Students' Perception towards Online Teaching Learning Activities During COVID-19

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Abstract: Educational institutes across the world have closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Most educational institutes have shifted to online learning platforms. In this background, study aim was to find out the perception of students towards online-class during COVID-19 pandemic. The study was carried out by using the structured questionnaire survey, and self-administered online Google form was developed to collect the data. The data were collected from 199 students of public college. The reliability test of collected data was checked by calculating the Cronbach's Alpha value. Frequency, percentage, and mean was used to analyze the data. Finding of the study revealed that 77.4% students adopted online class in their learning by using mobile devices. However, majority of respondents felt confident to use online-class function and adopt content. Similarly, 71.9% respondents reported that they used the mobile phone data (*for internet*) during online-class, majority of respondents believed that online class was one of the easiest platforms to share the knowledge and collect the required information. The analysis showed that the common online platforms in Nepal were Zoom, Microsoft Teams offering online interactive classes. They also agreed on the advantages of online learning. Majority of the students preferred to use smart phone for online learning. The benefits were mainly self-learning, low costs, convenience, and flexibility.

Introduction

The Internet is indispensable in our life now. People have been using it in their day-to-day activities for the last few decades. It has made people's lives easy and comfortable.

In developed nations, it has been used in education profoundly, but in underdeveloped and developing countries, the use of the internet is also expanding rapidly (Saheb, 2020). Covid-19 pandemic has strengthened its significance further especially in education. Governments around the world have declared lockdown as a result schools and colleges were also shut down. Physical presence of students and teachers was totally restricted. Schools and colleges had to shift their classes to online mode for their existence. They had not developed infrastructures needed to run virtual classes when countries declared lockdown. Teachers as well as students were not prepared well for the same but the pandemic created the situation in which no one could escape or avoid learning various ways of conducting classes through the internet. Universities and schools organized various training programs for teachers and students to help them develop necessary skills for online classes (Zweig & Stafford, 2016). Teachers and students who were familiar with computers and the internet learned it easily whereas others felt difficulty in learning. Online teaching means learning through synchronous or/and asynchronous mode using different devices connected to the internet. Teachers and students join for lectures which is known as synchronous system. They upload materials and tasks in apps and students submit their tasks virtually at any time which is called an asynchronous system. The Learning Management System is the backbone of online/distance learning (Mtebe, 2015). It is a shared online platform through which teachers, students and parents can communicate easily. It could be an app or software that helps teachers deliver lessons, upload materials, and give the assessments to students online.

Education institution has been conducting online classes since the lockdown 2020. Colleges organized training programs to both teachers as well as students for running the virtual classes smoothly. After running classes for some months, it is necessary to get ideas of students to improve their online delivery as well as learning progress. In previous classes, the teachers used to teach the students in face-to-face mode, but now, this method has to be learned and learned anyway; so, it is necessary to use the technology for teaching and learning. Therefore, it is significant to carry out this research to continue as well as address the needs of students of the education institution. Furthermore, I have included the objectives to explain the importance of online teaching learning activities on the basis of student's perception in covid-19. Because of addressing such issues, i have raised objectives: to explain perception towards online teaching learning activities during COVID-19.

Literature review

Domination of face-to-face mode of teaching and learning process as the only one way of getting formal education around the world is gradually decreasing. The internet service has made this possible. Online learning has become an alternative mode of getting education in many developed countries, however, underdeveloped and developing countries are still in their beginning stage due to various reasons such as internet facility, affordability of devices such as laptops and smartphones, and availability of facilities. Use of e-devices for language teaching and learning are an emerging area in developing countries (Duff, 2015). But covid-19 pandemic has brought a rapid transformation to face to face mode of teaching and learning. Governments around the world had declared lockdowns for many months which compelled universities and school shifting their regular classes online. The universities and school which were reluctant to the virtual teaching and learning process had no options. Online platforms proved to be significant in difficult times. The universities and colleges borrowed apps and conducted online training to make faculties familiar with the new environment to continue teaching the learning process online. Some schools and universities which had already got infrastructures for online ran classes more successfully than others.

Online learning is a form of distance learning or distance education in which both students and teachers do not need to meet physically on a daily basis (Gratton-Lavoie & Stanley, 2009). Students are free in terms of time and place as they can read and do assignments at their convenient time and places. Similarly, E-learning is a teaching process integrating any form of technology which takes place within an internet-based environment (Berge & Collins, 1995). In addition, students and teachers interact with one another with the help of the internet. Online learning is important not in the sense of acquiring knowledge and skills but also being familiar with technology. Students learn much about technologies and their benefits in their day to day as well as professional life. Technology has become indispensable in our life; therefore, it also helps students integrate technology in their work. Synchronous and asynchronous are the two forms of e-learning. In synchronous, learning requires simultaneous participation of both teacher and students whereas in asynchronous learning, a teacher uploads materials and assignments on his/her convenient time and students read the materials and do the assignments on their convenient time. Synchronous learning can

provide a lot of opportunities for social interaction (McBrien, Cheng & Jones, 2009), however, social interaction is not required in asynchronous learning.

The balance of synchronous and asynchronous learning is important for helping students engage in learning during pandemic. Students get opportunities to talk to their friends and teachers which could lead to forgetting their worries and trauma created by loneliness during the lockdown.

A study conducted on Graduate students in Palestine Technical College has revealed a good correlation between attitudes toward e-learning and technical abilities. It further clarified that students having good knowledge of technology prefer online learning. It also concluded that students having no experience of technology are not aware of its importance and reluctant to involve themselves in online processes.

