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Students' Attitudes toward Online Classes across Educational Establishments

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Abstract

Distance education is becoming increasingly popular across all educational institutes, and students of all ages are increasingly adopting it. Academic institutions should be aware of students' requirements and expectations in order to provide excellent education and use this information to develop successful methods and solutions for adopting remote education. "Students' Attitudes toward Online Classes across Educational Establishments" is the response to the question which has played a key role in the development and implementation of a pedagogically sound online curriculum. The paper uses qualitative and quantitative data to validate students' attitudes in order for the study to be more efficient. A formal questionnaire was used in the collection of primary data for this study. In addition, secondary data was collected from other research papers based on the topic. The questionnaire was designed with the theoretical backdrop, research topic, and study objectives in mind. Location, income, and teacher are the independent variables in the questionnaire. In addition, the dependent variables comprise ease of use, the interaction between students, course structures, and attitude. The current edition of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used to show the data as graphical representations in order to interpret the collected results. Students had optimistic perceptions regarding online learning, according to the results of the study. They believe that e-learning assists them to organize their time better, ensures learning flexibility. But on the other hand, the study also revealed the obstacles that students face when using e-learning systems which are the lack of interaction amongst students in online classes, support from faculties, lack of interest in learning new skills, lack of confidence in using e-learning, inability to understand contents delivered online, ignorance of the benefits of e-learning. The value of the research can be emphasized to make the process of accrediting additional remote education programs easier, and policymakers should integrate online learning themes in the curriculum, and the government should conduct workshops and seminars for instructors to qualify them with computer knowledge and application in the classroom.

Key words

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Introduction

Students in educational institutions around the world have witnessed significant changes, particularly since the introduction of information and communication technologies and the COVID19 outburst. There is a movement from the traditional teacher-directed approach to modern ways that incorporate digital technology. Technology has promoted and made teaching more meaningful, allowing students to attend lectures without having to leave their homes or classrooms. E-learning is the part that has brought about this change in students' learning. E-learning, in its broadest meaning, refers to any form of electronic learning [1].

The attitude of students toward online learning and distance education is one of the variables influencing this shift. Understanding their attitudes and perspectives can aid universities and academic staff in developing and implementing appropriate online learning strategies and modes to meet the demands of students. Many scholars have emphasized the necessity of educational institutions researching and reporting students' perceptions about online learning. Other researchers believe that students' attitudes and perceptions toward online learning are a significant impact on their academic achievement. Positive attitudes about online learning are crucial to students' engagement and accomplishment [2].

The current qualitative study's goal is to better understand student views toward remote education. To be clear, this research focuses on students rather than academics. While we recognize the necessity of analyzing faculty perceptions toward online education, our goal is to shift the focus to students. Second, we are focused in attitudes, which have typically been considered as an evaluation or evaluative judgment made with reference to an assessments measure in the social psychological literature. As a result, student distance education views reflect students' cognitive appraisals of remote education [3].

There is a large list of research studies where demographic influences on user attitudes about e-learning have been examined in various nations. Similarly, research indicates that social demographic parameters such as age, race, and gender, rather than socio-economic elements such as income and education, or other psychological aspects, play a big role in Internet use. The issues of demographic dimensions are universal, yet they are more prevalent in developing countries than in developed countries [4].

If the findings do not result in actionable knowledge, they are of little value. As a result, we will turn our results into actionable advice for professors. Although changing teaching approaches might be difficult, there is evidence that instructors prioritize student needs over observational evidence when making adjustments. Our practical, student-centered approach may motivate instructors to make minor adjustments to their online courses that improve effectiveness and satisfaction. The following is a two-part literature review. First, we will go through the basics of distance education research. Then we will go over some empirical findings that are pertinent to our current research. This study was selected as the primary knowledge available and was most easily accessible and influential.

In this way, it is easy to understand that students come from their youth and have different backgrounds that form their perceptions of satisfaction, resulting in different views of comfort or discomfort. Awareness of student's perceptions and experiences would enable institutions and administrators to create and introduce viable models and modes of online learning to address the needs of student's requirements. The optimistic attitudes of students towards online learning are essential to their preparation and participation in distance learning about studying.

