Students' Perception And Preferences For Online Education: A Study of Mid-West University School of Management (Musom), Nepal

Irsad Ahamad Iraki

Assistant Professor at Mid-West University School of Management working as a Lecturer of General Management.

ABSTRACT	ARTICLE DETAILS
Background: Due to the crucial nature of education, extended disruptions to students' learning resources are impossible. Despite these challenges, individuals should be able to succeed academically. Most online educational institutions fail to provide high-quality education. The quality of learning is directly affected by content design and execution. Recognizing and overcoming hurdles and curating online content are crucial to effective learning. This level of online teaching has never been attempted in Nepal, making the study even more significant. Practical experience is highly valued in the management curriculum, hence its adaptability for online learning is crucial to the success of management education. This study explored Nepali management students' views on online education's structure and character.	**Published On:** 6 January 2025
Methodology: This research was descriptive and cross-sectional as it aimed to capture the perceptions and preferences of management students at a single point of time, i.e., after the lockdown period was over.	
Implications for research: This research is crucial for management education institutes for two reasons. First, the unusual COVID-19 lockout left institutes little time to prepare their courses for online distribution. Second, this work will inform future research. Online education can benefit immensely from student feedback and ideas. The COVID-19 pandemic will not end the use of in-person lectures, which will enhance online learning. Due to uncertainties about reinfection length and likelihood, people may isolate themselves more. To effectively include online learning, educational institutions worldwide must be ready to adapt their teaching methods. This study may assist us choose an online platform's learning environment that encourages success and better understand students' online education preferences.	
Conclusions: Due to the new coronavirus, online learning has become the primary schooling method. More schools are going online to stay up with the curriculum. It may be premature to predict how teachers and students will handle online learning when they discover constraints and adjust to overcome them. Still, we've tried to capture teachers' and students' critical perspectives and readiness. This study found that most students liked online courses after Corona.	
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KEYWORDS: Pandemic, COVID-19, online classes.	

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The World Health Organization designated COVID-19 as a global health emergency of international concern on January 30, 2020. On March 11, 2020, a further designation of "pandemic" was applied. A considerable portion of the economy, including academia, has been impacted by COVID-19. Much like many other occurrences in life, COVID-19 has had a profound impact on educational institutions, instructors, and students across the globe. As a result, educational systems worldwide were impacted.

Academic schedules were in jeopardy due to the global closure of educational institutions. In order to sustain academic operations, an overwhelming proportion of academic establishments have shifted their focus towards online teaching and learning platforms. However, there remain numerous unresolved issues pertaining to the preparedness, design, and effectiveness of e-learning,

specifically in the context of a developing country such as Nepal, where technical constraints such as the suitability of devices and the availability of bandwidth posed significant barriers. As a quick but inadequate solution to the crisis, our educational system has resorted to online learning to sustain the teaching and learning processes within institutions of higher education.

Social isolation and lockdown were the only methods that effectively halted the spread of the pandemic by obstructing its cycle. In an effort to prevent the transmission of the fatal disease, which affected 73.8% of students, the majority of schools were compelled to close (UNESCO, 2020). Due to the undetermined duration of the closure of universities and colleges, both instructors and students were exploring alternative methods to complete courses within the designated academic calendar time. Although these limitations have undeniably caused inconvenience, they have also inspired innovative digital classroom interventions. This was a silver lining in light of the sluggish rate at which educational institutions were undergoing reform, their continued use of lecture-based teaching methods that date back millennia, entrenched institutional biases, and obsolete classrooms. COVID-19 has nonetheless compelled academic institutions across the globe to explore novel and innovative approaches with short lead periods. Present-day educational activities at the majority of colleges and universities are conducted online via applications such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Google Meet, and others.

The affected schools are trying to resume teaching, but digital access and efficiency determine learning quality. Motivation, pleasure, and interaction differ in online and traditional courses (Bignoux & Sund, 2018). Online teaching and learning is simplified by the Community of Inquiry (COI) paradigm (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2001). The COI framework says web-based training works by building a learner group. Through social, cognitive, and teaching presence, this group learns. Adam et al. (2012) concluded that well-designed online classes were as effective as face-to-face ones. These findings show that well-designed online learning can replace classroom learning.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this study is to evaluate the difficulties encountered by students during online sessions amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic at the Mid-West University School of Management. The focus is mostly on individuals and communities with limited financial resources who are particularly susceptible to the effects of the crisis. The study also aims to achieve other specific objectives:

    a. To assess the students' perception of e-learning during the COVID-19 lockdown phase.
    b. To examine the students' preferences for e-learning during the COVID-19 lockdown phase.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions are the focus of the study:

    i. What is the student's perception of e-learning during the COVID-19 lockdown phase?
    ii. What are the students' preferences for e-learning during the COVID-19 lockdown phase?

