REFLECTIONS OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS TOWARDS ONLINE LEARNING: AN ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT
Online learning is a kind of internet-based distance learning. The word e-learning can be exchanged as online learning. Online learning includes online classes, exams, game-based competitions, certification training etc. University students can use online learning to engage in digital programming and learning process at any time and they can easily connect to the web platform from home. The study examines the reflections of university students towards online learning.The study also assesses the reflections of university students towards teachers' skills and competencies. The present study follows descriptive survey research. This study is conducted in State University, Central University and Deemed University of West Bengal. Researchers have taken 91 social sciences students as sample of the study by using purposive sampling method. Online questionnaire is used in order to collect information from university students for the study. The study found that female students have better reflections towards online learning than male students. 56% of the university students have positive reflections towards teachers' skills and competencies regarding online classes. Only 44% university students have positive reflections towards online learning assessment.
Keywords: Online Learning, Reflections, University Students.

INTRODUCTION

Online learning has increasingly entered the world's education systems. High-tech technologies are used for online learning. The online curriculum preparation is a joint activity, with the teacher working with a team of individuals such as technicians and others who are interested with the online course. Students must be much more self-motivated, self-managed and self-disciplined during online learning. They have built their own framework so that they can frequently "attend online lectures", manage assignments and use the platform to fulfill their online activities (Mongan-Rallis, 2006).Online learning is a specific term. Computer-assisted curriculum and technological collaboration transform the pedagogical environment so that more and more university students can engage in online education. To meet the demands of students all across the world, universities are now working to improve the quality of web-based education and to adopt it as quickly as possible. Virtual instruction is a very successful way to consistently offer lessons. The learning resources are available everywhere and at any time because of their convenience and flexibility. It contributes to active and autonomous learning.Online learning has few benefits, such as: saves time, study from anywhere in the world, less boring and less repetitive, study materials readily available, adjustable schedules, etc. Despite this online learning has variety of other negative drawbacks, such as: Internet access challenges, requires a strong understanding of technology, lacks face to face comfort, not appropriate for each and every topic and not ideal for practical subjects or health issues.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The description 'learning that takes place partially and completely through the internet' can be described as 'Online Learning' (U. S. Education Department, 2010). Online learning is attractive to a variety of students and is

increasingly prevalent in environments such as primary schools, secondary schools and post-secondary education. Some studies related to online learning are given below:

Loeb (2020) found that students have more distractions and less supervision in the online setting which can reduce the motivation of the students. The teacher allows students to engage in simulated dialogue, gives assignments and tracks students together. Zhu, Zhang & Yates (2020) revealed that online learning among university students was largely optimistic and increased when they finished their courses, and their continued aim to learn online through online social interactions was significantly expected. Peytcheva-Forsyth, Bradley, & Bradley (2018) highlighted that students at the university level had positive online learning experiences, and they were particularly pleased with the educational materials' clarity and arrangement. Halliday (2018) found that quality lectures of the university teachers through technology and individual attention of digital learners together can perform as crucial academic support for the development of higher education. Ullah et al (2017) has revealed that slow and inadequate web facilities, with less knowledge on online learning among students, frequently provide negative approaches to online learning. Sun & Chen, (2016) revealed that the promotion of social participation, engagement and cooperation between teachers, students, teacher-student can be happened through online learning. Fedynich et al (2015) reported that 90 percent of all female participants got teachers' help in online learning always or sometimes. Yuan & Kim (2014) revealed that online learning can enhance engagement between teachers and students and peer-students which helps to increase the performance of students. Bell & Fedeman (2013) indicated that online learning programmes improve students-teachers' engagement and increase students' contact. Tamajian, Chizari & Rad (2012) revealed that psychological readiness of university students towards online learning was higher, but their technical knowledge about online learning was lower. Kiran (2011) highlighted that adult learners can get maximum flexibility to learn through technology which is helpful for the improvement of higher education.

From the above discussion, it is clear that learners have both positive and negative reflections towards online learning. These contradictions motivate researchers to conduct the present study.

RESEARCH QUESTION

1. What are the reflections of university students towards online learning in response to teachers' skills and competencies and assessment system?

OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the reflections of university students towards online learning.
2. To assess the reflections of university students towards teachers' skills and competencies
3. To analyze the reflections of university students towards online assessment.

HYPOTHESIS

1. There is no significant difference between male and female university students in reflections towards online learning.

METHODOLOGY

Design: The present study used online descriptive survey method for data collection. The investigators had used quantitative research design to analyze the data.

Participants: The study was carried out among university students pursuing higher education at the State University, Central University, and Deemed University of West Bengal. Researchers had taken 91 social sciences students (49 female and 42 male) as sample of the study by using purposive sampling method.

Tool: The investigators used self made online questionnaire as tool in this study.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The investigators had formulated a hypothesis i.e. there is no significant difference between male and female university students in reflections towards online learning.

