



A STUDY OF PROBLEMS AND OBSTACLES IN THE USE OF ICT TOOLS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC FROM THE TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVE AT HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL MOKOKCHUNG TOWN, NAGALAND.

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Abstract

For teachers all throughout the world, educating students through ICT efforts during the Pandemic was in fact a difficult challenge. Numerous national, state, and international ICT-driven initiatives have been implemented in the nation. The education sector has taken a proactive stance to make the best use of technology to reach every learner. The current study aims to determine the extent to which teachers use ICT tools in online classes during pandemics, identify the problems and difficulties they confront, and examine their attitudes about these technologies. The information was gathered from 8 Higher Secondary Schools in Mokokchung Town using a self-structured questionnaire. The study found that limited network connections, technical support, and a lack of necessary infrastructure for the intricate operation of ICT-enabled learning tools are the main concerns and obstacles from the viewpoints of teachers when transitioning from traditional teaching to virtual teaching. It was discovered that due to a lack of technological knowledge, teachers commonly fail to use effectively ICT tools during online classes. By counting frequencies, the information acquired with the aid of the questionnaire was tallied.

Key Words-ICT, Teacher's Perception, COVID-19

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study examines how teachers are adapting to using ICT during COVID-19. It identifies challenges and how they're using e-learning. Teachers recognize the need to pursue IT degrees to improve teaching skills and stay updated on tech advancements. This knowledge improves communication and 21st-century skills. The study offers useful insights for teachers and educational authorities on using ICT in teaching. It highlights the importance of communication with students and addressing online management issues. Integrating ICT into education can improve teaching materials and prepare teachers for ICT use in their pedagogy.

INTRODUCTION

The pandemic has forced the education sectors to shift dramatically to virtual and blended modes of teaching and learning using various Information and Communications Technology (ICT) tools and has radically accelerated the pace and urgency of various ongoing technology-driven educational initiatives. Teachers are now relying on various platforms to adopt new pedagogical methods to teach. Educational communities across the world are coming together and figuring out various ways to support Students and teachers with innovation platforms and strategies. The crisis has helped in the stimulation of innovation in the education field. India has also seen various ICT-led initiatives to reach out to everyone in such difficult times, including the most marginalized populations who may lack access to adequate health care, education, lack of access to devices and connectivity. There has been a monumental rise in adopting widespread use of Online tools like Zoom, Google, and mobile applications to facilitate communication with parents, telephone, television, and radio to try to reach every learner. This global crisis has reiterated the potential of ICT in enabling the goal of education access and quality for all children. Covid-19 has brought many pros and cons along with it. This pandemic has totally changed the working system of the Nagaland education sector. The classroom teaching methodology has been completely changed. Now teachers are teaching students with the help of internet access by sitting at their home place. However, teachers have to face many challenges to accomplish the objective of teaching and learning. Conducting online classes is itself a great challenge for teachers who are habitually conducting classroom teaching for many years in a state like Nagaland where not every student/teacher is well equipped with high-speed/internet and digital gadgets and is along these lines of suffering. Numerous advanced educational institutions in Nagaland are not equipped with digital facilities right now to cope with the sudden change from traditional education setup to the education system. Therefore, this study is expected to generate information on the teachers' perception of challenges integrating ICT in the Online teaching process during the pandemic in Mokokchung town.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

- To examine how much ICT Tools are being used by teachers in online classes during the pandemic.
- To comprehend the difficulties associated with implementing ICT Tools in online classes during the teaching process.
- To learn how teachers feel about using ICT Tools for online learning during the COVID-19 outbreak.
- To make recommendations based on how satisfied teachers are with online instruction.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

APPS/PLATFORMS USED BY TEACHERS

SL.NO	Particulars	No of respondent		Total	%	
		Yes	No		Yes	No
1	Zoom	55	43	98	56.1	40
2	WhatsApp	72	26	98	73.4	26.9
3	Google Meet	47	51	98	47.9	52
4	Google Classroom	39	59	98	39.9	60
5	Others	20	78	98	20	79

Out of 98 respondents, the data in the table above reveals that 56 percent of respondents used Zoom, 73.4% used WhatsApp, 47.9% used Google Meet, 39.9% used Google Classroom, and 20% used Skype or Webex application to deliver their lectures to students.

DEVICE USED FOR ONLINE CLASSES

SL.NO	ICT devices used by teachers	Percentage
1	Laptops	9%
2	Mobile phone	85%
3	Tablets	1%

According to the aforementioned data, 9% used laptops, 85% used mobile phones, and 1% used tablets. Thus, the study reveals that the majority of teachers used mobile phones for online classes.

METHODS USED FOR CONDUCTING ONLINE CLASSES

SL.NO	Particulars	No of respondents	%
1	Video conferencing	47	47.9
2	Microsoft PPT/Word/Excel	25	25.5
3	Google slides	18	18.4
4	Pre-recorded videos	3	3.1
5	Others	5	5.1
	Total	98	100

Out of 98 respondents, 47.9% used video conferencing, 25.5% used Microsoft PowerPoint/Word/Excel, 18.4% used Google Slides, 3.1% used pre-recorded videos, and 5.1% used other techniques including whiteboards. In online classes, video conferencing was proven to be the most popular technique.

