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AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF TEACHERS' PERCEPTION DURING COVID -19 PANDEMIC

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**Ms. Charmaine D'Souza

Abstract

The aim of the study was to examine the perceptions of teachers who shifted teaching from physical mode to online/ distance due to COVID-19 pandemic. A quantitative and sample survey approach was used using a Google form questionnaire and the data was obtained from 193 teachers from school to master's programme using purposive sampling technique. Data were analyzed using SPSS by using descriptive statistics and factor analysis. The study result indicated that teachers have several perceptions in online teaching and serves as a potential foundational data point for responding to the long-term academic, social, and economic effects of this pandemic. The study also found that teachers were facing difficulties in conducting online classes due to a lack of proper training and development, and problem of technical issues for doing online classes. The study findings would encourage educational institutions for quality enhancement of online teaching by providing continuous training and embracing the newest instructional strategies to teachers. Internet and new technologies gained importance in the education sector which made compulsory for online classes during the COVID pandemic.

Keywords: COVID-19, online teaching, Teachers' perception, online class, online tools.

INTRODUCTION

For the first time in the history of the Indian Education System, there has been a shift from a face-to-face teaching paradigm to a fully online platform. (Zimmerman, 2020). Due to the global epidemic, immediate emergency remote instruction was required (Hodges et al., 2020; O'Keefe et al., 2020) and Covid-19 laws forced higher education institutions around the world to explore with e-learning because traditional classroom-based learning was no longer possible. (Demuyakor, 2020; Ratten, 2020). Covid-19 has resulted in a major disruption in the education system (Bryson & Andres, 2020; Crawford et al., 2020). COVID 19 is an infectious disease caused by the "Novel Corona Virus," a newly identified virus (Dhawan, 2020).

Teachers had to quickly get used to the digital mindset of the online mode of teaching (Victoria, 2020). Students and faculty expressed similar worries about the availability of the Internet, student-teacher involvement, and increased workload in an online mode of teaching study based on the Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989). (Wingo et

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al., 2017).A blended model of education referred to as phygital mode (George, 2020) of education can be a challeng to implement. Covid-19 offered a significant challenge to the educational landscape, as schools at all levels, includin elementary, secondary, and tertiary, were compelled to close and seek alternative teaching and learning methods (Liguo and Winkler, 2020).There are a number of challenges that teachers were facing in an online environment like onlin teaching experience, student conditioning, the participation of students, and technical obstacles (Aliyyah et al., 2020 Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers developed a negative psychological state and faced a lot of pre-and pos technological challenges in response to the first online teaching phase.

The e-learning platform at present has 3bn users (Arora, 2017). By 2020, India's online education would hav grown at a CAGR of over 19 percent according to the market research analyst predictions from Technavio. Teacher contributions were recognized since their opinions and attitudes were crucial to motivation and learning (Koohang an Durante, 2003).

The COVID-19 has put up a new challenge to ensure that the teaching process continues in spite of the pandemic The switch to the digital platform was to protect students and teachers against coronavirus (Velichová et al., 2020). Th education sector was forced to conduct online teaching-learning so that the virus may be halted from spreading furthe on (Dhawan, 2020). E-learning improved teachers' knowledge while simultaneously improving their technical abilitie and bridging the gap between students and teachers (Dubey and Singh, 2020). It was also important to understand th fact that distance learning cannot replace face-to-face learning but can surely complement the traditional classroom learning models (Sutiah et al., 2020).

During COVID-19, instructors from Uttarakhand University revealed that teachers had a positive perception o online education in general, and that young teachers were more actively involved in online learning. Teachers could examine faculty perceptions, training, mentoring, and best practices to assess what is currently available (Agustina and Cahyono, 2017; Dja'far et al., 2016). One can become a good online instructor and establish the best career path through mentorship through a faculty development programme (Billings and Kowalski, 2008), and Conrad and Donaldson (2004) underlined the importance of developing a sense of community in online teaching. During an ongoing outbreak in Indonesia, young instructors had a positive opinion of the ease of use and utility of virtual learning, according to the study. while older professors struggled to create exciting content, describe it, and provide feedback through e-learning platforms (Rahayu and Wirza, 2020). University teachers had a negative perception and felt that virtual classes were unable to replace the emotional tie between the student and the teacher (Kulal and Nayak, 2020). It was also made essential for all Indian universities to finish 25% of their curriculum through online education and 75% through face-to-face contact (UGC, 2020).

