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Assessing University-Level Students' Attitude towards Online Learning

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ABSTRACT:

The present study has been carried out to find out the level of university students towards online learning. Online learning is very much popular among students of the present era. Even various government educational policy has focused on online learning and taken different initiatives. Here the researcher employed the descriptive survey method as a research technique. A total of 241 post-graduate students were taken as a sample of the study through purposive sampling. To collect the data the researcher developed a questionnaire consisting of 34 items having both positive and negative items. The findings of the present study revealed that there were no significant differences in attitude towards online learning between male & female, rural & urban, rural male & rural female, urban male & urban female, science & arts students, science male & arts male, science female & arts female students. And there was a significant difference between high-achiever & low-achiever university-level students in attitudes towards online learning

Keywords: **Online Learning, University Students, Attitude**

Introduction

We have been acquainted with the traditional education system since ancient India and this education system has been dominated by almost everyone from teachers to parents an important method. But now there is a huge development in technology that has made the world a modern world based on information technology. People's thinking, consciousness needs, and habits are also changing. Online learning touches on the daily changes in education or technology. One way to learn through the internet is through online learning. Technology-based online learning is rapidly gaining popularity as an alternative learning medium for students.

This system allows us to get an education online at our convenience without having to attend classes directly. Many people are taking part in the virtual class of the famous university sitting at home after working all day. The online learning method has reduced this distance and given the opportunity to study as well as reduced the cost of education. In addition, many students who had stopped studying for some reason are now able to continue their studies anew. An interesting aspect of studying through an electronic device is that it is possible to get the latest information here. This makes it easier for people of any profession to make the right decisions. At the same people of any age use a computer, mobile, tv, software, projector, etc.

Online learning first appeared on the Internet at the University of Phoenix in 1989. Later in 1993, with the creation of the first Internet web browser at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, online learning began to evolve. In 1998, the first fully-fledged online program was launched at New York University, Western Governor's University, and California Virtual University. In 2000, only 4% of students registered online. That rate increased by 20% in 2008. Since 2013, the enrollment rate of online learning has been increasing rapidly. According to the University of Phoenix's website more than a 1.4million students from the United States alone took online degrees in various subjects in 2015 alone.

Need and Significance of the Study

The amount of internet usage that has increased in recent times cannot be overstated. The importance of online learning has increased in every sphere of society. According to the title of my research, this issue has been selected to show the importance of online learning in education. The problem of this study has been selected to see how well students have responded to this online learning system by going beyond the traditional education system. Nowadays there are many amazing courses offered on the internet and anyone can take the courses. Information on various educational institutions at home and abroad is now easily available on the internet. The importance of this online learning for solving various problems of students is immense. So, this problem has been selected keeping in mind the need for online learning in the present age. Besides the students, attention is also paid to how much the teacher will benefit in this regard. Special emphasis is placed on the attitude of teachers and students. As the teacher-student is directly

involved in the education system, the views of the parents are no less important in the life of the student. As, a result of online learning, parents get various news about students from home, and at the same time, parents can be informed about the attitude of students towards online learning. It is also important to note the amount of money that the policymakers have allocated to the various policies has been adequate.

Review of Related Literature

Nachimuthu (2020) conducted a study to better understand and measure the attitude of Student teachers towards online learning during covid-19. The researcher designed a survey type of tool used as Google forms. He considered online learning-supported instruction as an independent variable and student attitudes towards online learning through computers were dependent variables. Here, he used an attitude scale for data collection. The objective of the study was to find out and compare the attitude of student teachers toward online learning. As a sample, the researcher took 130 student teachers studied in both the first year and second year in selected teacher education colleges affiliated with Tamil Nadu Teacher Education University, Chennai. Descriptive and inferential statistics had been used to analyze and interpret the data. The findings of the study showed that normal classroom practice did not affect students toward online learning and there was no significant relationship between male and female attitude scores of student-teachers toward online learning during the covid-19.

Halder (2021) has investigated the attitude of post-graduate students towards e-learning in West Bengal. Objectives of the study are 1. To find out how much enthusiastic the postgraduate students are in question of implementation of e-learning tendency varies for several faculties. Whether the tendency to e-learning varies with factors like faculty, living, and father's occupation. Here, the researcher takes 59 pg levels of students from Kalyani University as the sample. The survey method has been adopted for the study and a stratified random sampling technique has been used in selecting the sample. A well-designed questionnaire was developed by the investigators to collect data. Here, he uses descriptive and inferential statistics, bar graphs, etc. As a finding, the students had a high attitude towards e-learning.

Fouzdar and Behera (2017) conducted a study on postgraduate students' attitudes toward Mobile learning. The researcher wanted to find out the attitudes of postgraduate students towards mobile learning in the Purulia district of West Bengal. The objectives of the present study were to find out the difference between male & female, urban & rural, and gen &sc/st students' attitudes toward mobile learning. About 150 pg students of Sidho-Kanho University were taken as a representative sample of the whole population. He developed an attitude scale (Likert type) for data collection. Descriptive and Inferential statistics had been used to analyze and interpret the data. The results of the present study revealed that there was no significant relationship between urban & rural students, male & female students, and gen &sc/st students.

