

## CONVERGENCE OF FACE-TO-FACE AND DISTANCE EDUCATION- A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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### ABSTRACT:

The COVID-19 pandemic created a large number of challenges for every walk of life. Economies were devastated by its impact and established norms were disrupted. Education became an instant casualty of the pandemic. Schools and colleges were closed and all campus-based activities came to a standstill. All institutions were forced to look at alternative pedagogies to leap over the challenges. Consequently, a convergence of traditional and distance education-based pedagogies was seen. The present paper presents the attitude of the educationists working in India towards the convergence of pedagogy, which has been witnessed in recent times. It also looks into how the convergence of pedagogy can be made more effective.

**Keywords:** convergence of pedagogy, distance education, face-to-face education, COVID-19

### 1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic is an epoch-making event in the history of the world. The enormity and suddenness of the outbreak left every segment of the world in a state of shock and disbelief. Never since the containment of the Spanish flu had a virus wrecked so much havoc on the world. The advanced nations came to understand that their much-admired health infrastructure was no match for the virus. Developing countries were forced to undertake a rear-guard fight to contain the pandemic in light of the crumbling infrastructure. The education sector also witnessed far-reaching changes. The brick-and-mortar infrastructure built up by institutions across the globe became redundant for a certain period. Classrooms became empty. Hostels were evacuated. Cost-cutting measures were initiated and many in the academic circles lost their jobs.

Yet, one of the developments of great importance that emerged during this period was that many of the pedagogic techniques and technologies which were strictly associated with Distance and online learning found their way into the conventional modes of education. Live streaming, online classes, online discussion forums and the like, which were for long associated with the distance modes of pedagogy, found their way into mainstream education. Whether these changes were cosmetic or if they are going to be a regular feature in the future is a matter of substantial interest to the educational fraternity.

The practitioners in the field of education hold significant influence in the decision-making process in the sector. What is their perception of the aspect of convergence of distance and face-to-face pedagogy? This is an issue that we shall explore in the present study.

### 2. Objectives of the study

The objectives of the current study are:

- 1.1. To analyse the understanding of educational experts and officials regarding the essentials of face-to-face and distance education.
- 1.2. To understand how far the respondents believe that there has been a convergence between the face to face and distance education as a result of COVID.
- 1.3. To gauge the perception of the respondents as to the areas in which further convergence could happen

### 3. Methodology of the study

A questionnaire was administered online on the topic “Has COVID-19 created a convergence between Face to face and Distance Education?” to functionaries of various higher educational systems. In response, 36 persons responded to the questionnaire. The questionnaire elicited the views of the respondents on various themes under the broad topics- ‘Defining Features of a conventional education system’, ‘Convergence of face-to-face and distance education in the COVID -19 pandemic period’ and ‘suggestions for enhancing the efficacy of pedagogy through convergence’.

#### 4. Review of Literature

The review of existing literature on the topic reveals interesting discussions on Face to Face and Distance education in the context of recent realities.

**Farah Otaki et al. (2021)** state that those educational organizations that adopted ICT and web-based technologies before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic fared much better at adapting to the COVID-driven situation than those which migrated to the same after the onset of the pandemic.

**Jitendra Singh et al. (2021)** state that a meaningful academic experience can be provided to learners only if the management of educational institutions provides appropriate infrastructure for hybrid and blended learning. Capacity building of faculty members, especially in online tools is essential for supporting hybrid and blended learning processes.

**Muhammad Naeem Khan et al. (2021)** use the theory of Constructivism and the structural equation model to analyse the impact of the use of Social Media on the learning outcomes of students. They conclude that Social Media plays an important role in the learning processes of students during the pandemic by enhancing their ability for Constructive Learning.

**Schleicher (2020)** states that to overcome the effects of the pandemic on the education system, many countries have tried to encourage distance and online tools. For instance, Italy initiated a programme to equip schools with digital tools, lent digital learning devices to less privileged learners and trained school staff in the pedagogy of distance learning and teaching.

**Ugorji I. Ogbonnaya et al. (2020)** considers online education tools to be a boon during the pandemic period. The study finds that most of the pre-service teachers accessed digitally using smartphones. Online learning tools enabled pre-service teachers to collaborate effectively with tutors and interact with peers. However, the major hindrances in prosecuting the study process effectively were infrastructural constraints, poor internet connectivity, erratic power supply etc.

**Davy Tsz Kit Ng et al. (2020)** opine that teachers play a pivotal role in combining the advantages of both the synchronous and asynchronous modes of education. Such a combination affords extensive social interaction among the learners. The authors identify, the digital divide, data privacy issues, and the absence of professional leadership to be areas of key concern.

**Sharma D et al. (2022)** state that there are clear advantages and disadvantages of both online and offline modes of education. The authors put the opinion of 654 respondents to a chi-square test and found a clear association between the opinions of the questions.

**Singh J et al. (2021)** dwells deeply into the various facets of online learning; the emergence of a hybrid mode of learning and the various nuances associated with the training aspect of staff involved in handling this complex mechanism. The authors go on to present a SWOT analysis as well as a fishbone analysis in their study.

