ATTITUDE OF STUDENTS TOWARDS E-LEARNING DURING COVID-19: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN REGULAR STUDENTS AND DISTANCE LEARNERS IN HALDIA

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Abstract

Lockdown and social distancing measures due to the COVID-19 pandemic have led to closures of schools, training institutes and higher education facilities in most countries. The education system and the educators have adopted "Education in Emergency". While adapting to the new changes, staff and student readiness needs to be gauged and supported accordingly. The learners with a fixed mindset find it difficult to adapt and adjust, whereas the learners with a growth mindset quickly adapt to a new learning environment. Distance learning traditionally has focused on nontraditional students, such as full-time workers, military personnel, and nonresidents or individuals in remote regions who are unable to attend classroom lectures. Student attitude towards E learning from the study would provide important information regarding their perception towards e learning so as to improve future learning strategies and its need for their academic development in such a time of crisis. More researches are needed to know the attitude of the students in different parts of the country. It was with this back ground that an attempt was made to study the attitude of students towards eLearning during Pandemic of COVID 19 with reference to Haldia. Student's attitude towards e learning in education has been an increasing concern.

Index Terms - distance learners,covid 19, Student's attitude

Introduction:

The changes to teaching and learning at colleges and universities that many of us thought would last a few weeks but it turned into more than a 2 year's worth of disruptions. Online learning can be termed as a tool that can make the teaching–learning process more student-centered, more innovative, and even more flexible. The absence from the educational environment can affect the students' emotions towards education and school attendance. In this study, the investigator aimed to evaluate the Student attitude towards E learning during the COVID-19 pandemic in Haldia. **A report by the United Nation** Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) showed that until April 2020, school functions were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and almost 196 countries experienced national wide closure of schools, subsequently affecting almost 1.6 billion young learners . Furthermore, the Ministry of Health in Iran ordered a country wide closure of schools on March 2020 as a preventive measure in order to reduce the risk of viral transmission among the students and staff.

Rapid developments in technology have made distance education easy (McBrien et al., 2009). "Most of the terms (online learning, open learning, web-based learning, computer-mediated learning, blended learning, m-learning, for ex.) have in common the ability to use a computer connected to a network, that offers the possibility to learn from anywhere, anytime, in any rhythm, with any means" (Cojocariu et al., 2014).Online learning can be termed as a tool that can {*6 Journal of Educational Technology Systems 49(1)*} make the teaching–learning process more student-centered, more innovative, and even more flexible. Online learning is defined as "learning experiences in synchronous or asynchronous environments using different devices (e.g., mobile phones, laptops, etc.) with internet access. In these environments, students can be anywhere (independent) to learn and interact with instructors and other students" (Singh & Thurman, 2019). The synchronous learning environment is structured in the sense that students attend live lectures, there are real-time interactions between educators and learners, and there is a possibility of instant feedback, whereas asynchronous learning environments are not properly structured..*Nusrat Zerin Anny in his study found* Students and teachers' attitudes towards shifting to an entirely online learning environment were assessed due to COVID-19; investigate the students' and teachers' attitudes towards online learning during the COVID-19 situation in Bangladeshi Government Colleges. Findings revealed that cost and time-effectiveness, safety, convenience, and improved participation were the most frequently cited positive aspects of the online learning experience, while distraction and reduced focus, heavy workload, problems with technology and the internet, lack of ICT knowledge, and poor network infrastructure, limited availability of educational resources, low attendance of learners, uncooperative learners and insufficient support from instructors and colleagues were the most recurrent negative aspects. Research undertaken in the area of attitude and attitude formation shows that attitudes and beliefs are linked, and attitudes and behaviors are linked; moreover, attitudes are essentially divided into likes and dislikes (Siragusa & Dixon, 2008). With the broad expansion of ICT in education during the last decade, many research studies have explored the attitudes of users (educators and students) towards the integration of ICT in education (Gasaymeh, 2009; Mishra & Panda, 2007; Wen & Shih, 2008).This study will reflect the attitude students in higher education towards online classes in India with a special reference to Haldia.

Delimitation of the study:

The study will be confined to the following area, the students of Haldia, will be selected for the study. Selected students are from regular colleges and distance learners of Haldia. The study will be further delimited to 200 students of colleges and distance learners from IGNOU and NSOU in Haldia. The study will be further delimited to the male and female students.

