RISING TRENDS OF E-EDUCATION:BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES

(WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC PERIOD)

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Abstract: This paper attempts to investigate about the rising trends of e-Education, as a forced solution to the current crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic to rely on it for education. With a view to curtail the vicious spread of the deadly corona virus in the city, government resorted to imposition of strict rules for lock downs of schools and colleges. As a result of such proactive measures, all the educational institutions have adopted e-education as a tool for teaching.E-education refers to network enabled system of delivery of education and the transfer of skills and knowledge to a large number of students at the same time. This includes adoption of various electronic teaching methods either through a computer or a smartphone where the teaching material is accessed by use of the internet. Apart from the internet, CDs, DVDs, television and other similar tools can also be used for E-teaching. In spite of its wide accessibility, e-education has encountered a number of challenges in its effective implementation. So, through this paper attempt has been made to reveal both the benefits as well as the challenges faced in e-education.

Keywords: E-education, Covid-19, Teaching, Benefits, Challenges.

Introduction:

Since its outbreak in 2019, Covid -19 pandemic has ruined almost all the crucial sectors of our economy. On February 11, 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared an official name of the virus as COVID-19, an acronym for Corona virus disease 2019. It was first identified in Wuhan, China on December 31, 2019. It compelled the entire human society to self- quarantine themselves at home and main social distancing. In order to control the spread of the deadly corona virus, government of India had to impose strict lockdowns. Education sector not being an exception, has been hit hard and significantly disrupted. This disruption has shaken the country's economic future. Schools, colleges and universities all over India were forced shut down. Millions of students and teachers have been greatly affected as they were forced to stay back at home and slowly adopt the trends of e-education. **According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), over 800 million learners from around the world have been affected.** Another report of UNESCO has revealed that, about 14 crores of primary and 13

crores of secondary students are affected which are two mostly affected levels in India. The classroom teaching came to a hault and deprived the students from the advantages of physical classes such as face to face teaching-learning, difficulty solving session, co-curricular activities, playground, sports and so on. But this could not stop the educators from connecting with the students. Authorities of educational institutions decided to resort towards e-education, which would help them to connect with the students. Taking this as a challenge as well as an opportunity to explore, teachers around the country started preparing themselves for catering the students virtually.

E-education refers to network enabled system of delivery of education and the transfer of skills and knowledge to a large number of students at the same time. This includes adoption of various electronic teaching methods either through a computer or a smartphone where the teaching material is accessed by use of the internet. Apart from the internet, CDs, DVDs, television and other similar tools can also be used for E-teaching. It is not limited to a specific place or time. A student is not required to be physically present in a classroom and can avail the knowledge sitting in his home at his comfort. Also, the teacher is not forced to go to the classroom physically on scheduled time and deliver the lecture. Another characteristic feature of e-education is flexibility of timing. A teacher as well as the students can take up the class as and when demanded. Such type of teaching-learning method gives ease of accessibility and time to both the teacher as well as the students. Such classes can either be live or pre-recorded.

Review of Literature:

- **Dr. Pankaj Srivastava, 2018** in his study reveals that Education can become transformative when teachers and students synthesize information across subjects and experiences, critically weigh significantly different perspectives, and incorporate various inquiries. Educators are able to construct such possibilities by fostering critical learning spaces, in which students are encouraged to increase their capacities of analysis, imagination, critical synthesis, creative expression, self-awareness, and intentionality. E-learning, one of the tools emerged from information technology, has been integrated in many universities' education programs, shifting from traditional way of education to electronic environment.

- Peng S.Chan, Brad Welebir, 2003 is of the view that The Internet is a powerful and popular medium for information exchange. Because of its 24-hour accessibility, people who are not able to attend a traditional college or university can obtain an education from a distance easier than ever before, and at their own pace. The physical reach of the university has been dramatically expanded, which in turn has led administrators to re-evaluate their strategies. This study examines the manner in which traditional higher education is being transformed by the Internet and suggests ways for higher educational institutions to take advantage of this powerful medium.

- **Ruth Wilson**, through his study recommended that Training should be provided to the teachers, in order that lecturers can transfer knowledge to the electronic medium using the most effective approach, and to increase awareness of what can be achieved with

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learning and teaching material. Financial support is required in order that new technologies can be implemented and new projects funded. c. IT support services should be equipped to deal smoothly with increasing quantities of information being put online by departments and individual lecturers, and to respond to greater demand. d. Consideration should be given to the implications of embarking on an e-learning initiative, in terms of staff workload and changing roles.

