAINED FROM ONLINE CLASS DURING PANDEMIC PERIOD

Advantages	Garrett"s Score	Mean	Rank
Developing technical skills	2920	58.4	**I**
Able to give creative assignments to students	2505	50.1	**II**
Working from the comfortable environment	2410	48.2	**III**
Multitasking (Flexible Timing)	2360	47.2	**IV**
Maintain the health property	2305	46.1	**V**

Source: Primary Data

In choosing the most advantages factors that gained from online class during pandemic period, the important advantages is "Multitasking (Flexible Timing)", its total score 2920 and mean score is 58.4 respectively in the Garrett ranking. The second most advantages b is "Working from the comfortable environment" where the total score 2505 and mean score is 50.1, "Working from the comfortable environment" ranked III with the total score 2410 and mean score is 48.2, the rank IV is given to "Able to give creative assignments to students" with the total score 2360 and mean score is 47.2, "Develop technical skills" ranked V with the total score 2305 and mean score is 46.1

DISTRACTING FACTOR DURING ONLINE CLASS

Making a shift from traditional to online teaching was a challenge to the educators as the suddenness with which they were plunged into this new mode of teaching meant that they went into it with little preparation. Even so, the valiant teachers tackled the situation with unmatched dedication and

dexterity. Lack of appropriate materials and resources, technical problems, and lack of internet facilities and constant power cuts were some of the challenges that teachers faced during their virtual classes. Thus, they went ahead to invest in upgraded systems, high-speed internet, and power backup to ensure uninterrupted power during online classes. Teachers who were unfamiliar with the use of technology had to struggle with tools such as videoconferencing, prepare presentations and learn to be tech-savvy together with their regular teaching job. It was a monumental haul up, but teachers pulled together as colleges organized online courses to aid their staff in handling the situation.

During the survey it was observed that the sample respondents faced Distraction while taking online class. The respondents desired the following factors: The respondents are asked to rank the destruction factors.

- ✓ Unmuting the Video/ Audio
- ✓ No response from the student
- ✓ Network issue
- ✓ Family/friends distraction
- ✓ System hanging
- ✓ Not attending the class
- ✓ Power cut

TABLE 3

DISTRACTING FACTOR DURING ONLINE CLASS

Statement	Garrett"s Score	Mean	Rank
Network issue	4098	81.96	**I**
No response from the student	2581	51.62	**II**
System hanging	2487	49.74	**III**
Power cut	2139	42.78	**IV**
Family/friends distraction	1827	36.54	**V**
Not attending the class	1742	34.84	**VI**
Unmuting the Video/ Audio	1901	37.74	**VII**

Source: Primary Data

In choosing the distraction faced by college faculties while taking online class, the important distraction is "Network issue", its total score 4098 and mean score is 81.96 respectively in the Garrett ranking. The second most distraction is "Power cut " where the total score 2581 and mean score is 51.62, "System hanging" ranked III with the total score 2487 and mean score is 49.74, the rank IV is given to "No response from the students" with the total score 2139 and mean score is 42.78, "family/friends distraction" ranked V with the total score 1827 and mean score is 36.54, "Not attending the class" ranked VI with the total score 1742 and mean score is 34.84. "Switching on the camera" ranked VII with the total score 1901 and mean score is 37.74.

FACULTY PERCEPTION TOWARDS ONLINE TEACHING

The important pillar of online teaching is teacher. Their interest and skills in handling online classes are essential aspects. How did teachers perceive online classes, whether teachers are capable of handling online classes, these are the questions that arise before implementing it because some of the faculty members may not always have the competency to teach courses online. A cultural background constructs a different perception among teachers. The survey asked about the teachers' perception of their Common online platforms and teaching experience, Computer Literacy and Online Class Preparations, Effectiveness of Online Education, Student Success.

H0: There is no significant relationship between demographic variables and Faculty Perception towards online teaching.

Table 4

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.987[a]	.975	.950	14854.682

a. Predictors: (Constant),Common online platforms and teaching experience, Computer Literacy and Online Class Preparations, Effectiveness of Online Education, Student Success

Table 5

ANOVAᵇ

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.436E10	4	8.590E9	38.929	.002ᵃ
	Residual	8.826E8	4	2.207E8		
	Total	3.524E10	8			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Common online platforms and teaching experience, Computer Literacy and Online Class Preparations, Effectiveness of Online Education, Student Success

b. Dependent Variable: Faculty's perception

Faculty perception towards online teaching$= a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + b_4X_4$

The power of the regression model represented by the $R^2 = .975$ is a healthy and the 'F' test of the model shows that the significance of the model is high as the significance of F is .002ₐ which is less than .05.

Table 6

Coefficientsᵃ

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	68400.154	47412.947		1.443	.223
	Common online platforms and teaching experience	.095	.132	.723	.719	.512
	Computer Literacy and Online Class Preparations	-.440	.303	-.641	-1.449	.221
	Effectiveness of Online Education	-5.049	1.858	-.509	-2.718	.053
	Student Success	.041	.087	.465	.468	.664

Coefficients[a]

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Student Success	.041	.087	.465	.468	.664

a. Dependent Variable: Faculty's perception

From the above regression equation we can understand that the model's 't' test shows that the predictor, namely Effectiveness of Online Education are statistically significant at 95 % confidence as their significance levels are equal to .05 and the predictors Common online platforms and teaching experience, Computer Literacy and Online Class Preparations and Student Success are statistically not significant at 95 % confidence as their significance levels are greater than .05.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

From the above table it reveals that majority of the respondents are female and their age falls between 41 years and 50 years. Majority of the respondents are married and they are Ph.D holders. Majority of the respondents are assistant professor with 11 years to 15 years teaching experience and their monthly earnings are Above 75000. In choosing the most advantages factors that gained from online class during pandemic period, the important advantages are "Multitasking (Flexible Timing)". In choosing the distraction faced by college faculties while taking online class, the important distraction is "Network issue". Faculty perception towards online teaching, the power of the regression model represented by the R^2 =.975 is a healthy and the 'F' test of the model shows that the significance of the model is high as the significance of F is $.002_a$ which is less than .05. The model's 't' test shows that the predictor, namely Effectiveness of Online Education are statistically significant. and the predictors Common online platforms and teaching experience, Computer Literacy and Online Class Preparations and Student Success are statistically not significant.

As institutions transition to online instruction in the face of COVID-19, academicians are struggling with what it means to teach subjects online. High-quality online teaching is more difficult and demanding than its face-to-face counterpart. This requires advance planning and preparation and personal feedback and assistance. To accommodate online education, there will be a need for instructors who demonstrate teaching effectiveness in the online environment. Many suggestions for improving instructor knowledge about teaching skills include guidance from faculty guides, student and peer assessments, sharing best practices among teachers in established online communities or forums, and orientation programs for instructors to become an online role model.

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