Design of the Study: Descriptive Design incorporated with survey technique will be used for the present study. Scientific methods are used in the research to find out the truths and to achieve the knowledge. Human being has curiosity about the happenings around him. To satisfy this curiosity and to get the knowledge he uses his sense organs. The achieved knowledge is systematically collected and arranged by research method

Population and sample:

The population of the study will be all from Haldia. The sample will be stratified random sample constituting with 200 numbers of students from different colleges in Haldia and from IGNOU, NSOU study centers. To conduct this study the investigator has to select 100 regular student and 100 distance learners.

Variables of the Study:

Variable of the study has been identified as the following Independent variable e learning and Dependent variable attitude of the student's towards e-learning in terms of regular and distance learners.

Tools and techniques:

In the present study the below mentioned tools will be used for collection of data from Haldia, investigators developed five point attitude scale to collect data from students about. The questionnaire was prepared under the of guidance supervisor. The tool construction procedure consists of development of items, tryout of the item, and final selection of items, blueprint of the scale, validity and reliability of items. The construction of the scale was started with careful planning involves consideration of the characteristics of the population time cost and sources. Length of the Scale: 10 numbers of statements were intended to retain in the final form of the questionnaire keeping in mind that the number of favorable and unfavorable attitude

approximately in equal number. In total there were 18 statements were collected for this issue. A blue print was made considering dimensions according to the objective of the study as to find the attitude of students on online classes in pandemic.

The available conceptual literature were studied and five point attitude scale is formed to measure students attitude towards e learning during pandemic, in total 18 number of questions were formed. In the draft there were seven favorable 8 and 9 unfavorable statements out of 18 only 10 ten numbers of questions were kept after testing reliability and validity. The available conceptual literature were studied and five point attitude scale is formed to measure students attitude towards online classes during pandemic, there total 10 ten numbers of questions were kept after testing reliability and validity as most favorable response, possible favorable, undecided and neutral, unfavorable,mostunfavorable.

Analysis and interpretation:

In this present study the investigator has collected required data from various sources and systematically arranged and analyzed applying statistical technique and the outcomes are graphically represented. In the present study the investigator has collected data from 100 numbers of students to examine the student's attitude towards online classes during pandemic situation in Haldia.

The researcher obtained the scores of regular student's attitude and distance learners attitude, result is reflected in the given table below.

Attitude Score	Regula Student	Distance	Male	Female
41-50	20	37	31	32
31-40	37	17	28	25
21-30	15	15	19	20
11-.20	10	18	19	17
1-.10	18	13	3	6

Regular students and Distance Learners attitude towards e learning during pandemic
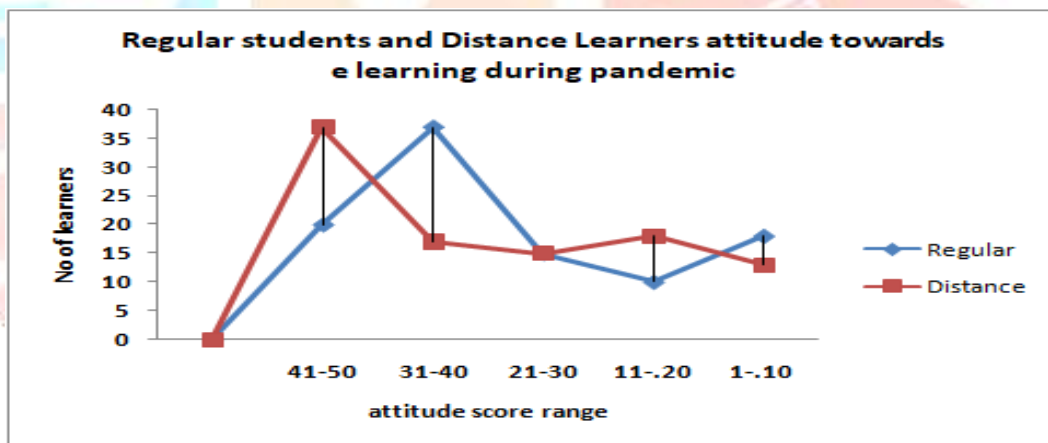
Item wise responses of Regular and Distance learners were given in the table below. The attitude of the learners irrespective of their gender, race we have examined the regular and distance learner's attitude.