The review of the literature has revealed key gaps in the existing studies which shall be addressed in the study

#### 5. The Study in Detail

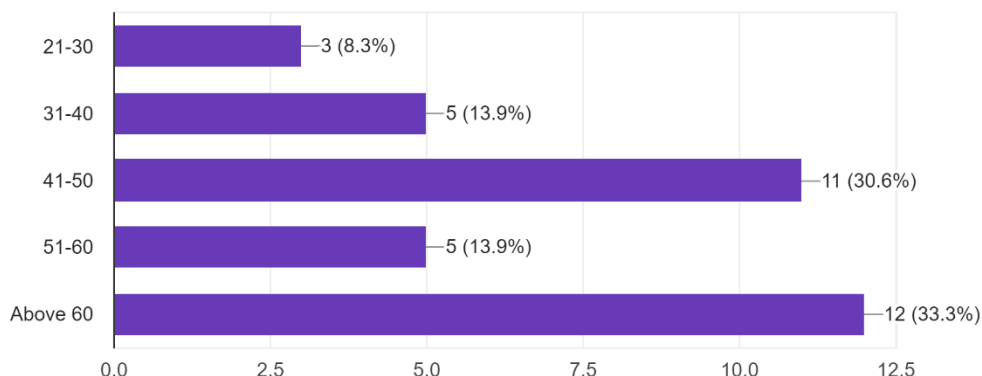
36 responses were received for the online questionnaire on the topic, ‘Has COVID-19 created a convergence of pedagogy between Face to face and Distance Education?’ The demographic details of the participants are provided below:

##### 5.1. Age-wise distribution of the respondents

Figure 1 gives a clear view of the age-wise distribution of the respondents. While 8.3% of the respondents belong to the age group “21-30”, 13% of the respondents belong to the age group “31-40”. Further, 30.6% of the respondents were in the age group “41-50”, while 13.9% of the respondents belonged to the age group, ‘51-60’ and 33.3% belonged to the age group “above 60”.

### Age

36 responses



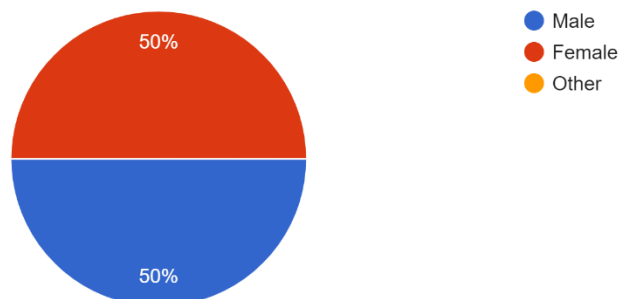
**Figure 1: Age-wise distribution of the respondents**

### 5.2. Gender-wise Distribution of respondents

It is seen from the available data on respondents that there was an equal distribution of male and female respondents to the questionnaire. Figure 2 makes this division clear.

### Sex

36 responses



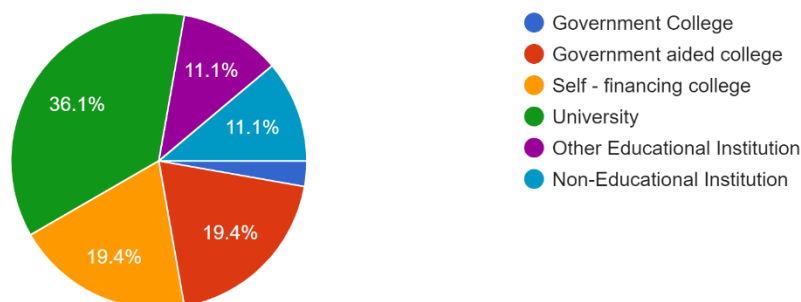
**Figure 2- Gender-wise Distribution of respondents**

### 5.3. Distribution of respondents according to the institution they work in

The respondents for the questionnaire work in a variety of institutions. 36.1% of the respondents work in universities, while 19.4% work in self-financing colleges and Government Aided Colleges respectively. This distribution is made clear by the following figure.

#### Institution in which you are working

36 responses



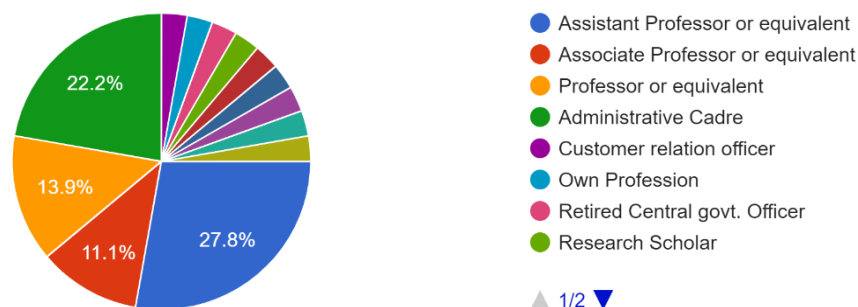
**Figure 3- Distribution of respondents according to the institution they work in**

#### 5.4. Level at which the respondents are working

The respondents are engaged at different levels at various institutions as indicated in Figure 4 below.

#### Level at which working

36 responses



**Figure 4- Level at which the respondents are working**

It is seen clearly from Figure 4 that nearly 28% of the respondents work at the Assistant Professor and equivalent level, and 11% work at the level of Associate Professor or equivalent. 13.9% of the respondents work at the Professor or equivalent level. 22.2% of the respondents work in administrative cadres and the rest of the respondents came from diverse occupational levels other than those mentioned above such as customer relations, research, self-employment etc.