Not only is it a prerequisite for the effective transition of the educational paradigm, but also for the support of the education paradigm in planning and performing productive online instruction.

Literature Review

E-learning is the use of interactive technology for a variety of learning uses, ranging from add-on features in traditional classrooms to the complete replacement of virtual meetings for face-to-face meetings [2].

In an attempt to assess the feasibility of online education, several quantitative experiments have been performed. There has, however, been no study aimed at monitoring student variables that could offer answers to the following questions, such as:

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Do the programming capabilities of students shape online quality perceptions? Do the computer skills of learners also influence the learning outcomes of students? How does connectivity impact the understanding and learning outcomes of students within the online environment?

A teacher plays a vital role in the process of maintaining the consistency of online education. Not only because the teacher actually faces the pupils, but also because more pressure has been put on them. This does not, though, mean that the quality assurance of online education should be put aside by the administrator. More specifically, enough resources (training, financial, monetary, and promotional) should be offered by the administrator, skilled faculty should be recruited, and faculty should be encouraged to provide successful online teaching. This research will lead to online literature in the field of education. It will also provide as a useful student knowledge that can serve all online teachers and administrators to deliver online education more efficiently. Students would not consider their online education as high quality because the online education services do not reach the standards. Moreover, further work needs to be carried out in the field of enhancing collaboration and using multi-media to improve students' online instructional interactions in terms of both course material and social networking [3].

There were several potential contributing factors to a person learning stress, which is likely additional assessment that was required during a crisis to move from normal in-class student learning to a completely online learning curriculum. The findings of this research were limited to the initial epidemic and represent students 'opinions that had to re-adjust their remaining semester to exclusive online learning. In addition, they did not reflect how many students will react differently after an entire semester until they have more experience studying in the online world [4].

Furthermore, students might participate in online learning regardless of their geographic location, time, or location. Online learning allows teachers to communicate with students via email, online chat, and an online bulletin board from anywhere in the world. Because tele mentoring is not limited to a single geographic place, more mentors and protégés can participate.

We wanted to investigate whether the location is an important variable from a student's point of view when attending online classes. We came up with strong evidence that location is an important factor from our responses.

Retention into subsequent semesters, as well as progression to the next course in the program sequence, are key challenges for low-income and underprepared college students. Many underprepared individuals do not complete their early developmental education courses, as several other publications in this series have shown out. Because of the excitement surrounding these and other cutting-edge technology-based programs, teachers are wondering if the further expansion of online learning might be used to improve academic access, advancement, and success for low-income and underprepared college students [5]. It was important to investigate whether household income has a strong effect on the attitudes of students when attending online classes.

Because there are no requirements to teach online, there is a paucity of data on whether online teachers participate in professional learning relevant to online instruction, the effectiveness of such experiences, and areas where extra support is needed. Online teachers should be trained in the following practice areas, according to the National Education Association's (Guide to Teaching Online Courses) guide: appropriate communications, appropriate and timely feedback, facilitated discussions, and facilitation of group work and multimedia projects, curriculum and materials customization, and online tool adaption to facilitate effective instruction [6].

The perceived ease of use (PEOU) of a tool is defined as the ease with which it can be utilized, whilst the advantage that an individual obtains from utilizing the product is defined as its perceived usefulness (PU) [7]. Attitudes toward using an online tool are influenced by user evaluations of its usefulness and convenience of use. Behavioral intentions to use an online tool, according to the TAM, determine actual system utilization [8]. While attending online classes, we wanted to investigate whether the platform used by students were perceived as comfortable as it is for some.

Interaction in remote education classes was the subject of a later study in agricultural education. Kelsey and

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D'souza (2004) studied a group of graduate students who had completed two years of remote education curriculum. Participants believed that their interactions with course teachers were the most beneficial, and that student-to-student connection was of minor importance. In a study of 64 business educators who taught via distance education, Chapman and Henderson (2010) discovered that the respondents feel "interaction" is vital and should be a benchmark for distance education programs, however, the definition of "interaction" was not defined [9].