Ullah, Khan & Khan (2017) conducted a study on students' attitudes toward online learning at the tertiary level. This study mainly focused on exploring the relationship between undergraduate students' attitudes towards the technology acceptance model with a special reference to online learning. The researcher designed a self-structured closed questionnaire with 5 points Likert scale for data collection. The researcher took 83 undergraduate students as a sample including 55 males and 28 females. Descriptive & Inferential statistics had been used to analyze the data. The findings of the study showed no significant difference between students' interest in computers, the usefulness of the computer to students, and easiness of using online learning at the undergraduate level.

ZHU, AU& YATES (2013) conducted a study on university students' attitudes toward online learning in a blended course. The researcher used two phases in the study including the pre and post-test and course participation (developed from the data of students' weekly reports and online forum transcripts) in phase one and Interviews in phase two. The paper aimed to find out 120 students of Australian University attitudes toward online learning in a blended course. The researcher used A four-point scale from 16 '1= strongly disagree to 4= strongly agree'. Descriptive & Inferential statistics had been used to analyze and interpret the data. The results of the present study revealed that the students became more positive toward online learning by the end of the course at a significant level.

Statement of the Problem

Researcher stated the present problem as "**Assessing University-Level Students' Attitude Towards Online Learning".**

Objectives of the Study

After considering the above reviews researcher considered the following as the objectives of the present study-

1. To find out the difference between male and female students' attitudes toward online learning.

2. To find out the difference between urban and rural students' attitudes toward online learning.

3. To find out the difference between science and arts students' attitudes towards online learning.

4. To find out the difference between a high achiever and low achiever students' attitudes towards online learning.

Hypotheses of the Study

The researcher framed the following null hypothesis for the present study-

Ho.1: There exists no real difference between male and female students.

Ho.2: There exists no real difference between rural and urban students.

Ho.3: There exists no real difference between rural male and rural female students.

Ho.4: There exists no real difference between urban male and urban female students.

Ho.5: There exists no real difference between science and arts students.

Ho.6: There exists no real difference between science male and arts male students.

Ho.7: There exists no real difference between science female and arts female students.

Ho.8: There exists no real difference between a high achiever and low achiever students.

Definition of Key-terms

- **Attitude:**

Freeman defined attitude as a dispositional readiness to respond to certain situations persons or objects in a consistent manner which has been learned and has become a typical mode of response.

- **University students:**

Here university-level students refer to students who have passed undergraduate and are admitted to post-graduate.

- **Online learning:**

Benson and Conrad defined online learning as access to learning experience via the use of some technology.

Delimitation of the Study

The study lasted for seven months. The study included 241 students from rural and urban universities. Samples were collected from four districts of west Bengal. No financial support was taken from any institution for the study. In this study, data was collected through a questionnaire using the survey method.

Research Method

The descriptive Survey research method has been employed by the researcher for this present study.

Population & Sample

- Population: All students at the university level have been taken as population.
- Sample: Purposive sampling has been used as a sampling technique. 241 post-graduate students have been selected as sample

Research Tool

The researcher has developed a questionnaire to collect data from the study. A total of 34 questions have been included in the questionnaire. Both positive and negative questions have been kept and five answers have been given for each question. The validity of the research tool was ensured by expert.

Data Collection Procedures

After developing the research instrument, the researcher collected the data in April-May month of 2021 using google forms. This link was shared through WhatsApp, E-mail, etc. for collecting the data from sample students.

Results

Testing Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1: There exists no real difference between male and female students.

Table-1: 't'-test: Attitude towards online learning between Male & Female students.

Groups	Sample	Mean	S.D.	df	t-value
Male	93	89.6	10.8	239	0.89
Female	148	90.9	13		

Analysis: In the above table, the calculated 't' value was not significant; therefore, the corresponding null hypothesis (Ho.1) was accepted. As such, it could be inferred that there existed no significant difference between Male and Female students.

Hypothesis 2: There exists no real difference between rural and urban students.

Table-2: 't'-test: Attitude towards online learning between Rural & Urban students.

Groups	Sample	Mean	S.D.	df	t-value
Rural	159	90.1	11.5	236	0.13
Urban	82	90.8	12.9		

Analysis: In the above table, the calculated 't' value was not significant; therefore, the corresponding null hypothesis (Ho.2) was accepted. As such, it could be inferred that there existed no significant difference between Rural and Urban students.

Hypothesis 3: There exists no real difference between rural male and rural female students.

Table-3: 't'-test: Attitude towards online learning between Rural Male & Rural Female students.

Groups	Sample	Mean	S.D.	df	t-value
Rural Male	78	89.2	9.7	157	0.98
Rural Female	81	91.1	12.9		

Analysis: In the above table, the calculated 't' value was not significant; therefore, the corresponding null hypothesis (Ho.3) was accepted. As such, it could be inferred that there existed no significant difference between Rural Male and Rural Female students.

