A study on Learners Perception of effectiveness of Online Programs

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Abstract
Online courses are gaining much popularity now a days. In the past joining online program was considered an alternate option for traditional classroom learning and was confined only to those learners who are depraved from joining traditional teaching because of jobs and other limitations but with advent of Corona Pandemic the only feasible option available with the education sector is online education. This has created a greater awareness among the learners about the online programs offered by prestigious institutions. Specially the learners in rural areas and two tier cities who were not so much exposed to information Technology so were not keen for online education are now becoming aware about the online Programs. This paper tries to study the perception of students about the online Programs.The responses were collected using a structured questionnaire administered to learners from different streams.The study revealed that learners are interested in online programs because of institutional reputation,timing flexibility, high grades and value addition features of online programs.

Key words : Online program, traditional teaching, learners, education

Introduction

Students have become eager for scores and in the wild hustle and bustle of getting ahead of their peers, they don't allow one stone to overdo others. They are still willing to take a degree percentage to another stage regardless of whether it's projects, unit tests or much-dreaded end-semes. Hard-cover books and notes do not help satisfy the hunger for information these days, and that is why online courses are taken to rescue.

Online courses methods help to inspire, clarify and extend the knowledge base of our interpretation. Given the accelerated lifestyle in which students fail to combine academics and joint studies, online programs offers them a versatile atmosphere. The introduction of e-learning prompted students to accept more responsibilities for intellectual growth. Many of the reputed universities have begun sharing various online courses that are available to more students worldwide. It offers a streamlined and convenient way to gain expertise in a wide range of areas, from sociology, psychology, and science and medicine to technology.

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In addition to the versatility of location and speed of studying, the access to resources and the collaborative nature, online learning characteristics draw students from the whole world. The online courses, posted from period to period digitally by professors of renowned universities, offer many choices, for example stopping, replaying, inserting favorites, etc. Online courses are interactive both through the teaching strategies as well as the various creative strategies used to assess one's own insight of the topic. The course's affordable price is an extra benefit. In addition, a wide range of programs is available to meet the needs of various groups of students. And also, online courses just must provide the ability for both school and university students to fully understand something else. It inspires them to try art, design or coding hobbies. Moreover, these courses still have no age limits. Either a child, young person or an aged person can connect to online courses.

Some of the advantages of acquiring online classes include:

1 Online course helps in giving skills of real world

After completing the training course you can add tech knowledge to your resume by including email and website navigation. It has its own benefit over people that have no such skills. Training how to obtain knowledge through the

internet brings a world of opportunities for your personal and work life.

2. Online courses give convenience and flexibility

The greatest benefit of an online program is the availability (theoretically) of the classroom and teacher 24/7. Announcements, access to notes, reviews, practice tests, doubts, discussions with colleagues and research can be done at any time. You draw up your own timetable to meet your course specifications, other than those due dates. Online courses allow you to invest time with work, your family, your friends, important people, and any other activities you want. For individuals whose busy schedules are constantly evolving such as those who travel often for employment, families with toddlers, students who take care of others or whose wellbeing prohibits them from going to campus, online courses prove to be the best decision.

3. Online courses bring education to doorsteps

In online courses, students also experience the involvement of their families, acquaintances and friends in the program. In the internet world, people can become interested in studying the topic. All in all, everybody in the family participates in studying.

Some of the disadvantages of acquiring online classes include:

1. Online courses bring procrastination

Much like the disputed properties called the force, there are online courses on a negative side. The downfall begins with procrastination. In an online class, procrastination chops you to pieces. No one can tell you to attend class on time. No one reminds you that tasks are due. Nobody preaches to you, begs and pleads for you to keep up to date.

2. Online courses need your responsibility

You alone are in control of your reading. Nobody can force it upon you. Nobody can make you study. Professors will share a small amount of knowledge and experience and will show you a few resources and look forward to it. Your desire must be sparked to learn. So, another drawback of online courses is that you will not be able to study if you are not responsible.

3. Online courses can give you unnecessary freedom

Since online courses mean virtual classrooms, you get so much freedom. You get the freedom to do anything you want while attending the class since no one is watching you. This freedom is the biggest downside of online courses.

The online course is a movement that focuses on 'teach all.' You can learn anywhere from free sources such as Youtube, and even from paid and at home. If you'd like to improve your knowledge about a specific subject or acquire understanding and knowledge of a whole new topic, both of these can be achieved from various courses offered by online providers.

You can have several options if you're going to look for the top choice for online courses, so it could become challenging to find out the right one. To support you quickly, here is the list of many of the most successful online courses providers:

1. Coursera

It works with leading organisations, universities and institutions. It has on its website over 2,000 academic programs. In addition to online courses, it also offers online degree programmes, which are developed at top colleges and universities worldwide, including the University of Michigan, Duke, etc.