CONCERNS OF THE INQUIRY

It is evident that this lethal infection will persist for an extended period of time. The global community has encountered the onset of the second surge of COVID, and specialists anticipate the occurrence of numerous more surges with differing degrees of peril to humanity. This necessitates global acceptance of the presence of COVID as a typical occurrence and the establishment of localized strategies for dealing with it.

Due to the critical character of the education sector, prolonged disruptions to students' access to learning resources are not feasible. Despite these arduous circumstances, they ought to be capable of completing their academic pursuits. The majority of institutions that have implemented online platforms for teaching and learning have fallen short in delivering a high-quality education to their students. The fundamental concern pertains to the calibre of learning, as this is directly influenced by the design and execution of the content. Effective learning depends on the degree to which barriers are recognized and overcome, as well as the degree to which content is curated for the online environment. Given that this magnitude of online education has never been attempted in Nepal before, the study is even more significant. Furthermore, practical experience is highly valued in the management curriculum; therefore, its suitability for an online environment is a pivotal determinant of the overall success of the management education sector. In this study, we have examined the perspectives of Nepali management students regarding the nature and structure of online education. The findings of this investigation hold considerable importance for academic institutions.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research is of utmost importance for management education institutions for two reasons. Firstly, the institutes were not given enough time to prepare their courses for online delivery because of the unprecedented lockdown imposed to manage COVID-19. Secondly, the results of this study will guide future research in this field. When seen in this light, online education can benefit greatly from the incorporation of student feedback and suggestions.

Second, while traditional in-person lectures will continue to complement online learning, the former will remain in place even after the COVID-19 pandemic has passed. People may start isolating themselves more frequently due to the uncertainty around the length and likelihood of reinfection. Because of this, educational institutions around the world need to be prepared to change the way they teach in order to incorporate online learning more fully. The results of this study might provide valuable information for selecting an online platform's learning environment that promotes successful learning, which could help us better understand students' perspectives and preferences for online education. This study hold the importance of executing classes through online platforms during the adverse times like COVID.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

With the aid of contemporary technical progress, we are able to employ diverse methodologies in the creation of online content. In order to develop online courses that are effective and efficient, it is imperative to consider the preferences and perceptions of the learners. The learner's preference is contingent upon their inclination to participate in collaborative learning and the factors influencing their readiness for online education. This section provides a comprehensive analysis of pertinent literature.

The concept of readiness for online learning was initially developed by Warner, Christie, and Choy (1998) in Australia's vocational education and training sector. The researchers employed three primary criteria to assess students' readiness for online learning: self-directed study skills, a preference for online education over traditional classroom settings, and proficiency and confidence in utilising electronic communication and internet-based platforms for learning. Several studies, such as the one conducted by McVay (2001), expanded on the idea by developing a 13-item measure to assess student behaviour and attitudes as predictors. Smith, Murphy, and Mahoney (2003) conducted an exploratory study to evaluate M McVay's (2001) online readiness questionnaire. The study identified two key factors: "ease with e-learning" and "self-management of learning." Several following research were done to operationalize the concept of online learning readiness, as evidenced by the works of Evans (2000) and Smith (2005). Various elements that influence students' readiness for online learning have been suggested by researchers. These factors encompass self-directed learning (Gugliemino, 1977; Garrison, 1997; Lin & Hsieh, 2001), motivation for learning (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000; Fairchild et al., 2005), learner control (Hannafin, 1984), computer and internet self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1997; Compeau & Higgins, 1995; Tsai & Lin, 2004; Hung et al., 2010), and online communication self-efficacy (Palloff & Pratt, 1999; McVay, 2001; Ropper, 2007).