#### 5.5. Responses to substantive questions

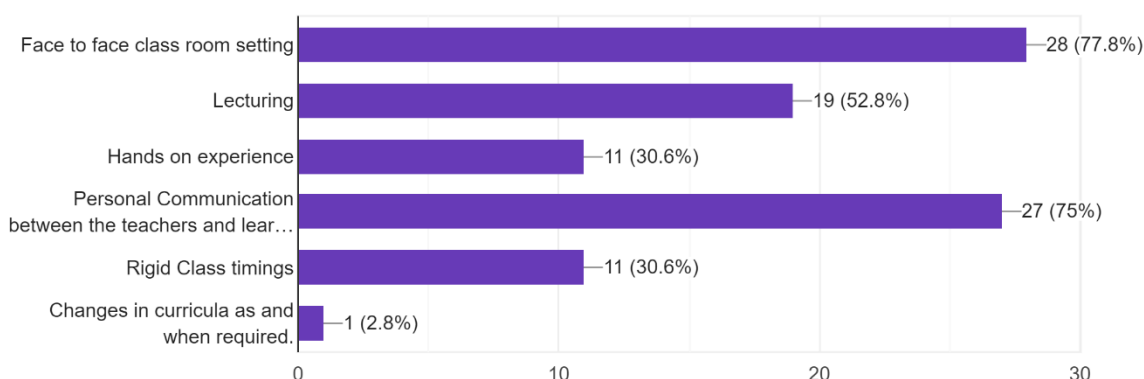
The questionnaire raised several substantive questions which were responded to by the respondents.

##### 5.5.1. Defining Features of a conventional education system

The respondents felt that there were certain key defining features of a conventional education system, which they ranked as given in Figure 5 below:

Which of the following do you associate the conventional education system most with? (you can tick more than one option)

36 responses



**Figure 5: Defining Features of a conventional education system**

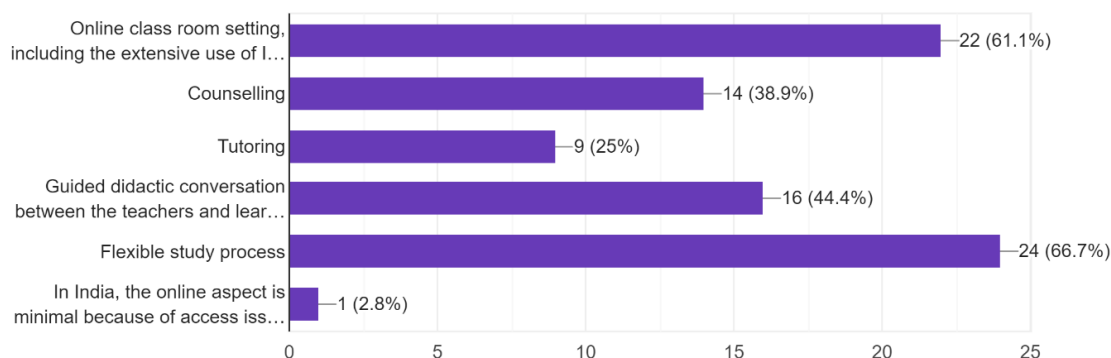
Most of the respondents felt that transaction of curricula in a Face-to-Face classroom setting is an essential feature of the conventional education system (77.8%), while 75% felt that personal communication between the teachers and learners is an essential feature. 52.8% of the respondents felt that lecturing was a defining feature of the conventional education system. Interestingly, only 30.6% of the respondents felt that hands-on training and rigid class timings were essential features of the conventional education system. Only a minuscule proportion of respondents felt that effecting changes in the curricula as and when required was an essential feature of the conventional education system.

#### 5.5.2. Defining Features of the Distance Education System

The respondents provided some very interesting responses for the identification of the defining features of the distance education system. The responses can be seen in figure 6 below. The majority of the respondents felt that an online classroom setting is an essential part of the distance education mechanism (61.1%), while a greater majority felt that a flexible study process was essential to distance education (66.7%). Only 38.9% and 25% of the respondents respectively felt that counselling and tutoring were essential aspects of distance education. Less than half of the respondents felt that Guided Didactic Conversation between the teacher and the learners was an essential aspect of distance education (44.4%).

Which of the following do you associate the distance education system most with? (you can tick more than one option)

36 responses



**Figure 6: Defining features of a distance education system**

### 5.5.3. **Main differences between Face to Face and Distance Education**

According to the respondents, there are major differences between the Face to Face and Distance modes of education. Their responses are given below:

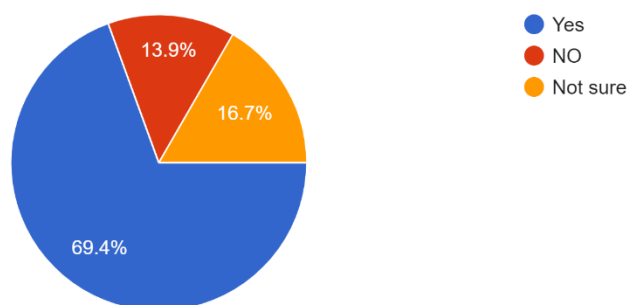
- a. Distance education is more helpful in information assimilation since there are more opportunities for face-to-face interaction in the former.
- b. Self-motivation is required more in the distance mode of studies as compared to the face-to-face mode
- c. The differences between the two have come down considerably due to the convergence of pedagogy during COVID times and both are using a blended approach
- d. While Live interaction between the instructor and the learners is possible in Face-to-Face education, multi-dimensional content and learning exercises are possible in the Distance Education system.
- e. In the face-to-face model, the teachers can identify the real gap in the student's understanding and suggest areas for improvement
- f. Face-to-face education is real-time communication without any limitations but distance education has many limitations. Face-to-face education activates 5 senses to enable critical thinking, questioning and clarification of doubts while distance education activates the learner depending on the time, manner and place where the learner is attending
- g. Face-to-face education gives importance to infrastructure in classrooms/colleges. Isolated teachers are prone to preach.
- h. Distance Education has multiple modes of content delivery. It follows the course team approach in content development. Distance Education is technology dependant so not very much suitable for digital immigrants and populations in technology inaccessible regions. Quality enhancement in Distance Education can be accelerated and is easier than in the Face-to-face scheme.
- i. Face-to-face education is more effective than distance education. The distance education mode is more useful for employed people for their further studies.
- j. During this pandemic period distance education is more effective than face-to-face education.
- k. Face-to-face education creates a very good bond between the teacher and the students. But the distance education system does not help establish the same
- l. Face-to-face education helps students to socialize more and develop a personality which is difficult in distance education.
- m. Distance learning is flexible, open type & highly technological. Whereas face-to-face learning is traditional & involves students and teachers interacting in real time
- n. Face to face system is very systematic and distance education is very flexible
- o. Flexibility, massiveness, self-study, more focus on qualifying for the exam, less chance for intimacy among teachers and learners in distance education unlike face-to-face education
- p. Face to Face teaching is associated with rigid classroom teaching, minimum attendance is mandatory, whereas in ODL system Learners have the flexibility and can study at their own pace of time.
- q. Face-to-face education is necessary until one gains minimum levels to pursue one's career whereas distance education offers a much broader aspect of education as it can help one learn and grow flexibly. It can also add up to your qualification in a less stressful manner.
- r. Peer group interaction is limited in ODL mode while in regular mode it is more in face-to-face education
- s. The face-to-face education system is good for small kids because at the basic level they need direct interaction with teachers to understand things clearly and easily. At higher level studies distance education is more useful because learners from any part of the country or world can learn.

### 5.5.4. **Convergence of face-to-face pedagogy and distance pedagogy in the COVID-19 pandemic period and after**

The question was posed to the respondents whether there has been a convergence of face-to-face and distance pedagogy during the pandemic period and after. The responses received have been shown in Figure 7 below. The figure details that while 69.4% of the respondents felt that there was a convergence of pedagogy during the pandemic period, 13.9% felt that there was no convergence, and 16.7% were not sure about the same.

Do you think that there has been a convergence of face to face pedagogy and distance pedagogy in the COVID-19 pandemic period and after?

36 responses



**Figure 7: Convergence of face-to-face pedagogy and distance pedagogy in the COVID-19 pandemic period and after**

Those who responded that such convergence had taken place, felt that the reason for the same was

- During the COVID - 19 pandemic, there was no face-to-face counselling session and all conventional system of Education changed their mode of instruction to online.
- The emergence of learning that combines online and face-to-face delivery is not novel--it is already being developed and implemented by schools throughout the country and the world, and in some cases has been underway for several years. While some schools call this method of teaching "blended," others call it "hybrid," and others don't bother naming it--they're just implementing an approach that they believe is helping their students. During the covid pandemic period, we implemented it in general.
- The flexibility has brought in more areas of opportunities to get more experts into the faculty pool
- Distance education makes teaching and learning easy.
- Blended mode has several advantages
- Learners are compelled to depend on distance education tools due to COVID.
- There has been no difference between these groups as both were online during this period. Probably distance education students would have studied better than the others as they were having the support of readily pre-prepared notes.
- Conventional Universities have also adopted 'Online' teaching during the Pandemic. ODL mode of teaching has been practising Online counselling for the last 3 decades.
- Students at any level from primary to university level were getting online classes during covid-19 times.
- It is not the pedagogic understanding or practice that has changed, only the mode, and superficially, largely.

#### 5.5.5. Aspects of convergence of pedagogy

The respondents have indicated many areas in which the convergence of pedagogy has taken place. The ordering of the same is provided in Figure 8 below. From the depiction, it is clear that most respondents (83.3%) consider, the use of online classes as a major area of convergence between face-to-face and distance learning during the COVID period. Similarly, the use of online assignments along with the increase in asynchronous interaction has also been cited as strong indicators of convergence (61.1% each). The use of other digital tools was also seen as an indicator of convergence by 52.8% of the respondents. However, the acceptance of the "guided Didactic" principle was not seen in practice by most respondents in educational institutions and was hence not seen as a strong indicator of convergence in pedagogy (only 57.8%). The rest of the suggested indicators of convergence such as on-demand examination did not have many advocates.