When it comes to online education, it's important to reconsider the methodology, criteria, and approaches that are typically used in traditional educational design and planning.

The positive and negative effects of ICT use must be taken into account, which can be attributed to a variety of specific factors such as the type of communication (mostly text-based, but also video communication); the shift in the teacher's role within the classroom; and, last but not least, problems with managing student access to network resources [10].

When it comes to online education, it is important to reconsider the methodology, criteria, and approaches that are typically used in traditional educational design and planning. The positive and negative effects of ICT use must be taken into account, which can be attributed to a variety of specific factors such as the type of communication (mostly text-based, but also video communication); the shift in the teacher's role within the classroom; and, last but not least, problems with managing student access to network resources [11].

Research Methodology

This study looked at present students' views about switching to an entirely virtual learning environment as a result of COVID-19. During the outbreak, one of the most pressing concerns was how to ensure that online learning in educational establishments remained consistent. Although many studies have been published on the perspectives of academics and executives, there has been few research on the responses of students on the quality of online learning.

Here, we are observing the mindset of a student towards online classes. For our research, we have selected a descriptive methodology that is the most frequently used research design in the world. The standardized descriptive approach requires the use of questionnaires, private interviews, etc.

We needed to collect qualitative data to verify the mindset of students for the study to be more successful. Therefore, to do the qualitative analysis, a survey is appropriate and as such, using Google Docs, we opted to do an online questionnaire survey.

In assembling a group of respondents to engage in this research, a non-probability sampling process, convenience sampling, was used. For this analysis, this was also the most fitting sampling process, since it provides a reasonable representation of the target population. Convenience sampling is a strategy from which researchers more easily utilize all respondents open to them. Therefore, questionnaires were provided to students in this sample that were most readily accessible to the investigator.

In the selection of primary data for this research, a formal questionnaire was used. Questionnaires are also used because, when used for data processing, they are simpler and easier than other approaches. The questionnaire was built based on the theoretical context, research issue, and aims of the study. The contents of the questionnaire were linked to the theoretical framework used for the research, in particular the Likert-scale answers to certain questions. These were calculated from (1) "Strongly Disagree" to (5) "Strongly Agree" on 5-point Likert scale values.

To interpret the collected data, the current edition of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used to display the data as graphical representations.

To add to the precision and reliability of data collection, frequency tables have also been used. In this analysis, using tables, charts, and descriptive statistics, such as mean, percentage, and response frequency graphs, results from the analyzed data were presented.

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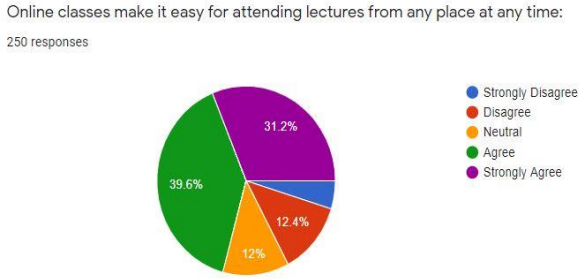
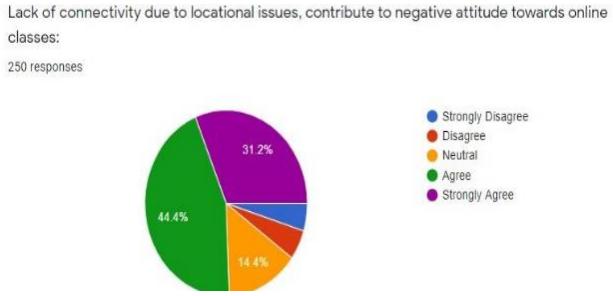
Descriptive Analysis

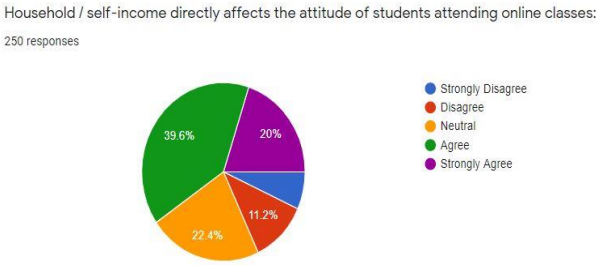
42.8%, of the students on average, spend 3 to 6 hours per week on online classes, whereas 37.6%, spend 7 to 12 hours and 19.6%, of the respondents spend 13 to 18 hours.