Following the start of the Covid-19 epidemic, two months of research into the Italian school system on teachers' views and experiences with online education indicated that teachers had a positive perception of employing technologies (Giovannella 2020). Klapproth (2020) suggested that teachers need to develop their digital skills and equip them with the necessary computer hardware and software as well as a desire to employ online instructional technology. Teachers were frontline workers in educational reform (Kin and Kareem, 2016), and committed teachers' long-term behaviour will be critical for a successful educational response to COVID 19.

Teachers' attitudes must also be examined, according to models of planned behaviour (Ajzen, 2015). Vakola and Nikolaou recognized patterns in a person's thoughts, attitudes, and behaviours regarding change in an organization (2005). When defining attitudes about a shift in teachers' feelings, Kin and Kareem (2018) identified the same three categories. The word techno stress was coined by Al-Fudail and Mellar (2008) to characterize the situation of teachers who were expected to educate in a technological environment but perceived neither internal skills and experience nor external support of training and technology support. Boyer-Davis (2020) reported a significant difference in the overall perception of techno-stress by faculty as compared to pre and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to Azjen (2015), investigations should add more measurements to one of the elements of the theory of planned behaviour. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the teachers had no option but to switch to e-learning. The government had to take the step to move to the online platform for the betterment of students in spite of low access to the internet and the unavailability of gadgets (Thandevaraj et al., 2021). Akat and Karatos (2020) have arrived at a conclusion that there is a sociological, psychological, and economic impact on society due to pandemics. After switching on to digital teaching, teachers had expressed their concerns regarding assessments, assessment tools, monitoring school learning (Jelinska et al. 2021), also teachers have shown depression, anxiety, and stress symptoms (Ozamiz, 2021), and higher levels of psychological stress (Besser, 2022).

A study conducted by Pallerone (2021) showed a marked increase in burnout as well as stress in school teachers and techno-stress among teachers at the university level during the pandemic as reported by Penado-Abilleira et al., 2021. Jakubowski & Sitko-Dominik (2021) reported that some teachers have gone through a mild level of stress, depression, and anxiety during the first and second waves of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although there is a good percentage of teachers who have a positive perception about virtual teaching amid COVID-19, which helped to reduce the learning gap and thereby shape the future of pupils, however, they did encounter a number of obstacles in online teaching such as assessment and conductance of online examination (Kamal & Illiyan, 2021).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Aim

To study the perceptions of teachers on online teaching- learning during COVID-19 pandemic

Objective

The objective of this study is to understand the perception of teaching from home in the education sector.

Sample

This research investigates the challenges of Goa teachers (school teachers here means those who teach from primary to PG level of education) regarding online teaching using a quantitative cum sample survey method using both primary and secondary sources for data collection. Purposive sampling was used to select the respondents who are teachers. An organized Google Forms questionnaire was used to gather essential information during the COVID-19 during the second wave of the pandemic, March and April 2021, a sample of 193 teachers responded to a survey from Goa.

Tools used

Teachers' perceptions toward online classes were gathered using all the 15 items measured on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Statistics used

The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20 was used to analyze the data.