If yes, which of the following are the major areas of convergence? (you may choose more than one)

36 responses

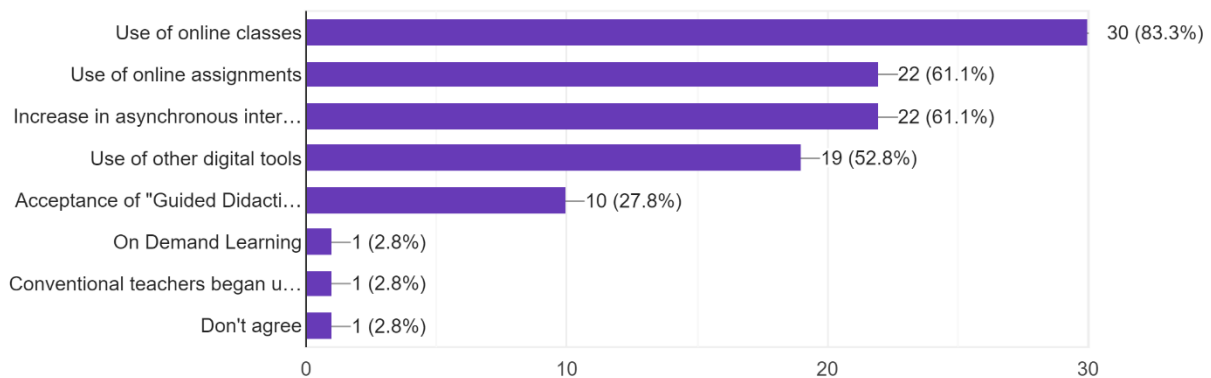


Figure 8 - Aspects of convergence of pedagogy

#### 5.5.6. Response of the teaching community to the convergence of pedagogy

The response of the teaching community to the convergence of pedagogy provides important insights. The responses are indicated in Figure 9 below. From the responses, it is clear that the teaching community has on the whole welcomed the convergence of pedagogies, whereas a small proportion of respondents were indifferent regarding the same.

How has the teaching community reacted to convergence of pedagogy?

36 responses

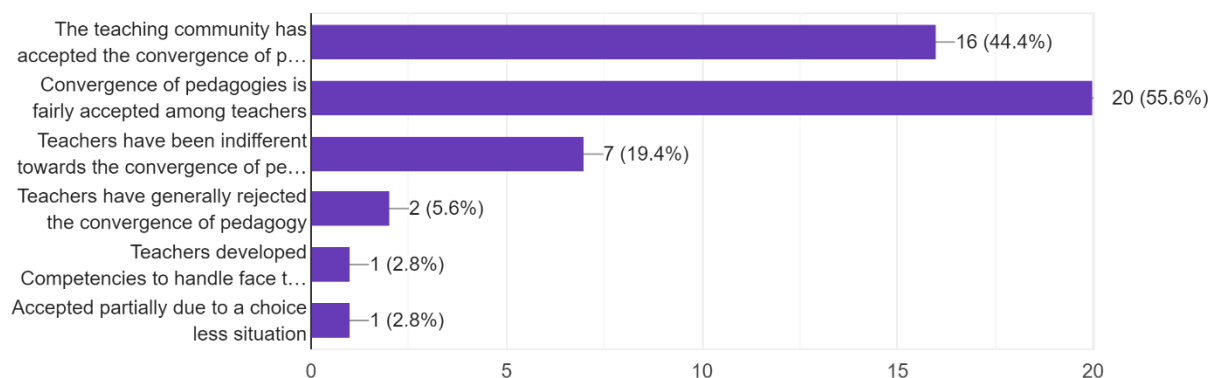
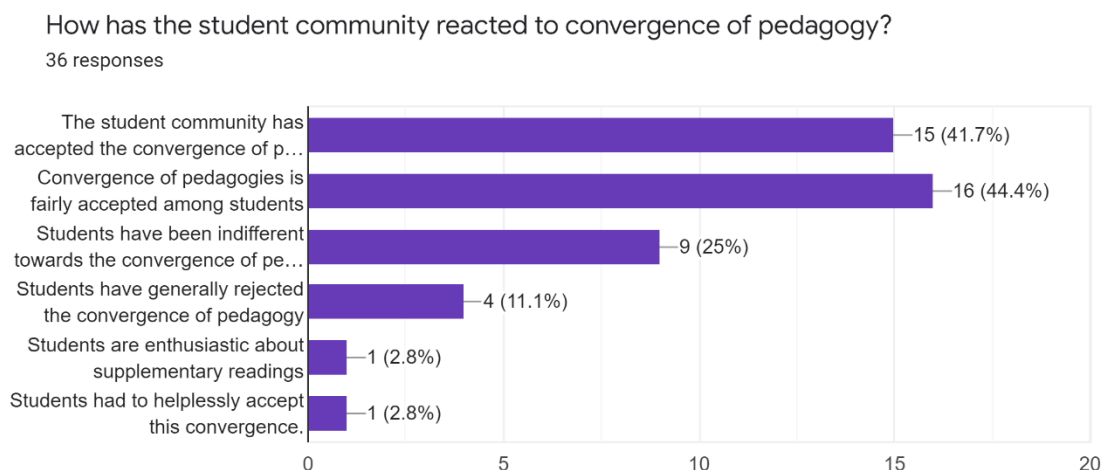


Figure 9- Response of the teaching community to the convergence of pedagogy

#### 5.5.7. Response of the learners to the convergence of pedagogy

The learners have positively accepted the reality of convergence of pedagogy between the face-to-face and distance modes of education (41.7%+44.4%) as is seen from the responses indicated in Figure 10 below. Lesser numbers of respondents feel that the learners are either indifferent or have rejected the convergence of pedagogy.