Any effort to make online education more efficient must take users' viewpoints into account. A number of research have indicated that students have mixed feelings on online learning. Students' perceptions of their online classes are significantly impacted by the way their instructors communicate with them, according to multiple studies. Consistency in course design (Swan, et.al., 2000), the capability of the interaction with course instructors to promote critical thinking ability and information processing (Duffy, Dueber, & Hawley, 1998; Picciano, 2002; Hay et al., 2004), rate of interactivity in the online setting (Arbaugh, 2000; Hay et al., 2004); the extent of instructional emphasis on learning through interaction, the flexibility of online learning (Chizmar & Walbert, 1999; McCall, 2002; National Centre for Vocational Education Research, 2002; Petrides, 2002; Kim, Liu, & Bonk, 2005), chances of engaging with teachers and peers in online learning settings (Wise et al., 2004; Kim, Liu, & Bonk, 2005), social presence (Kim et al., 2005; Jonnasen, 2002), academic self-concept ((Lim, Morris, & Kupritz, 2007), competenc Therefore, for an online class to be successful, it needs to include well-organized material, knowledgeable teachers, cutting-edge tools, and clear directions and feedback (Gilbert, 2015; Sun & Chen, 2016).

Several issues with online education were also highlighted in the research. Problems with responding quickly (Hara & Kling, 1999; Petrides, 2002; Vonderwell, 2003), doubting the supposed expertise of peers (Petrides, 2002), feeling alone or disconnected (Woods, 2002; Vonderwell, 2003; Lin & Zane, 2005), difficulties in working with classmates, technical difficulties (Piccoli, Ahmad, & Ives, 2001; Song et.al., 2004), problems with instructors (Muilenberg & Berge, 2005), and higher rates of student attrition (Frankola, 2001; Ryan, 2001; (Laine, 2003). Some of the drawbacks of online learning include the fact that students need to be more self-disciplined, have stronger writing skills, and be more motivated to learn on their own time (Golladay, Prybutok, & Huff, 2000; Serwatka, 2003).

Researchers have compared the efficacy of online or web-based tutorials to that of traditional classroom training. The nature of online interactions, as compared to those in traditional classrooms, exhibits significant variations, and the consequences of engaging in either setting can directly impact the attitudes of both students and instructors. The studies conducted a comparative analysis of students' and teachers' perceptions of online learning experiences in contrast to traditional classroom experiences. The findings revealed contradictory outcomes, hence highlighting the need for more investigation. Some areas of study in this field include the analysis of the nature and quantity of online interactions (Moore & Kearsley, 1995), the flexibility and accessibility of web-based instructions (Navarro & Shoemaker, 2000), the skills, motivations, time, and perception of both learners and instructors (Yong & Wang, 1996; Shih, Ingebritsen, Pleasants, Flickinger & Brown, 1998; McIsaac, Blocher, Mahesh & Vrasidas, 1999; White, 2004), and whether these aspects are connected to academic achievement (Brewer & Erikson, 1997). These studies also confirmed that an online course can be just as effective as a traditional course if it is properly designed (Nguyen, 2015). There was no noticeable

distinction in terms of students' satisfaction and academic performance between online learning and face-to-face classes (Hara & Kling, 1999).

Considering student voices as crucial to online learning, Anwar (2020) carried out a research study. Finding out how well online learning worked and what difficulties Pakistani college students encountered were the main goals of the study. A total of 126 undergraduates and 62 graduate students made up the sample size for this study. While he acknowledged that online education does assist educate people about health issues, he also said that it is not a replacement for traditional classroom instruction. Even though the majority of students had the necessary technology to participate in online lectures, those who took the survey still rated traditional classroom instruction as superior.

A study on the pros, cons, opportunities, and threats of online education during the COVID-19 epidemic was carried out by Shivangi (2020). The principal benefit of online learning, in her opinion, was the time flexibility it provided. Concurrently, it found that strong IT infrastructure is a prerequisite for online learning and that technical issues were the biggest downside of online learning.

A study with a sample size of 307 students was carried out by Muthuprasad and Jha (2020) to investigate the perception and preference of online learning among agricultural students. The majority of students indicated a need for online education in order to finish the course. The majority of them also mentioned smartphones as a means of accessing online classes.

METHODS

An online survey was conducted among students taking online courses at MUSOM during the lockdown period. A total of 170 participants, consisting of both graduate and undergraduate students, were selected for data collection. Convenience selection approaches was employed to ensure that the sample accurately represents the educational program and gender distribution.

Demographic data was gathered, followed by learners' preferences, perceptions, benefits, limitations, and recommendations. The statements were formulated through a comprehensive examination of literature and consultation with specialists to mitigate any potential bias from the researchers. To evaluate and condense the perception, statements were assessed using a five-point likert scale, with a rating of five indicating the highest level of effectiveness and a rating of one indicating the lowest level of effectiveness. The data was summarized by calculating the frequency and percentage for most of the questions.