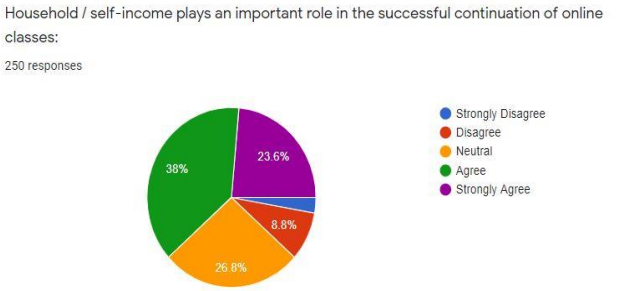
39.6% of the students agreed that online classes make it easy for attending lectures from any place at any time, while 31.2% of the students strongly agreed to it. However, 12% and 12.4 %, were neutral and disagreed respectively.



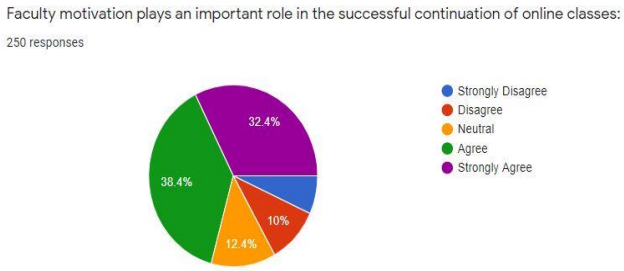
Though, 44.4% and 31.2%, of the students agreed and strongly disagreed respectively, that lack of connectivity due to locational issues, contributes to the negative attitude towards online classes however, 14.4% were neutral in the response.



Students who are attending online classes, 39.6% and 20%, agreed and strongly agreed respectively, that household/self-income directly affects the attitude of students attending online classes. 22.4% were neutral and 11.2% disagreed with the fact.



8.8% and 2.8%, disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively that household/self-income plays an important role in the successful continuation of the online semester. However, 38.0% of the respondents agreed to it.



38.4% agreed that faculty motivation plays an important role in the successful completion of online classes, whereas 10.0% strongly disagreed with it. However, 12.4% were neutral while responding.

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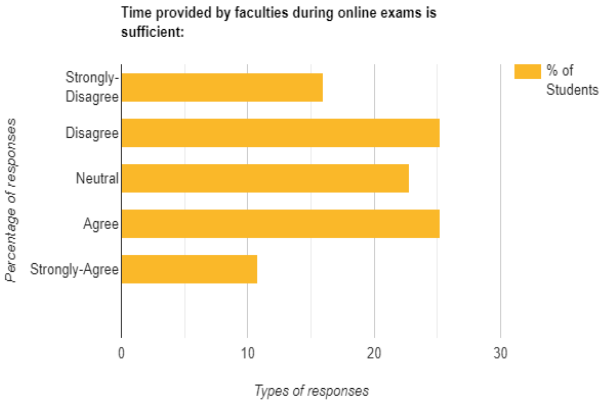
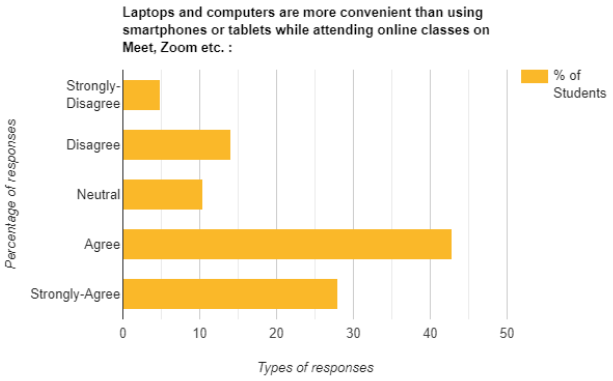
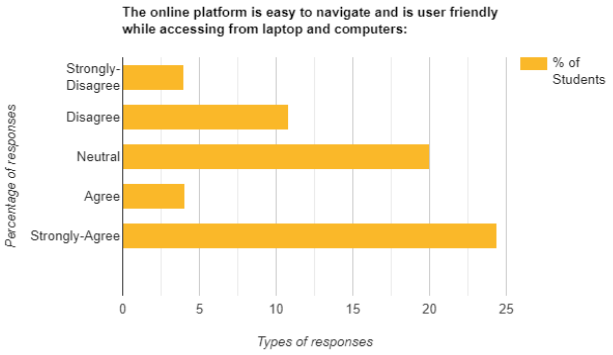