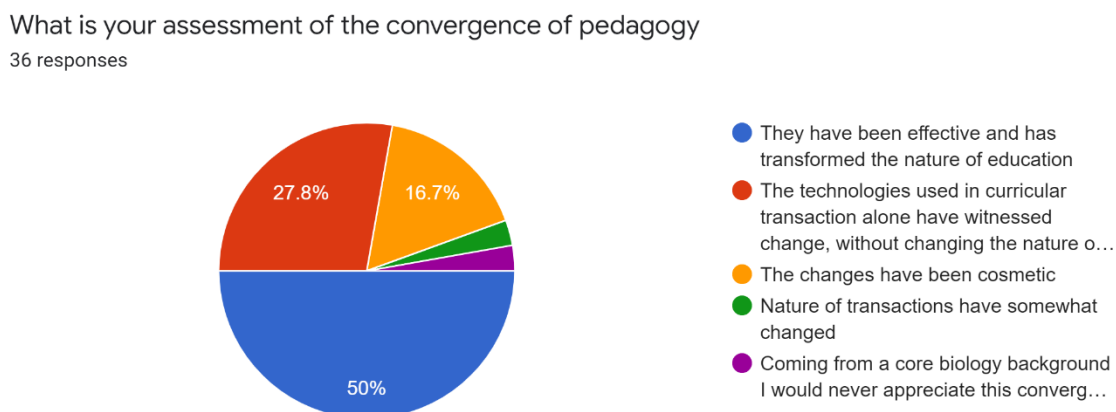




**Figure 10- Response of the learners to the convergence of pedagogy**

#### 5.5.8. Assessment of convergence of pedagogy

The respondents gave an overall assessment of the issue of convergence of pedagogy. These responses are summarized in Figure 11 below. It is seen that 50% of the respondents feel that such convergence has been effective and has transformed the nature of education. 27.8% of the respondents feel that the technologies used in curricular transactions alone have changed without changing the nature of the transactions. 16.7% of the participants feel that the changes have essentially been cosmetic, while other views expressed have been negligible.



**Figure 10- Assessment of the convergence of pedagogy**

#### 5.5.9. Potential areas in which the convergence of pedagogy can benefit the educational system

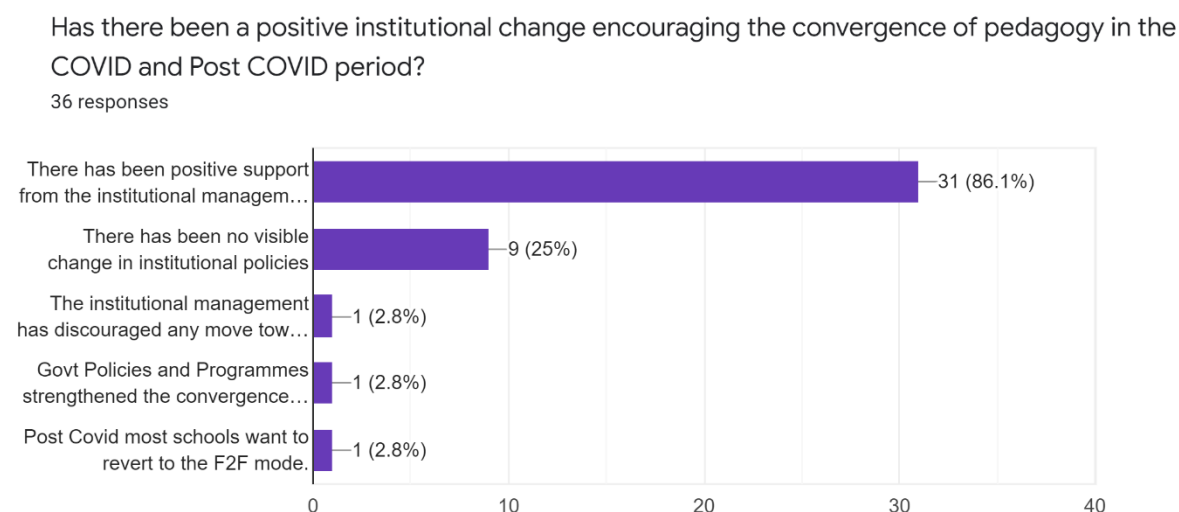
The respondents felt that there are certain potential areas in which such convergence can benefit the educational system. These are listed below:

- Assignments, online classes - Examination system
- The use of technology for a wide range of knowledge generation
- AI Chatbots, Simulation, Virtual Lab Sessions, Local Language interfaces, Multidimensional and multisource data interfaces, Deep Learning, Data Mining, access to real-time databases, etc need to be embedded in the Convergence System, for a robust system.
- The convergence can bring more experts including industry experts to interact with students & this ultimately helps the engagement of industry with academia
- Convergence could result in - Development of multi-disciplinary programmes, greater student involvement and interaction, better sharing of knowledge and ideas, better use of out-of-class resources, greater use of ICT and better Storage and sharing of digital educational resources.
- Online Libraries