- **Albaugh & Duray, 2009 reveals that** the e-education market has a growth rate of around 35.6% but still failures exist. This is because the success of e-education system depends upon certain considerations like attentive students, technology trained and dedicated teachers, curriculum designed course, technical infrastructure and environmental distractions.

Aims and objectives:

- To study the various factors responsible for the rising e-education trends during the pandemic
- To analyse the benefits of e-education for the students as well as the teachers.
- To study the challenges faced by the students as well as the teachers while adopting the tools of e-education.
- To study the methods of overcoming the challenges of e-education.

Research Methodology:

In order to analyse the benefits and challenges of e-education, the researcher has used an explanatory research design.

Sample Design:

For the selection of sample, the researcher has used an empirical investigation survey which was conducted through Google Forms. These forms were prepared with dichotomous questions and were sent through mail to the selected samples. The researcher has used a non-probability convenience sampling technique for the present study.

Sample Selection:

For conducting the survey, the researcher has decided to select 100 online respondents as they can be easily handled so that the objectives of present research can be fulfilled.

Instrument Development:

For the instrument development of this research, focus has been made on the questionnaire instrument. However, questionnaire instrument is considered important and the research uses the adoptive questionnaire in order to check the reliability and validity, questionnaire is considered important to investigate the variables relationship.

Data collection procedures :

For the data collection procedure, the respondents have been informed about the purpose of the data collection and it is their choice that they are willing to fill the data or not. However, they are informed that questionnaires are not for the commercial purposes.

Data analysis technique :

In the data analysis technique, there will be the interpretation of collected data and for that focus has been made on the descriptive data analysis. However, in the descriptive data analysis, there will be the analysis through percentage or graph, charts etc.

Hypothesis of the study:

H0- Pandemic situation has arisen due to Covid-19 and small-scale retailers have been remarkably affected due to the increasing online buying behaviour of consumers in Nagpur city.

H1- Pandemic situation has arisen due to Covid-19 and small-scale retailers have not been remarkably affected due to the increasing online buying behaviour of consumers in Nagpur city.

Scope of the study:

The main focus of the researcher while writing this paper was on the rising trends of e-education and its benefits and challenges to the teachers as well as the students. The researcher has also made an attempt to understand the reasons of emergence of e-education during the covid-19 pandemic.

Limitations of the Study:

- This study is limited to the period of lockdown and in Nagpur City due to COVID-19 pandemic.
- Due to strict rules laid down for lockdown, the researcher was unable to visit the students and teachers personally so google forms for the questionnaire were designed and sent to the respondents through e-mails.
- The time is an important constraint and there may be a chance for sample error.

Collection of Data:

To study the benefits and challenges of the rising trends of e-education during the pandemic, the following sources of data collection were used-

Primary Data: The following techniques were used to collect primary data.

Discussion : A discussion was done with all the respondents on cell phones to understand the impact and they were also asked to fill up the questionnaire designed through Google Form.

Observation : Personal observation was carried out by the researcher in order to understand the efforts taken up by the students and teachers to adapt e-education for teaching-learning.

Secondary Data: Secondary data was collected through the following sources which are very useful tools-

- Newspaper Articles

- Published reports and survey

- Published sources collected from research papers and periodicals.

- Web sites related to COVID-19 and e-education.

Data Analysis:

Following diagrams and graphs show the data collected and analysed for the research-