RESULTS

Findings from the analysis of quantitative data are presented below:

7.1 Demographic details of the respondents.
Table 1: Demographic details of the respondents

Demographic Variables		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	82	48.2
	Female	88	51.8
Place of residence during COVID	Urban	115	67.6
	Rural	55	32.4
Program	MBA	28	16.5
	BBA	142	83.5

The demographic information include the respondents' gender, place of residence, and the programme they attended. The number of female respondents, 88 (51.8%), exceeds the number of male respondents, 82 (48.2%). Out of all the participants, 115 individuals (67.6%) were from urban areas, whereas 55 individuals (32.4%) came from rural locations. Throughout the study period, 16.5% of the total participants were enrolled in the MBA program, while the remaining 83.5% were enrolled in the BBA program.

7.2 Basic information regarding online classes
Table 2: Basic information regarding online classes

Statements		Frequency	Percent
Did you attend any online courses earlier (before COVID-19)?	Yes	89	52.4
	No	81	47.6
Whether your college has begun online classes in response to the COVID-19 pandemic?	Yes	165	97
	No	5	3
The device you used to attend online classes	Laptop	31	18.2

	Smartphone	75	44.1
	Tablet	1	0.6
	Both laptop and smartphone	63	37.1
Suggestions to meet the COVID situation	Assignments and reading materials can be provided	71	41.8
	The curriculum schedule can be suspended	2	1.2
	Managing with online classes	97	57.1

Out of the individuals surveyed, only 89 (52.4%) had previous exposure to online classes, whilst 81 (47.6%) had no prior contact with them. However, in accordance with the opinions of 97% of participants, the college has initiated online courses as a result of the pandemic. When questioned about their approach to managing the curriculum within the COVID-19 pandemic, a majority of respondents (57.1%) expressed that online classes might serve as a viable alternative to traditional classroom instruction in order to cover the course content. Conversely, 41.8% of students expressed a preference for teachers to offer assignments and reading materials. Merely a small fraction (1.2%) expressed a desire for the curriculum timetable to be halted until the circumstances returned to normal. The 41.8% of respondents who opposed online classes cited two main reasons: difficulty concentrating on the subject due to dread of the pandemic, and technological constraints that hindered their online learning experience. In terms of the device utilized for online classes, 44.1% of respondents employed smartphones, while 37.1% possessed both smartphones and laptops, and 18.2% relied on laptops for online classes. This data suggests that the availability of devices was not a significant concern.

Table 3: Structure of online classes

	Statements	Frequency	Percent
Format of online class	Live online classes	53	31.2
	Live classes that were recorded and kept in LMS	112	65.9
	Sending reading materials through email	5	2.9
Nature of Video content	Course instructors should use PowerPoint	39	22.9
	Course instructors should teach using virtual whiteboard	16	9.4
	Both PowerPoint and whiteboard should be used	71	41.8
	Lectures only	11	6.5
	As per the convenience and requirement	33	19.4
Nature of course material	Reading material was sufficient	48	28.2
	Video content supplemented with reading material	112	65.9
	Video content is sufficient	10	5.9

The majority of students (65.9%) favored live sessions that were recorded and posted on the Learning Management System (LMS). In contrast, 31.2% of respondents chose live online classes, and a small percentage (2.9%) preferred only relying on reading materials. The majority of participants express a preference for both recorded and live classes that offer the option of being recorded, as it allows for greater flexibility in their learning process. Regarding the nature of reading materials, the majority of respondents (65.9%) expressed a preference for video content accompanied by supplementary reading materials. The majority of participants (41.8%) expressed a preference for the instructor to utilize PowerPoint presentations and whiteboards for teaching.

Table 4: Frequency and duration of online classes

Statements		Frequency	Percent
The appropriate frequency of online classes in a week to ensure their effectiveness	6 days/week	84	49.4
	5 days/week	48	28.2
	4 days/week	25	14.7
	3 days/week	13	7.6
Duration of each class	30 minutes	10	5.9
	45 minutes	61	35.9

	60 minutes	85	50
	More than 60 minutes	14	8.2
Expectations from the course instructor to conduct the classes	As per the schedule to complete the syllabus	129	75.9
	Daily	35	20.6
	Once in a week	1	0.6
	Twice in a week	5	2.9
How much time would you like to spend in a day for online classes?	2-4 hours	112	65.9
	4-6 hours	35	20.6
	6-8 hours	3	1.8
	Less than 2 hours	20	11.8
How much time do you need as a break between two online classes?	10 min	48	28.2
	15 min	86	50.6
	Less than 10 min	14	8.2
	More than 15 min	22	12.9

Approximately 40.9% of the participants expressed a desire for online lessons to be conducted for a duration of 6 days per week, while 50% of the respondents indicated a preference for each class to last for 60 minutes. Approximately 75.9% of students anticipated that professors will adhere to the syllabus and complete it according to the predetermined timetable. Approximately 65.9% of the participants expressed a preference for dedicating 2 to 4 hours per day to an online lesson, with a desired break of 15 minutes between each class.