To classify latent variables and for data minimization assessed by the observed components, the principal component analysis (PCA) was used as statistical data depletion method that belongs to the factor analysis family and its objective is to find out the number of items using just a few underlying components that describe the variation in the original data set (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2014; Todhunter, 2015). The items which have an Eigenvalue (EV) higher than one are considered representative (Hair et al., 2006). The Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the questionnaire's reliability and internal accuracy. The Cronbach's alpha value varies from 0 to 1, with a defined threshold value of 0.8 being regarded as good, indicating high internal consistency. The Cronbach's alpha for present study is 0.738 which indicates higher internal consistency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This segment includes the demographic information of teachers regarding virtual teaching and challenges confronted by the teachers amid COVID-19.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENT TEACHERS

The respondent included male (25.4%) and female (74.6%) teachers. the total number of teachers who responded eighty-three teachers, 65% of whom were tenured fulltime faculty members. The participants were distributed the differing ranks with 34% (n = 28) Professors, 18% (n = 15) Associate Professors, 22% (n = 18) Assistant Profe and 26% (n = 22) Instructors. Sixty-eight percent of respondents had not previously taught online.

Table 1 KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	0.713
Approx. Chi-Square	1078.452
df	105
Sig.	0.000

Table 2 Total Variance

Table 3 Rotated Component Matrix	Component 1	2	3
Online teaching should be opted for in the future	.798		
Online teaching helps in completing the syllabus	.760		
Comfortable in teaching online	.732		
Teaching online is better than teaching offline	.717		
Online teaching helps to clear doubts of the students	.676		
It is a good idea to teach online	.656		
Experiencing stress and anxiety teaching online due to students behavior		.843	
Unable to stay motivated during this era of pandemic		.754	
Unable to keep your students engaged during online teaching		.698	
Unable to complete your portion on time due to limited time constraints		.655	
Online teaching is a burden and has increased your work hours		.584	
Online teaching reduces communications gaps between teachers and students			.70
Online teaching has increased your technical skills			.68
Online teaching is diversifying your knowledge			.62
Students are more bothered about attending online classes			.55

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

PRINCIPLE COMPONENT ANALYSIS AND RELIABILITY ANALYSIS OF PERCEPTION

In the present study the PCA with varimax rotation was used one by one for challenges. The Kaiser- Meyer-Olkin (KMO) .713) tested the sampling adequacy) value greater than 0.7 which means data was adequate and Bart

test of sphericity (chi-square value **1078.452**, $p < 0.05$) showed that inter-correlation between variables was clearly described for PCA. PCA has applied to issues and challenges confronted by teachers in distance learning. The result showed that three factors have an EV > 1 indicating three-component solutions. There were a total of fifteen statements, The first factor was an adaptation to online teaching explained 23.475% of the variance, the second factor namely personal opinion comprised five variables and delineated 19.848% of the variance, third factor namely motivation to deliver online classes which had just four variables, i.e. and the third factor which was lack of basic infrastructure described 13.539% of total variance that is illustrated in Table 2. From this table, three factors have been obtained namely adaptation to online teaching comprised of six variables. The second factor namely personal opinion comprised five variables and the third factor namely motivation to deliver online classes had just four variables. The total variance explained by the variables is **56.861%**.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

Because the study was conducted in the Goan context and uses a small sample size due to COVID-19's accessibility limitations, generalisation to other states is limited. Future research can explore factors with larger sample sizes and must try confirmatory factor analysis to validate the proposed model further. The study can be reproduced in other underdeveloped nations because comparable sorts of perceptions exist. Previous research has failed to pinpoint the root causes of teachers' reported impressions in similar situations. Furthermore, no previous research had recommended design considerations for developing tools to assist instructors by addressing their perspectives.

CONCLUSION

Although teachers are positive about online education, there is always space for improvement. Certain considerations must be made when implementing in a country like India. This includes improving infrastructure, enhancing Internet connectivity, expanding rural areas, and changing teaching attitudes, among other things. Colleges and other educational institutions must provide good training and assistance to both students and professors in regards to online classes in order to help them feel more at ease. Colleges and professors must make an effort to change students' mind sets. To attain this purpose, colleges or the government must frequently conduct teacher and student training and development programmes so that they will be able to control their emotion and will suffer from anxiety or stress.

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