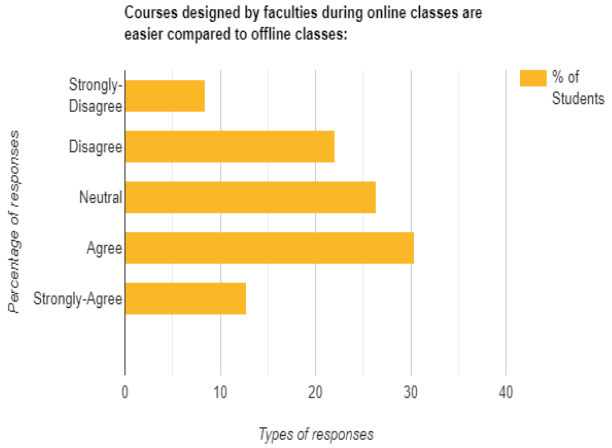
25.2% of the respondents both agreed and disagreed that time provided by faculties during online exams is sufficient. However, 22.8% were neutral.



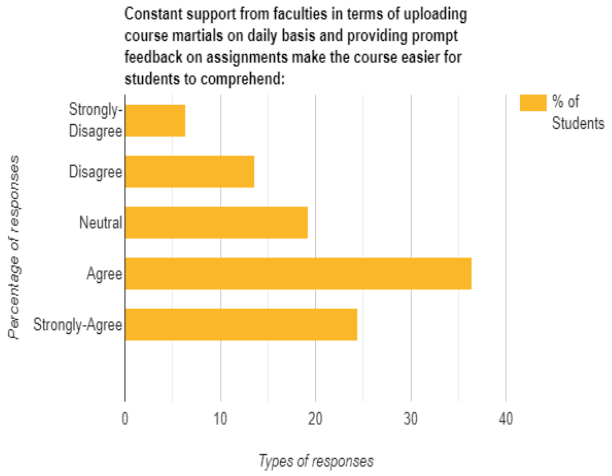
42.8% of the respondents agreed that laptops and computers are more convenient than using smartphones or tablets while attending online classes on Meet, Zoom, etc. However, 14.0% of the students disagreed while responding and 10.4% of them were neutral.



40.8% of the students agreed that the online platform is easy to navigate and is user-friendly while accessing from laptop and computers and 24.4% strongly agreed to it, whereas 20.0% of the respondents were neutral.



30.4% of the students agreed that the courses designed by faculties during online classes are easier compared to offline classes, whereas 22.0% of the students disagreed and 26.4% were neutral.



36.4% of the students agreed that constant support from faculties in terms of uploading course materials on daily basis and providing prompt feedback on assignments make the course easier for students to comprehend, whereas 24.4% strongly agreed and 19.2% are neutral.