Data collected from the teachers

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). Is your creativity enhanced due to e-education?
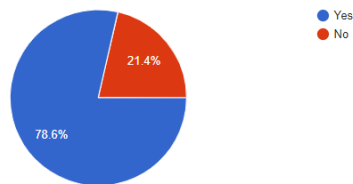
Which tools do you use to support your lectures?
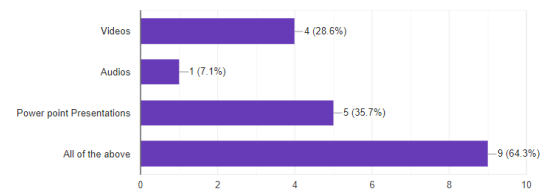
Do these tools help you in delivering the lectures smoothly?
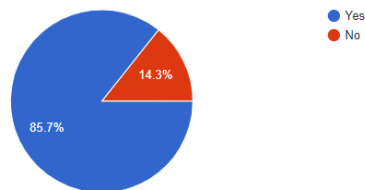
. Does this help you to maintain the attention of your students?
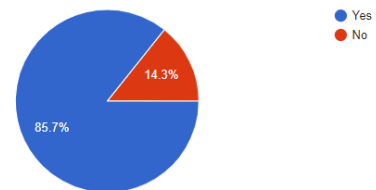
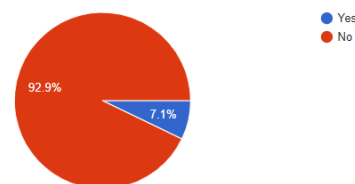. Are you able to maintain the Mentor Mentee relationship with the students?
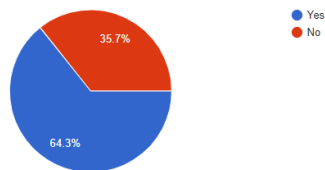
Do you feel the students are learning attentively as they did in physical classrooms?
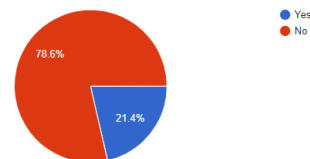
. Do you find teaching online stressful?
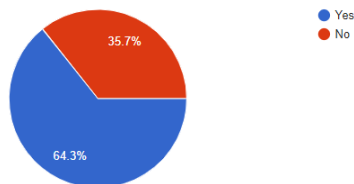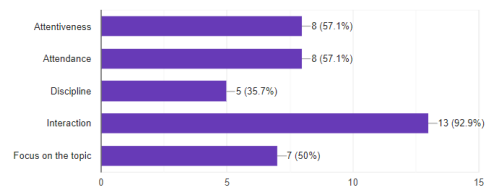

Is it possible to keep a watch over the students?

`. What kind of obstacles do you find while teaching online?
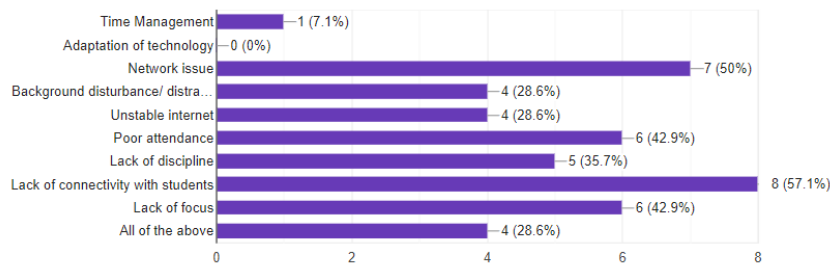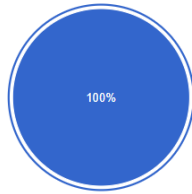

`. What help do you expect from your institution?
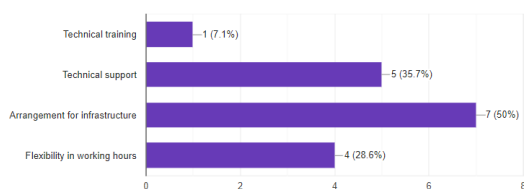
What kind of cooperation do you expect from the students?

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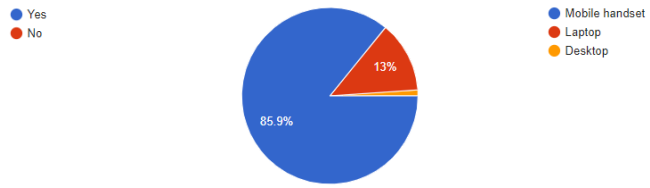International Peer-Reviewed Multidisciplinary E-Journal

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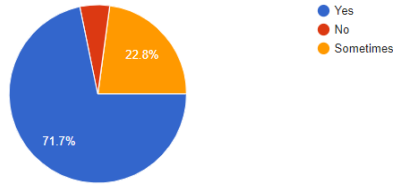2582-9173

Data collected from Students
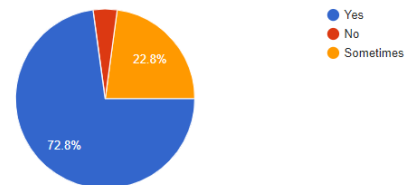
Do you study online?

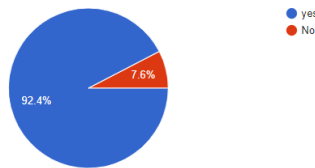Which device do you use while studying online?

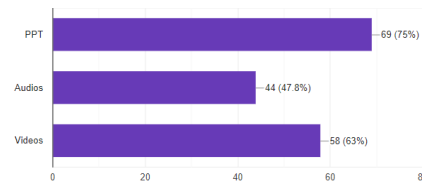Do you have a stable internet connection at you end?
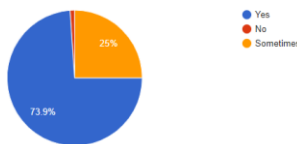

Do you understand the concepts taught online?