Table 5: Plans and criteria for evaluation

Attributes		Frequency	Percent
Do you feel a quiz of 5-10 min during each class is necessary to achieve better?	Yes	153	90
	No	17	10
Do you feel assignments at the end of every class are necessary to achieve effective learning?	Yes	152	89.4
	No	18	10.6
Deadline for submitting assignments	1 day	13	7.6
	2-3 days	90	52.9
	1 week	44	25.9
	Before the next scheduled class	23	13.5
Do you like to attend online exams?	Yes	119	70
	No	51	30
Nature of Online Exams	Subjective	9	5.3
	Objective	13	7.6
	Both	97	57.1

The majority of students (90%) indicated a preference for quizzes, while 89.4% favored assignments, as they believe both methods are most helpful for learning when administered at the end of each class. Approximately 53% of the participants expressed the opinion that a period of 2-3 days should be allocated for the submission of their tasks. Remarkably, 70% of the participants expressed a desire to participate in online examinations, while approximately 57% indicated a preference for both objective and subjective assessment formats.

Table 6: Respondent's perception towards online learning

Statements	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	S.D
I prefer my online courses as they are very structured with set due dates similar to face-to-face courses	25.9 %	31.8%	28.8%	11.2%	2.4%	2.32	1.052
Online classes help me comprehend the course materials compared to Classroom learning	21.8%	36.5%	28.2%	10.6%	2.9%	2.36	1.030

Online environment makes it easier for me to communicate with my instructor than classroom environment	27.1%	24.7%	25.3%	14.7%	8.2%	2.52	1.260
I am more comfortable responding to questions by email than orally	28.2%	16.5%	22.4%	21.2%	11.8%	2.72	1.381
My technical skills (email/internet apps) has increased since attending online classes.	14.7%	12.9%	23.5%	24.1%	24.7%	3.31	1.364
I spend more time on my homework in comparison with regular classroom learning	18.2%	22.9%	35.9%	17.1%	5.9%	2.69	1.131
Instructor understands the online environment and makes it easy to learn in progressive manner	17.1%	25.9%	28.2%	21.2%	7.6%	2.76	1.188

Where,1- online is or might be less effective, 2- online is or might be somewhat less effective, 3- online is or might be equally effective, 4- online is or might be somewhat more effective, 5- online is or might be much more effective.

A mean value below 3 for the majority of the statements suggests that online classes were marginally less effective than in-person classes. The percentages were computed for each of the seven propositions, which were scored on a five-point continuum scale, as depicted in Table 6. The results indicated that there were minimal disparities in the perception of graduate and postgraduate students about online learning. Approximately 49% of the participants concur with the assertion that online learning enhances their technical aptitude in comparison to traditional in-person classes. It is apparent that approximately 52% of respondents agree with the assertion that online classes are less effective in terms of contact with the instructor compared to face-to-face classes. The aforementioned facts suggest that students have unfavorable experiences in relation to online programs. The lack of fairness in internet accessibility, inadequate teaching skills, or subpar learning environments may be contributing factors to this issue.

The table suggests a diverse range of perceptions towards online learning, with some respondents finding it more effective in certain aspects (e.g., structure, comprehension, technical skills), while others express preferences for traditional classroom interactions. The findings highlight the nuanced attitudes and experiences of individuals in the context of online education.

Table 7: Benefits of online learning

Benefits	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Flexible schedule and convenience	2.25	1.135	5
Improves your technical skills	2.44	1.216	4
More comfortable environment	2.61	1.183	3
More interaction and greater ability to concentrate	3.45	1.259	2
Self-discipline and responsibility	4.12	1.327	1

The survey findings suggest that self-discipline and responsibility were identified as the primary advantages of online learning. Online education empowers students to take responsibility for enhancing their learning. Therefore, the desire for online education is mostly fueled by self-discipline and responsibility. The factors of increased engagement, improved concentration, a more pleasant work environment, enhanced technical skills, and a flexible schedule and convenience were identified as the second, third, fourth, and fifth most important.