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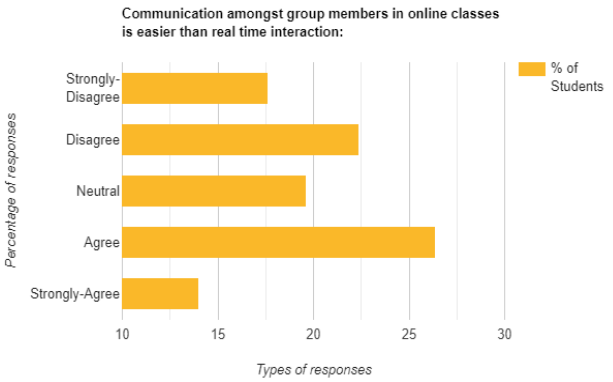
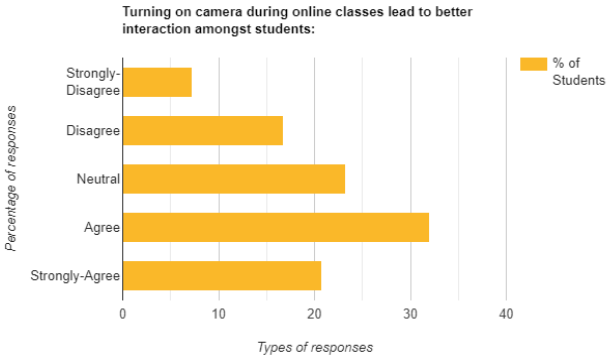
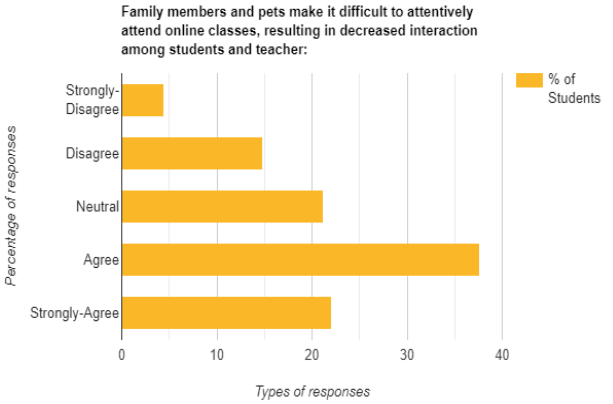


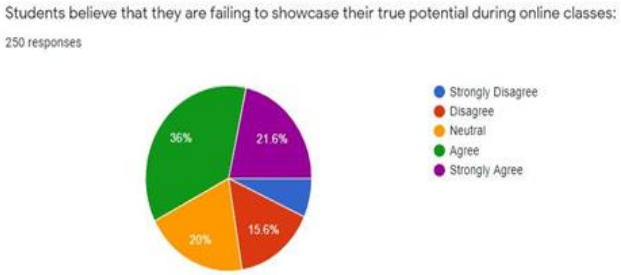
26.4% agreed that communication amongst group members in online classes is easier than real time interaction whereas 22.4% disagreed. However, 19.6% were neutral and 17.6% strongly disagreed.



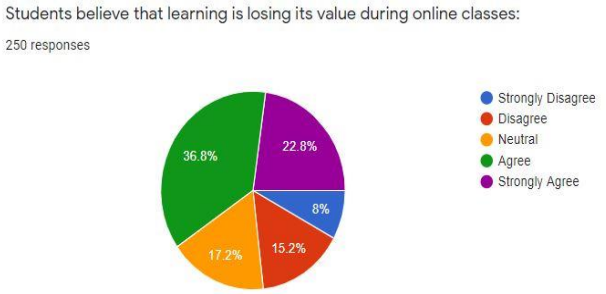
32.0% agreed that students turning on camera during online classes lead to better interaction amongst students and 20.8% strongly agreed to it. 23.2% of the respondents were neutral. However, 16.8% of the respondents disagreed.



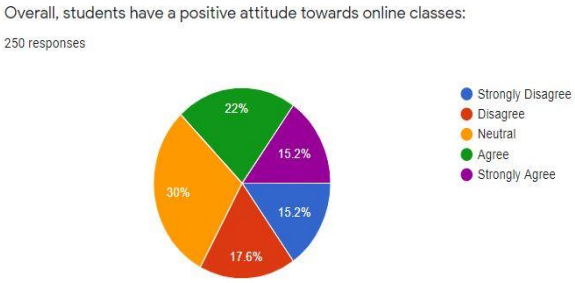
37.6% of the respondents agreed that family members and pets make it difficult to attentively attend online classes, resulting in decreased interaction among students and teacher, and 22.0% strongly agreed to it. However, 14.8% disagreed.