DIFFICULT TO REACH STUDENTS IN REMOTE AREAS

Particular	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
No of respondents	48	30	10	6	4	98
%	48.9	31	10	6.1	4	100

In accordance with the aforementioned statistics, 48.9% of respondents strongly agreed, 31% agreed, and 10% were unsure about their position. Reaching students in rural locations is not difficult, according to 10.1% of respondents.

Teaching students in isolated places is challenging for 79.9% of the survey participants. The main challenges that teachers have while attempting to interact with pupils in distant places online include poor connectivity, a lack of internet services, a lack of electricity, and a lack of a computer.

PROBLEMS OF ELECTRICITY, INTERNET CONNECTIVITY

Out of	Particular	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total	98
No of respondents	15	43	20	12	8	98		
%	15.3	43.8	20.4	12.3	8.2	100		

respondents, 15.3% strongly agreed, 43.8% agreed, 20.4% neither agreed nor disagreed, 12.3% disagreed, and 8.2% strongly disagreed that the problem of electricity and internet connectivity was a challenge in teaching online classes.

59.1% of those surveyed reported having trouble getting power and connecting to the internet while instructing online. Unexpected power outages and unclear speech quality during online classes have an impact on students' attention as well as learning. 20.5% of the respondents had no issues with energy or the internet.

TEACHER'S PERCEPTION OF ONLINE TEACHING/LEARNING

SL.NO	Variables	Percentage	
		Yes	No
1.	I like to have proper guidance/ training on how to conduct online teaching sessions	73%	27%
2.	Online tools are easy to use for teaching	32.50%	67.50%
3.	Do you find it difficult to stick to a study schedule for online teaching?	53%	47%
4.	Difficult to get feedback from the students.	37.50%	42.50%
5.	Do you think that online learning is a good solution for a pandemic period?	82%	12%
6.	Online sessions take more time than face-to-face sessions	37.50%	62.50%
7.	My home environment is not suitable to conduct online classes	62.50%	37.50%
8	Would you like to take an online course in the future?	50%	50%

Since they lack sufficient instructions on how to conduct online sessions, the majority of the teachers feel that they need the training to handle ICT tools. 73% of the respondents need proper guidance/training on how to conduct online class. 53% of respondents said it was difficult for them to maintain an online learning schedule. The majority of Online education is a good option during a pandemic, according to 82% of respondents. For 62.50% Of the teachers their home environment is not congenial to conduct online classes. 62.50% of respondents said that online sessions took longer than in-person ones. While the majority of teachers prefer to teach using the traditional way, 50% of respondents said they would be interested in taking online courses in the future.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. Nearly all teachers switched from classroom instruction to online teaching as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.
2. Zoom, Google Meet, WhatsApp, and Google Classroom were the main learning apps utilized by respondents as their platforms for conducting online lessons.
3. The majority of teachers 85 % used mobile phones as a means of communication with students because they found them to be simple to use.
4. According to 81.8% of the respondents, teaching students online is best done using video-based tools including video conferencing, Microsoft PowerPoint, Word, Excel, and Google Slides.
5. According to 79.9% of the respondents, teaching kids living in remote places was difficult. limited accessibility.
6. According to 82.6% of respondents, it is challenging to encourage students in online teaching classes due to the limited face-to-face interaction opportunities, the students' challenging behavior, and the difficulty comprehending their difficulties. Of the majority in online instruction, 82.6% of the respondents said it was difficult to monitor students' progress.
8. During the course of teaching in online classrooms, 69.1% of respondents discovered an internet connectivity issue. Due to poor internet service during online lessons caused by sudden power outages, students' motivation and learning are regularly affected. lessons are frequently interrupted.
10. According to 50% of respondents, one of the biggest difficulties in online education is the lack of motivation among online students.
11. The practical subject in the online class was difficult to teach, according to 72.4% of the respondents. They said that using a blackboard during class was a simple way to explain concepts to students.
12. The majority of respondents (75.5%) stated that maintaining discipline is a challenge they encounter when enrolled in online classes.
14. When it comes to online teaching methods, 36.7% of respondents are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

Suggestions-

- 1 Teachers must have access to applications and learning platforms as well as basic ICT tools.
2. Administration must be aware of the availability of digital tools and have the appropriate support systems in place because practically all ICT tools require a high-quality internet connection and electricity to function.
3. Parents must take a more active role in their children's education and provide them with the necessary technology.
4. Participants including the Department of Education, Department of Basic Education, and others should make a deliberate effort to ensure that parents are aware of online learning in order to ensure that they look after their children when they are working from home.
- 5 By providing appropriate resources in the form of internet access and ICT gadgets, the government should rescue the students whose parents are unable to pay for them or are destitute.

Conclusion-

For the majority of the teachers, the experience of online teaching was pleasant. They felt that though initially shifting to online learning was a herculean task but as the academic transactions progressed, they began to enjoy the experience of taking classes from home. Teachers are interested in using technology in education, but face challenges due to being used to traditional teaching methods. Reliable internet access, teaching numerical subjects, and motivating students are the main obstacles. Online courses need an attractive design and should focus on developing critical thinking skills. Understanding how teachers perceive new innovations and their impact on teaching and learning is crucial for the successful adoption of new technologies. Teachers are eager to learn and utilize new resources to their fullest potential, even after mastering them. During these challenging times of online teaching, it is essential for both instructors and students to maintain good physical health and positive attitudes amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Educational institutions should ensure that teachers receive the necessary training on learning software in order to instruct and mentor students effectively and efficiently.

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