Table-1: Reflections of Male and Female Students towards Online Learning

Gender	Reflections towards Online Learning			Chi-Square (χ^2) (Calculated value)	Chi-Square (χ^2) (Tabular value)	df	Sig.
	Positive	Negative	Mixed				
Male	658	412	106	21.646	0.01 level= 9.21	2	.000*
Female	781	399	195				

In order to test hypothesis the investigators had used Chi-Square statistical method. Table-1 indicates that calculated value (21.646) is higher than tabular value (9.21) at 0.01 significance level. That means here null hypothesis is rejected at 0.01 level. Actually this hypothesis is significant at 0.01 level. So it can be said that female university students have better reflections towards online learning than male university students.

The objective of the study was to examine the reflections of university students towards online learning. For this the researchers had used self made online questionnaire.

Table-2: Online Platforms Used by University Students for Online Learning

Online Platforms	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Google Meet	66	72
Skype	09	10
Zoom	07	8
Webex Meet	02	2
Others	07	8
Total	91	100

Table-2 indicates that majority (72%) of the university students used Google Meet for online learning. 10% university students used Skype for online learning, 8% university students used Zoom foronline learning and 2% university students used Webex Meet foronline learning.

Table-3: Availability of Devices for Online Learning

Availability of Resources	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Own Mobile	51	56
Own Laptop	12	13
Own Computer	05	6
Own Tablet	02	2
Family Member's Mobile	21	23
Total	91	100

Table-3 indicates that majority (56%) of the university students used their own mobile for online learning. 13% university students used their own laptop for online learning, 6% university students used their own computer for online learning and 2% university students used their own tablet for online learning.Whereas 23% university students used their family member's mobile for online learning.

Table-4: Reflections of University Students towards Teachers' Skills and Competencies regarding Online Classes

Reflections	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Positive	51	56
Negative	29	32
Mixed	11	12
Total	91	100

Table-4 indicates that majority (56%) of the university students have positive reflections towards teachers' skills and competencies regarding online classes. 32% university students have negative reflections towards teachers' skills and competencies regarding online classes. 12% university students have mixed reflections (both positive and negative reflections) towards teachers' skills and competencies regarding online classes.

Table-5: Reflections of University Students towards Online Learning Assessment

Reflections	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Positive	41	44
Negative	33	37
Mixed	17	19
Total	91	100

Table-5 indicates that majority (44%) of the university students have positive reflections towards online learning assessment. 37% university students have negative reflections towards online learning assessment.19% university students have mixed reflections (both positive and negative reflections) towards online learning assessment.

FINDINGS

- Female university students have better reflections towards online learning than male university students.
- 72% of the university students used Google Meet for online learning.
- Majority (56%) of the university students used their own mobile for online learning. Whereas 23% university students used their family member's mobile for online learning.
- 56% of the university students have positive reflections towards teachers' skills and competencies regarding online classes.
- Only 44% university students have positive reflections towards online learning assessment.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- Male university students need to inspire for online learning.
- Teachers and students of university must have to increase knowledge about different online platforms for online learning.
- As the study found 23% university students did not have their own electronic gadgets for online learning, university or government must have to take initiative regarding this problem.
- As the study found 32% university students have negative reflections towards teachers' skills and competencies regarding online classes, University teachers must have to develop their technological skills and competencies. Government can organize training programme for university teachers to develop their technological skills and competencies.
- As the study found 37% university students have negative reflections towards online learning assessment, University or government must have to take necessary steps to improve online learning assessment procedure.
- The government should organize seminars, workshops, and colloquiums to teach students and teachers how to use online learning in real-world situations.
- This research encourages instructional designers, instructors, and institutions to improve the quality of present and future online education.

DISCUSSION

There are some studies (Wiesenberg, & Stacey, 2005; McSporran, & Young, 2001) who revealed that female students have better reflections towards online learning than male students. The present study also found that female university students have better reflections towards online learning than male university students. Benta et al (2014) highlighted that 96% students had participated in online learning through different platforms at higher education level. The present study also found that majority of the university students have participated in online learning through different platforms. NCERT (2020) reported that 27% students did not have electronic devices for online learning. The present study revealed that 23% university students did not have their own electronic gadgets for online learning; they used their family member's mobile for online learning. Queiroz, & Mustaro, (2003) suggested that teachers need to improve their technological skills and competencies to achieve the pedagogical skills. The present study also recommended that government can organize training programme for university teachers to develop their technological skills and competencies. Bali & Liu (2018) found that majority students were satisfied with online learning assessment procedure. Although the present study found that only 44% university students have positive reflections towards online learning assessment.

CONCLUSION

From the above discussion it can be concluded that female students have better reflection towards online learning. University students used their own mobile phone, laptop, computer for online learning.Some students have negative reflection towards online learning assessment and teachers' skills and competencies regarding online classes. However, online learning can be defined as an innovative approach to provide access to everyone,

anywhere, by leveraging the attributes and resources of various digital technologies, as well as other forms of learning media that are well-suited to open, flexible, and distributed learning environments, in order to create a well-conceived, interactive, and user-friendly environment for learners (Khan 2005). Learner's effective reflection towards the online programme is a crucial input for successful accomplishment of online learning and it can be achieved if teachers are technologically competent.

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