Do you feel your teacher is creative while delivering the lectures?
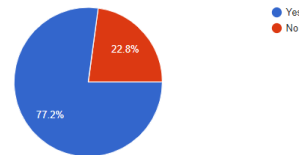

What kind of tools your teacher uses while delivering the lectures?
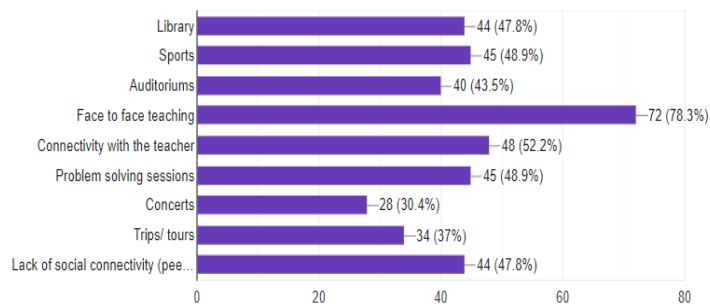

Does the audio -visual tools of online teaching help you to understand the concepts easily?
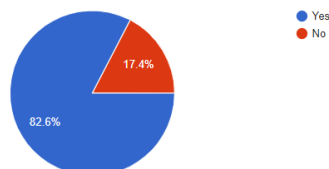

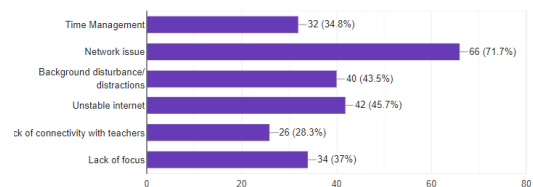Do you feel the level of your knowledge has enhanced due to e-education?

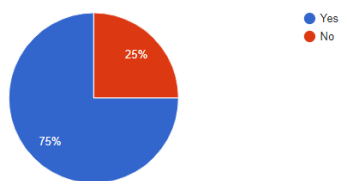. What do you miss during online sessions?

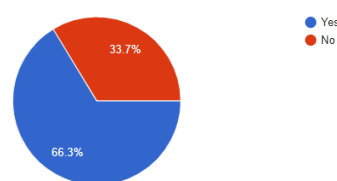. Do you feel any connectivity with the teacher?

. What kind of problems do you face while attending online classes?

Are you comfortable with the online notes provided to you?   . Is your social life affected?

Findings:

- From the data received from this research, it is clear that Covid-19 pandemic has changed the face of the education system in our country.
- From the study it is proved that e-education is the most important requisite for raising the standards of education in the current scenario.
- E-education has provided numerous opportunities to the teachers to exhibit their skills and talents.
- The various tools like Power point presentations, videos, audios prove to be a great supplement to the teachers.
- The data from the research shows that students find such tools attractive and they understand the concepts well.
- The analysis shows that the various audio-visual tools have helped to raise the level of knowledge of the students.
- The data collected also reveals that due to online teaching, the students as well as the teachers do not feel any connectivity with each other.
- The study shows that the most common obstacles which is faced by the teachers and students are unstable internet connections, network issues, disturbances from the background which prove to be a distraction for the class.
- The students miss the physical library of the school, sports and co-curricular activities, problem solving sessions and the social connectivity with the peers.
- The research shows that teachers are not able to keep a watch over the students as they did in physical classrooms.
- The teachers are of the view that, if proper training and appropriate infrastructure is made available to them, smooth conduction of the lecture will be possible.
- The study also reveals that teachers also expect attentiveness and interactive sessions from the students.

Suggestions:

- From the researcher's point of view, in order to cope up with the challenges of e-education, the teachers and students will have to keep arrangements for a stable internet connection.
- It is also suggested that the teachers take more efforts to maintain connectivity with the students by arranging various participatory activities for them.
- Arranging online competitions can prove to be a connecting link between students and teachers.

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- Conducting regular Parent-Teacher meets can help to maintain the mentor mentee relation.

Conclusions:

The worldwide outbreak of the deadly Corona virus has resulted into the closing down of all the schools and colleges which has affected the education system badly. This has led to a distinctive rise in the e-education where the physical classrooms have been transformed into virtual platforms. Digital teaching-learning has given higher standards to the education system of our country. Teachers have very well accepted the digital platforms and the students have also adapted themselves to the virtual classes.

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