Table 8: Constraints of online learning

Constraints	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Lack of connectivity	2.85	2.312	8
Data limit	2.99	1.789	7
Data speed	3.55	1.686	6
Face-to-face interaction	3.82	1.417	5
Lack of device	4.54	1.647	4
Poor learning environment	5.44	1.527	3
Technophobia (dislike to use of technology	6.18	1.932	2
Intense requirement for self-discipline	6.58	2.342	1

According to Table 8, the primary obstacle in online learning was identified as the significant need for self-discipline. The second and third obstacles were technophobia (aversion to the use of technology) and an inadequate learning environment. These insights

indicate that for a country to transition to online education, it is crucial to enhance the learning environment in order to foster interactive sessions and boost student engagement.

Results of the study reveal that self-discipline and responsibility were listed as the important benefits of online learning, while the high necessity for self-discipline is the major impediment in online learning.

DISCUSSIONS

This study largely explored students' preferences and attitudes surrounding online education.

Initial investigations into online education have recognised that the design of online courses is a critical determinant of their effectiveness. This finding is supported by research conducted by Cereijo et al. (1999), Hartley and Bendixen (2001), and Hill (2002). In order to optimise the productivity of learners, it is advisable to restrict the duration of extended classes and provide adequate breaks between consecutive sessions. By doing so, one not only prevents cognitive burden but also mitigates physical strain that can result from extended use of electronic devices. This is supported by Thompson's (2014) formula, which recommends working for 52 minutes with 17-minute intervals.

Particularly with regard to computer and internet usage, the technical proficiency of instructors and students significantly influences the efficacy of online courses. The advantages attributed to online classes are convenience and flexibility. Online courses are advantageous for collaborative groups, according to Petrides (2002), and students frequently access course materials from their home computers, according to Poole (2000). As a result, recorded recordings should be uploaded to the university's website to facilitate access, and online courses should be designed to suit the needs of the students.

It was discovered that interactivity is one of the primary success factors of online courses. As illustrated by the research conducted by Johnson et al. (2008), it is critical to establish and maintain a collaborative learning environment in an e-learning setting in order to maximise participant satisfaction. Furthermore, Gunawardena and Zittle (1997) discovered a robust correlation between the social presence of learners and their overall satisfaction with the medium.

Online courses must actively involve students by incorporating regular, purposeful exercises that aid in maintaining their attention. Huggett (2014) also illuminated the significance of interaction frequency when developing online courses. Additionally, the lack of promptness in receiving responses to inquiries was identified as a difficulty with online learning. Additionally, Hara and Kling (1999), Petrides (2002), and Vonderwell (2003) documented this. Therefore, it is imperative that the instructor promptly responds to the inquiries of the students.

The participants were also solicited for recommendations on how to improve the efficacy of online learning. Appropriate content, connectivity, pre-recorded videos, and adequate follow-up were discovered to elevate online classes to the level of traditional classrooms. Multiple times, the majority of the participants reiterated the point. As a result, online learning facilitates communication between educators and institutions, improves accessibility, and expands educational prospects. Hill (2002); Bourne et al. (1997); Owston (1997); Hara and Kling (1999, 2001); Rourke (2001).

The results of the research hold significant potential for informing the development of both the content and structure of online courses.

LIMITATIONS

There are several constraints in the study. The study was restricted only to understanding the preferences and perceptions of management students of MUSOM. Furthermore, the analysis was limited to understand the perception of learners and excluded the instructors. The findings are mainly dependent on student's recollection of experiences with online classes. The survey was conducted after the COVID situation had improved, which may have led to biased results.

CONCLUSION

The coronavirus pandemic has led to a shift in the education system, with online education becoming the primary means of instruction. Universities and institutions are transitioning to online platforms to meet the curriculum. The perception and readiness of teachers and students are crucial factors in adjusting to online learning. This study found that most students have a positive attitude towards online classes, finding it advantageous due to its flexibility and convenience. They prefer well-structured content with recorded videos and interactive sessions with quizzes and assignments. However, they also find online classes more challenging than traditional classrooms due to technological constraints, delayed feedback, and instructors' inability to effectively handle Information and Communication Technologies. Therefore, factors such as these should be considered when developing online courses to make them more effective and productive for learners. This study will be useful for reimagining higher education with online components.

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