Hypothesis 4: There exists no real difference between urban male and urban female students.

Table-4: 't'-test: Attitude towards online learning between Urban Male and Urban Female students.

Groups	Sample	Mean	S.D.	df	t-value
Urban Male	15	90.7	11.9	80	0.03
Urban Female	67	90.8	13.2		

Analysis: In the above table, the calculated 't' value was not significant; therefore, the corresponding null hypothesis (Ho.4) was accepted. As such, it could be 25 inferred that there existed no significant difference between Urban Male and Urban Female students.

Hypothesis 5: There exists no real difference between science and arts students.

Table-5: 't'-test: Attitude towards online learning between Science and Arts students.

Groups	Sample	Mean	S.D.	df	t-value
Science	67	91.5	14.3	239	0.84
Arts	174	89.9	10.9		

Analysis: In the above table, the calculated 't' value was not significant; therefore, the corresponding null hypothesis (Ho.5) was accepted. As such, it could be inferred that there existed no significant difference between Science and Arts students.

Hypothesis 6: There exists no real difference between science male and arts male students.

Table -6: 't'- test: Attitude towards online learning between Science Male and Arts Male.

Groups	Sample	Mean	S.D.	df	t-value
Science Male	23	91	12.2	91	0.78
Arts Male	70	88.9	9.5		

Analysis: In the above table, the calculated 't' value was not significant; therefore, the corresponding null hypothesis (Ho.6) was accepted. As such, it could be inferred that there existed no significant difference between Science Male and Arts Male students.

Hypothesis 7: There exists no real difference between science female and arts female students.

Table-7: 't'-test: Attitude towards online learning between Science Female and Arts Female.

Groups	Sample	Mean	S.D.	df	t-vale
Science female	44	91.7	15.6	146	0.44
Arts female	104	90.6	11.7		

Analysis: In the above table, the calculated 't' value was not significant; therefore, the corresponding null hypothesis (Ho.7) was accepted. As such, it could be inferred that there existed no significant difference between Science Female and Arts Female students.

Hypothesis: There exists no real difference between high achiever and low achiever students.

Table -8: 't'-test: Attitude towards online learning between High Achiever and Low Achiever.

Groups	Sample	Mean	S.D.	df	t-value
High Achiever	210	89.5	11.4	239	2.54*
Low Achiever	31	96.6	13.8		

*Significant at 0.05 level.

Analysis: In the above table, the calculated 't' value was found to be significant for the rejection of the null hypothesis at 5% level of significance but not rejected at 1% level of significance. As such, it could be inferred that there existed a significant difference between high-achiever and low-achiever students.

Findings

- There existed no significant difference in the mean scores of attitudes towards online learning between male and female students where in higher mean scores were obtained by the female students than the male students.
- There existed no significant difference in the mean scores of attitudes towards online learning between rural and urban students whereas in higher mean scores were obtained by urban students than rural students.
- There existed no significant difference in the mean scores of attitudes towards online learning between rural male and rural female students whereas in higher mean scores were obtained by the rural female students than rural male students.
- There existed no significant difference in the mean scores of attitudes toward online learning between urban male and urban female students whereas in higher mean scores were obtained by urban female students than urban male students.
- There existed no significant difference in the mean scores of attitudes towards online learning between science and arts students where in higher mean scores were obtained by the science students than the arts students.
- There existed no significant difference in the mean scores of attitudes towards online learning between science male and arts male students where in higher mean scores were obtained by the science male students than the arts male students.
- There existed no significant difference in the mean scores of attitudes towards online learning between science female and arts female students where in higher mean scores were obtained by the science female students than the arts female students.
- There existed a significant difference in the mean scores of attitude towards online learning between a high achiever and low achiever where in, the higher mean scores were obtained by the low achiever than the high achiever.

Limitation

This study is especially useful in the current era. The researchers believe that this study measures the attitudes of students at the university level toward online learning. However, the researcher thinks that there are some limitations –

- The researcher selected the research work as a sample of university-level postgraduate students in Nadia, North 24 Parganas, and Burdwan district. The results of the study would have been better if samples had been collected from every district of West Bengal.
- The study did not find any information on vocational education students. The study would have been more effective if it had been available to vocational students in science & arts.
- Many students did not understand many of the test terms in the questionnaire that the researcher created. If the question papers were prepared by analyzing the probes, the examinees would understand better and the results of the research would be more effective. Despite the above errors, it can be said that the work of this research is of special significance in the judgment of the present age.

Conclusion

Looking at the attitude of university-level students towards online learning, we can conclude that female students have shown better positive attitudes towards online learning than male students. Rural students have a more positive attitude toward online learning than urban students. Science students have a more positive attitude towards online learning than arts students. Low-achiever students have a more positive attitude toward online learning than high-achiever students.

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