2. SWAYAM

Under the Government of India (GoI), the Ministry of Human Resource Development Management (MHRD) initiated a Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM) for applicants of the 9th and postgraduate levels, which enables them to take advantage of the digital effective learning of this platform. SWAYAM is an open and engaging platform filled with learning content, expert tutorials, online programs and esteemed certificates to make you available in the workplace. SWAYAM is partnered with more than 1,000 staff members to ensure high-quality learning outcomes.

3. NPTEL

NPTEL is an abbreviation of the National Programme Technology Enhanced Learning, which is an Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and seven Indian Technology Institute (IIT) initiative aimed at building content of courses in science and engineering. The initiative is undertaken by the IIT Delhi, Roorkee, Madras, Bombay, Guwahati, Kanpur, and Kharagpur. The main concept of the project is to make documented lessons for Open Access available online from its member institutes. It runs one of the largest YouTube teaching channels in engineering, fundamentals and some topics in social science and humanities.

Literature Review:

Luaran, Samsuri, Nadzri, Rom (2014) : The findings demonstrate that almost all of the people polled were subjected to e-learning and that they wanted to learn more flexibly through e-learning, either through the instructor's guided or self-studied courses, and that they could learn flexibly at any period and location. Individuals also admitted that one of the drawbacks of e-learning is to lessen your necessity to engage with your pal face to face.

Neuhauser, C. (2002) : The data showed no substantial variations in exams, assignments, participatory and final rankings, although the stats of the online group were somewhat greater. The studies have shown that equitable learning opportunities for online and face-to-face students can be similarly efficient.

Vonderwell (2003) : It was revealed that there was no direct link with instructors, particularly a one-on-one relationship with the instructor, among people involved in online courses.

Xu, Ebojoh & Omamerhi (2008) : It has been observed that a gap remains in the strategies of design delivery which has to be taken care of in online courses. The respondent is pleased with previous assessment techniques and has similar communication as well as design delivery problems. An important root of frustration for individuals was the challenge of communication

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Research Objectives:

The research was conducted to:

1. study the perception of students about online programs.
2. Investigate the reasons for choosing online programs.
3. determine the factors responsible for selecting online program.

Research Design :

In this research study a structured questionnaire is administered as an instrument to 100 learners belonging to different streams in order to collect their responses about what they perceive about online programs. The questionnaire contained closed ended questionnaires.Likert scale of rating 1 to 5 was used ranging from 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly Agree.

The responses collected were statistically analyzed using SPSS software .Descriptive statistics is used for interpreting the data.

Analysis and Interpretation :

Reliability Analysis :

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	100	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	0
	Total	100	100.0

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.763	19

The Cronbach Alpha value is O,.763 which indicates the data is fair and is reliable**.**

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	60	60.0	60.0	60.0
	Female	40	40.0	40.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Total responses received were 100. Out of 100 respondents 6o respondents were male and 40 were female.

Education_Level

|		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Under Graduation	46	46.0	46.0	46.0
	post graduation	40	40.0	40.0	86.0
	other	14	14.0	14.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	
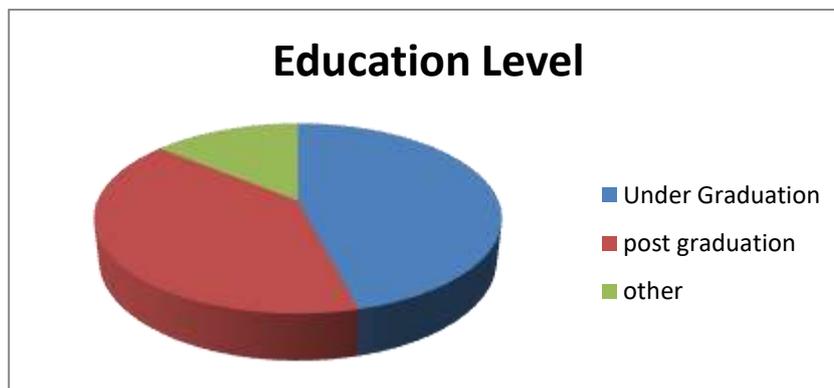
The respondents were having different education levels. Out of 100 respondents 46% were students of undergraduation,40%

were doing post-graduation and 14% respondents completed their post graduation and doing other degrees.