- g. For Quality Assurance
- h. Elevated educational technology knowledge among teachers, functional feedback processes, constructive online evaluation
- i. Enhancing the Interpersonal relations of students and teachers
- j. Use of online classes and assignments and use of other digital tools, Increase in asynchronous interaction between peers and teachers and learners and Acceptance of "guided didactic form of study"
- k. The convergence can bring more experts including industry experts to interact with students & which ultimately helps the engagement of industry with academia
- l. Only with increased access, and appropriate teacher development on this front can change take place. The level of mental maturity of learners for understanding and undergoing this process must be taken into account
- m. The integration of face-to-face and online learning to help enhance the classroom experience and extend learning through the innovative use of information and communications technology. Blended strategies enhance student engagement and learning through online activities to the course curriculum, and improve effectiveness and efficiencies by reducing lecture time. Learning combining the best elements of online and face-to-face education is likely to emerge as the predominant teaching model of the future.

#### 5.5.10. Institutional Response to the convergence of pedagogy

The responses received from the survey participants are represented in Figure 12 below. An overwhelming majority of the respondents feel that there has been positive support from institutional management for pedagogic convergence (86.1%), while a small proportion feels that there has been no change in the institutional policies. What is surprising to note is that only a minuscule proportion of the respondents (2.8%) feel that government policies have encouraged convergence.



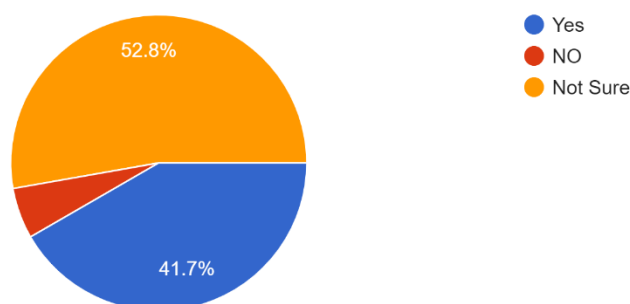
**Figure 12 -Institutional Response to the convergence of pedagogy**

#### 5.5.11. New Education Policy (NEP) and the convergence of pedagogy

A major policy document that has been discussed threadbare in recent times is the New Education Policy (NEP-2020). The researcher elicited the opinion of the respondents on the NEP and its approach to the convergence of pedagogy. The results are shown in Figure 13 below. While 41.7% of the respondents feel that the NEP supports the convergence of pedagogy, only 5.2% feel that it does not. However, a substantial proportion of the respondents (52.8%) are not sure of the approach of the NEP on this issue.

In your opinion, does the New Education Policy (NEP) support the convergence of pedagogy?

36 responses



**Fig-13- New Education Policy (NEP) and the convergence of pedagogy**

Those respondents who felt that the NEP has supported the convergence of pedagogy feel that it has done so by

- It is framed guidelines with the requirements of a fast-changing world. It is Student-centric and emphasis is given to developing vocational, cognitive and life skills in students. Special focus is also given to the development and usage of digital technologies in the education sector
- NEP promotes Multiple Disciplines, Local Language Content, Life Long Learning, Flexible Curriculum, Open Learning etc
- NEP Encourages the use of techno pedagogy
- Integral education is encouraged by NEP
- NEP emphasises Blended learning
- Technology intervention and integration, Online and digital learning etc have been focused on in the NEP

#### 5.5.12. Suggestions for enhancing the efficacy of pedagogy through convergence

The respondents provided several suggestions for enhancing the efficiency of pedagogy through convergence. The major suggestions are provided below:

- For effective convergence to take place, it has to be ensured that everyone has access to technology and gadgets
- More information has to be provided regarding the technicalities related to the operation of digital tools for learners that they use on online education portals.
- Frequent Feedback from learners must be obtained and considered relating to the key areas of convergence
- The digital divide may be reduced by increasing the bandwidth and reach of the internet and by making technology-based devices more affordable.
- Appropriate pedagogy approach should be framed with a special focus on the following areas: -Development of more open educational resources, Sophisticated ICT tools for engaging students in creative and productive activities, and assessment and evaluation tools.
- For an effective convergence system, Providing Learning Tools, flexibility, and adaptability with evolving AI, ML, NLP, Chatbots, Virtual Labs, Virtual Libraries, local language contents, multiple contents, multi-dimensions etc, need to be integrated for a robust learning convergence system.
- Encourage credit transfer between face-to-face and distance modes. Create an umbrella arrangement to manage all required logistics regarding effective convergence
- A short course/period of study through online or distance mode be made mandatory for obtaining a face-to-face degree/diploma. A technology preparedness course is made for face-to-face teachers. Conduct and analyse problems faced by students/teachers as they transitioned from pure face-to-face to blended/hybrid modes
- Exposing the students as well as teachers to changing with the need of the ever-volatile economy is vital. An open book system with close mentoring of experts through online interactions can help to improve the quality of the students

#### 6. Discussion

The survey has provided deep insights into the perception of teachers and educational administrators on the issue of convergence of pedagogy. If we start with the definitional aspects first, the Conventional mode of education has been defined as an instructor-centred system with key features such as crowded classrooms, instant feedback,

impersonal approach from teachers and the use of physical access devices such as boards, tables, writing aids etc Sabri Erdem (2020). The responses received from the participants of the survey too fall on these expected lines with the emphasis being on face-to-face interaction, classroom setting personal interaction and feedback etc.