36.0% of the students agreed that they are failing to showcase their true potential during online classes, whereas 21.6% strongly agreed to it. However, 20.0% of the students were neutral while responding.



36.8% of the students agreed that learning is losing its value during online classes whereas 22.8% of the students strongly agreed to it. 17.2% were neutral.



30.0% of the students are neutral that students have a positive attitude towards online classes. 22.0% agreed to it and 17.6% disagreed.

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Discussions

It has been found that location is a critical element for students taking online classes because connecting to the internet is challenging for students living outside of cities. Students will have a positive attitude toward online classes if they have a steady internet connection regardless of their location, and this will also facilitate them in attending lectures from any location at any time. Students will be able to access lessons from rural places while still receiving a high-quality education. Furthermore, household or self-income plays an important influence, considering students who are in financial distress may find it difficult to attend online programs. It is important to note, however, that students do not have to physically visit educational institutions during online classes, and the investment needed for acquiring a laptop or internet connection is a one-time expenditure with which they will be able to continue online classes with minor expenses. Academic teachers play a crucial role in the effective continuation of lectures, whether it is an online or offline course. Students may acquire a positive outlook toward virtual classes if lecturers can agree on the timeframe of exams in online classes, just as there is no issue with time offered by lecturers in traditional classes. Furthermore, if students submit papers during exams and quizzes by attaching images, teachers should allow additional time for it as well, and this approach will also resonate with offline classroom practices.

Because there are many constraints on both the faculty and student endpoints, special attention should be given while creating courses for online classes. Furthermore, webcams should be switched on during online classes to ensure successful and greater interactions, and if students can manage a particular location in the room dedicated just to class activities, they will have more attention and focus. Finally, students believe that online classrooms have many restrictions and that they will be unable to adapt to the fast-paced dynamic environment; yet, if faculty provide additional care and support, students may establish a favourable attitude toward online classes.

Conclusion, Limitation & Recommendation

While there are many potential contributing factors to personalized learning, likely, a transition from normal in-class student learning to a fully online learning system requires additional assessment during crisis. Further studies on the feasibility of school openings to minimize the transmission of COVID-19 should be done. The findings of this research are limited to the epidemic and represent the views of students who have to readjust their remaining semester to exclusive online learning, and are likely to be skewed, considering the small period of time given to students to prep for online learning.

We recommend distance learning will benefit from many technical advancements, including video conferencing services, emailing to continue correspondence, and making lectures accessible to students online with audio material, available free of charge to both professors and students.

In comparison, in other types of schools or other countries that may have various structures in place, media access, ability to perform online programs, access to infrastructure, etc., this present research and its generalizations may not exactly translate into distance learning.

Finally, outside of one follow-up issue, the urgency of administering the survey during the COVID-19 pandemic precluded determining post-survey thoughts. Future research should also expand the participation of students through majors to increase both the sample size and the sampling of possible shifts in the distance learning experiences of students. The limitations as in online learning, the students, the teachers, and the tenured faculty find many possible drawbacks, namely adequate resources, organizational preparation, student readiness, various levels of team building, crisis management, faculty learning curve, participants with restricted language skills, logistical support, collective effort, synchronous or asynchronous classroom situations, expenses.

Further analysis should be carried out on this subject by competent experts to obtain the actual findings of it, which would be much more precise compared to our studies, which have a lot of limitations given our level of expertise. These findings could allow other related

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educational institutions to become conscious of problems linked to dramatic improvements in learning methodologies in response to sustained emergencies. These findings should help other undergraduate colleges of similar size become aware of concerns associated with quick alterations in learning approaches in response to long-term emergencies.

While other countries have dealt with viral infections before, the global response to COVID-19 may need the development of future procedures if new emergent pathogens necessitate a rapid move to completely online schooling.

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