Stream

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Arts	21	21.0	21.0	21.0
	Science	16	16.0	16.0	37.0
	Commerce	58	58.0	58.0	95.0
	other	5	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	
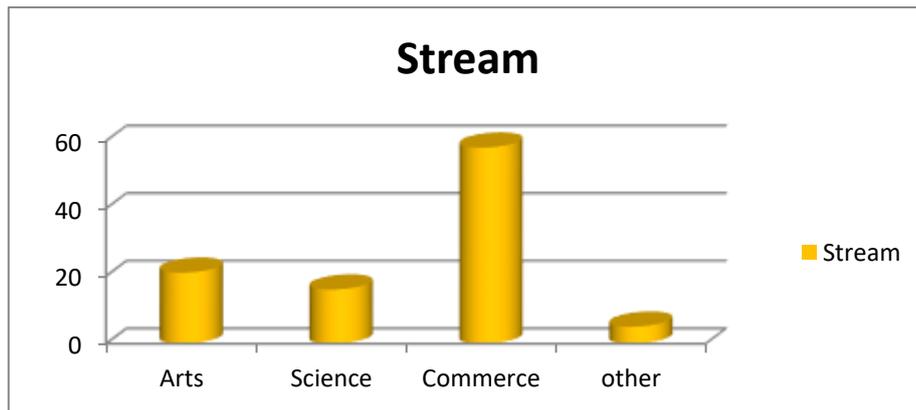
The respondents belong to different streams of education. Out of 100 respondents majority(58%)were students of Commerce stream,21 % were from arts stream,16% belong to arts stream and remaining 5% were doing courses of other stream.
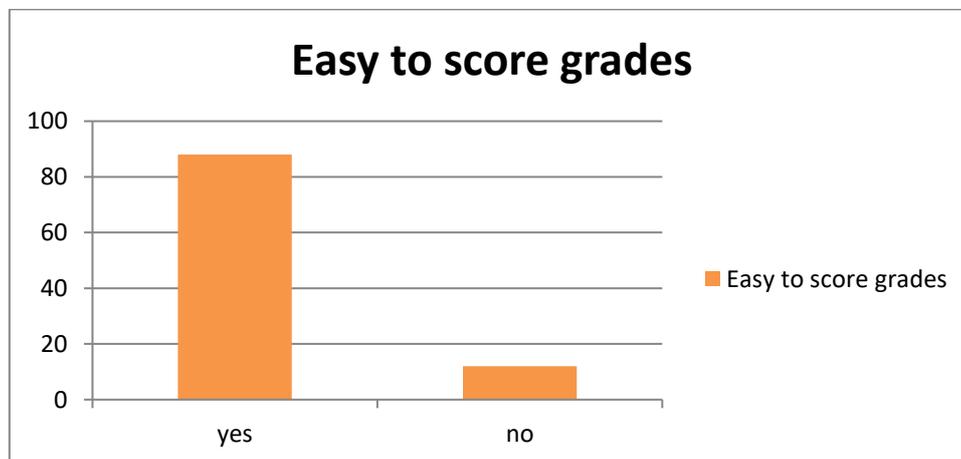
When asked about grades scoring easiness ,majority (88%) agreed that it is easy to score good grades in online programs as compared to the offline prorams.

Online courses are good options for gaining skills

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	yes	77	77.0	77.0	77.0
	no	23	23.0	23.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

When asked about the potential of online programs to increase expertise and professional skills majority (77%) consented that skills enhancing potential is there in online courses.

Findings :

After analyzing the responses collected from Respondents, it is evident that :

1. Majority learners accepted that it is easy to score good grades in online program as compared to offline learning programs.
2. Majority (77%), thinks that online programs enhances employability skills and are helpful in bringing professionalism. They consider online programs as value addition to their resume ,but majority are of the view that online programs alone are not capable enough to provide employment.
3. Most of the learners chose online courses due to their flexible timing, cost effectiveness and tailor made course content features.
4. Online programs are more popular among the learners of Commerce and Arts stream .Science stream students does not appeared much interested in online programs.
5. Majority agreed that effectiveness of online programs is less as compared to Face to Face classroom teaching because of monotonous instructional methods and procrastination.

Conclusion:

Finally it can be concluded that although some lacunas are there learners are quite fascinated by online learning programs as it is cost effective, flexible and convenient for the learners as compared to offline classroom mode of teaching. Online courses if taken ethically by learners can result in tremendous knowledge gain and result in value addition. No doubt online courses which were optional in the past now has become the most accepted way of learning in the covid era. Prevailing Covid crisis all over the world ,compelled the world to shift from offline teaching to online teaching learning .In future no doubt online teaching learning will surpass offline teaching and learning. The only requirement is inculcating more and more traditional teaching- learning features in online learning. It is suggested that if personal attention , more face to face virtual interaction and virtual proctored assessment is introduced in online programs ,then it will act as feather on cap and online education will become primary mode of learning in near future.

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