male vs female students attitudes towards e learning during pendamic
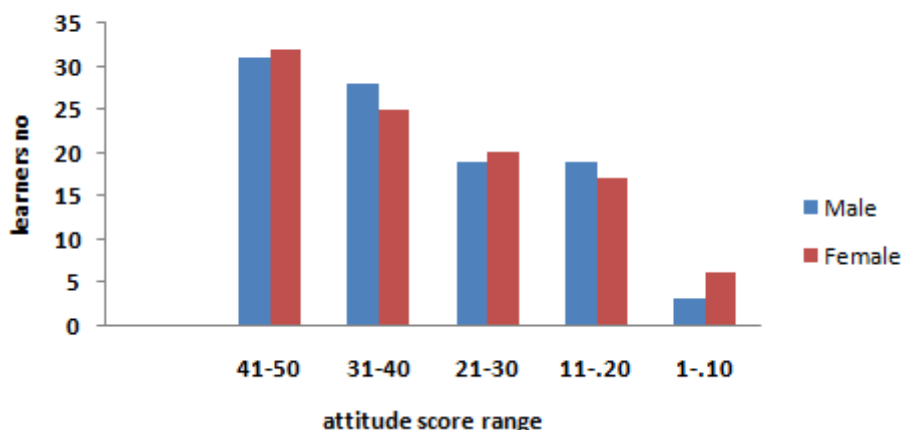
To find and compare attitudes of students towards online classes between male and female students of Haldia it reveals that 3% male students and 5% female scores within the range 100-90, 8% male students and 8 % female scores within the range 90-80, 23% male students and 22% female scores 80-70, 8% male students and 7% female scores range 70-60, 4% male students and 5% female scores range 60-50, 2% male students and 2% female scores in the range 50-40, 2% male students and 1% female scores in the range 40-30. 92%male from the total respondent's scores found to obtain favorable attitude towards online classes instead of 94% female. Females having 2% more favorable attitude towards online classes in Haldia as Haldia being a industrial city there is plenty of power supply and internet support. From the calculation of row data we obtained the mean, median, mode, correlation and p value, the calculated p value is 0.368 which is greater than 0.05, hence the hypothesis is accepted, there is no significant difference exits in students' attitude towards online classes in male and female students of Haldia

Discussion:

It has been observed that very less percentage of students disagreed that online classes are not feasible for all, only 4% respondents disagreed ,6% strongly disagreed ,8% undecided,20% agreed and 60% strongly agreed,majorit of the respondents found to be agree with the statement that online classes are not feasible for all. From the above table and diagram it is observed Online classes lack face-to-face communication between the learner and the educator 20% agreed and 60% strongly agreed, majority of the respondents found to be agreeing with the statement. It is also observed that for the statement Online classes reduces social and cultural interaction among the learners 30% agreed and 40% strongly agreed, majority of the respondents found to be agreeing with the statement. In case of the statement Online classes is cost-effective as it reduces commuting and other costs involved it is found Strongly agree 8%,Agree 42%,Disagree 8% and strongly disagree 12% where as undecided 30%. For the statement the Online classes reduces geographic location constraint in selecting the learning option(s)"Strongly agree 6%,Agree60%,Disagree 4% Strongly Disagree 4% and undecided 26%.   The Table further reveals that Strongly agree 60%, Agree20%,Disagree 6% Strongly Disagree 6% and undecided 8% for the statement Online classes provides efficient performance monitoring. Similarly, the above Table also indicates that from the total respondents Strongly agree 50%, Agree30%,Disagree 4% Strongly Disagree 6% and undecided 10%Online classes gives access to greater resources. Regarding the statement Online classes Lack of technical resources it is found that Strongly agree 60%, Agree20%, Disagree 6% Strongly Disagree 6% and undecided 8%Nearly 50% of the population disagree that Online classes Not able to reach out to all the students instead of 20% undecided   It has been found from the observation that 60% of population strongly agreed that online classes reduces social and cultural interaction among the learners and only7 6% strongly disagreed with the statement.

Conclusion:

The study is a new approach in the field of education in the industrial city Haldia, which will give us a new path parents and teachers of the locality. The education system has the tool for solution of every problem in the family and society. One of the most significant worldwide transformations after Covid-19 in education is the affected student's attitude towards online classes and guardians perceptions. The study also reveals its finding and helps the stake holders of education in new aspects.

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