Rumble (1986) presents the 7 essential elements of distance education as enunciated by Keegan as follows

- a. Physical separation of the teacher and the student
- b. Educational organization's influence
- c. Use of technical media
- d. Two-way communication
- e. The general absence of group learning with the learners acquiring education as an individual unit
- f. Industrialized form of education
- g. Privatization of learning (education at the level of the individual)

If we look at the responses provided to the survey, it is found that these essential elements propounded by Keegan have been indirectly referred to by the respondents. The physical separation of learners and the flexibility in the study process which have been highlighted by Keegan have been alluded to by our respondents.

Hassenburg (2009) states that distance education affords several freedoms which were unimaginable under the traditional education structure. The access afforded by distance education to learners irrespective of their physical disabilities, geographic disadvantages, or financial problems gives it certain advantages over traditional education. The author goes on to mention that flexibility and convenience afforded by distance advantage marks a big difference from traditional education. Hassenburg, however, goes on to state that many of the perceived advantages of distance pedagogy have not been borne out in practice. The aspect of flexibility in distance education has been strongly highlighted by the respondents to the present survey. Some of them have stressed the innate advantages of traditional pedagogy over the distance mode.

M. Mahruf C. Shohel (2022) mentions that during the pandemic, many institutions provided emergency remote teaching and learning opportunities to tide over the challenge created by the closure of on-campus classroom sessions. The teachers were forced to adopt many new remote pedagogies to handle the situation. The authors, therefore, imply that convergence had indeed taken place during this period. In the present survey, an overwhelming majority of the respondents also felt that the convergence of pedagogies had taken place in the period, which is corroborated by the studies mentioned above.

Syahrin Syahrin (2020), states that the preferred learning styles of the learners could be encapsulated in the technologies that they used in online classrooms. Farah Otaki (2021) states that the tools of distance and online education were effective in providing seamless medical education to learners. Emiliana Vegas (2021) states that educational institutions in India had used technologies such as educational television, online classes etc to reach out to learners. The respondents to the present survey have also indicated that the preferred modes of educational institutions during the pandemic were online classes, online assignments and other digital tools, which are corroborated by research.

Li-Kai Chen (2021) has depicted a discouraging response to the convergence of pedagogy. Most of the teachers who took a McKinsey survey stated that Online education is a very poor substitute for classroom teaching. The teachers rated online education at 5 on a scale of 10. The teachers in Japan and the USA were very harsh to the extent that they ranked online education at 3 on a scale of 10. Teachers from many countries flagged the issue of lack of access to technical devices and sound internet connection as contributing to learning loss. This is quite contrary to the questionnaire results received in the present study where it is seen that most of the respondents depicted a positive inclination towards the convergence of pedagogy.

Almendingen K (2021), based on his study states that two weeks into the lockdown and the start of online sessions 75% of the learners who participated in their study felt that their life had become more difficult and further 50% of the students felt that it was now much more difficult for them in the changed circumstances to attain the curricular objectives. A further ten weeks later these percentages changed to 57% and 71%.

Mansi Babbar et al. (2021) state that the sudden outbreak of the pandemic left most educational institution management in a state of unpreparedness. The breakaway from traditional patterns created huge adjustment problems. Most institutions put their best foot forward and tried their best to minimize the impact of the pandemic through the introduction of a blend of pedagogy. The same sentiment is exhibited by the respondents of the present questionnaire. The respondents felt that the management of institutions had taken a positive approach towards the convergence of pedagogy.

The New Education Policy has in general taken a very positive approach towards the convergence of pedagogy. Two important initiatives need special mention. One is National Digital Education Architecture (NDEAR) which focuses on the creation of highly interoperable online platforms that can work efficiently from a wide variety of operating systems. The second is PM -Evidya which aims at providing an equitable education to all through multi-modal learning access to students, teachers, and parents ensuring inclusion to overcome the digital divide (GoI, 2021). The respondents to the present questionnaire have also expressed the feeling that the NEP 2020 has made a positive approach towards the convergence of pedagogy.

## 7. Conclusion

The study has revealed the attitude of the professionals working in the field of education towards the issue of convergence of face-to-face and distance education. It is clear that despite a large number of teething issues associated with the convergence of pedagogy, the educational community considers it the need of the hour and has exhibited a positive attitude towards the same. The students do face the problem of access, yet they too are ready to embrace the winds of change. There are several areas in which the concept of convergence of pedagogy can work wonders and these need to be worked upon in all earnest. In a nutshell. It can be stated that though the pandemic has forced upon us this convergence, it has great prospects in the coming times.

## 8. Limitations of the study

There are a few limitations to this study. Though the digital questionnaire was sent to a large number of academicians, only 36 of them responded. This has limited the scale of the study. Further, since the pandemic has still not come to an end, a complete analysis of the issue can be done only in a few years.

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