Similarly, another study carried out by Muhammad & Chaudhary (2012) on undergraduate students at Taif University. It was survey-based research in which a questionnaire was developed and responses were collected from one hundred students enrolled in Information Technology and Engineering at Taif University. This study concluded that although students were aware of the importance of technology and its role in developing various language skills and aspects, they could not take advantage of these gadgets because teaching and learning in the classrooms were not properly integrated. It suggests that students can take advantage of technologies if the teaching and learning process in the classrooms and examination system are aligned properly. It means having a positive attitude as well as access to computer and internet facilities is not only enough to engage in online learning.

Ullah, et al. (2017) studied on the topic Students' Attitude towards Online Teaching at Tertiary Level. It was the non-experimental descriptive research studies in which a closed questionnaire with 5-points Likert scale was used to collect data from 83 (55 males and 28 females) respondents selecting randomly from undergraduate level. The major finding of the study is that there is no significant relationship between students' interests, usefulness of computers to students and ease in using online learning. This study also supports the finding of the previous study carried out by Muhammad & Chaudhary (2012). Both studies have revealed that students were not involved in online learning having only access to the internet and computer.

Duraku, & Hoxha, (2020) carried out research study on the topic the impact of COVID-19 on higher education: A study of interaction among students' mental health, attitudes toward online learning, study skills, and changes in students' life on bachelor's level

students at the University of Pristina using exploratory mixed method. This study has found that the students could engage in online learning if they get support from their teacher. In other words, the relationship between teachers and students plays a vital role in engaging students in online learning. Online is one of the options to forget their worries and anxiety created by covid-19 and lockdown imposed by the government. The study further emphasized that students felt relaxed while talking to their teachers and friends in online classes. Online classes not only helped students excel in their learning but also forget their worries and relax which is imperative for their well-being during a difficult time of pandemic 2020. This study has revealed that students were positive toward online learning as they see it an opportunity to draw their attention away from pandemic.

Similarly, Jaggars and Baisley (2010) conducted a research study which has claimed that online learning could be effective to those students who were academically prepared and were from high income families. In other words, online learning may not be effective to low-income and academically underprepared students. Low-income students may face significant barriers to both enrollment in and successful completion of online courses, such as lack of high-speed Internet access at home. In addition to potential financial and technology barriers to online coursework, low-income and academically underprepared college entrants may also struggle with social and psychological skills, such as self-direction, self-discipline, and help-seeking, which most institutions feel are required for success in distance education (Liu, Gomez & Yen, 2007).

Academically well-prepared, motivated and students having technical skills are positive to online learning whereas opposite to other students. Similar to the studies included in the meta-analysis, relatively well-prepared university students were randomized into online or face-to-face sections of a microeconomics course. This study found no significant difference between the two groups overall but noted that among students who had low prior GPAs, those in the online condition scored significantly lower on in-class exams than did those in the face-to-face sections (Figlio, Rush, & Lin, 2010 as cited by Jaggar and Bailey).

Methodology

This study employed an online quantitative survey design with Five-Point Likert scale items. First, i developed a structured survey questionnaire in different areas from my

experiences. I discussed the questionnnarie with my faculty and concerns. I prepared 25 questions from my study area. After a long discussion with my faculty and concerns, i finalized the questions and then developed survey form; after that i shared the developed surveys with experts at Tribhuvan University. I made some minor corrections from their suggestions and feedback. I selected the 20 best questions out of 25. I removed five questions according to the recommendations of experts.

A modified questionnaire has been used to collect data from 199 students enrolled in different public colleges. The respondents of the survey are the students who are actively using e-learning platforms for their regular course during COVID-19 lockdown. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. where, Section 'A' contains demographic information of students and Section 'B' was related to perception of students for effectiveness of e-learning during COVID-19.

I shared the survey link in an online classroom through MS Teams, Facebook Messenger, Email on the same date and time. I informed all respondent (public campuses students) about the purpose and use of the data. I requested them to submit the questionnaire in their free time. I did not give any pressure during the data collection period. Students were autonomous for self-determination to submit the questionnaire. For the purpose of validation and analysis of the collected data from the sample respondents, appropriate statistical tools and techniques have been used by the researcher.

I received the data into the Google Forms. i retrieved that data into an Excel spreadsheet. I uploaded the data into IBM SPSS 25 version to analyze. First, i coded the provinces of the respondents as Province 1 = 1, Province 2 = 2, Province 3 = 3, Province 4 = 4, Province 5 = 5, Province 6 = 6, Province 7 = 7. Likewise, i coded the alternative use of internet as mobile phone data= 1, cyber center= 2, no alternative = 3, and Wi-Fi internet = 4. i coded the data of respondents for device use as mobile= 1, Laptop/computer=2, Mobile and Laptop = 3 and no device use=4. Similarly, i coded the class/faculty as faculty of education= 1, faculty of humanities= 2 and faculty of management = 3. Likewise, i coded the five-point Likert-scale

Strongly Agree = 5, Agree = 4, Neutral = 3, Disagree = 2, and Strongly Disagree = 1.

As for reliability, Cronbach's alpha was used as a measure of internal consistency to indicate how the items are closely related. The result for the internal consistency of the Likert-scale items showed that the Cronbach's Alpha value was 0.858, and Cronbach's

Alpha based on standardized items was 0.865 for the 20 items. A reliability coefficient of 0.70 or higher is considered "acceptable" in most social science research situations (Mockovak, 2016).

Results and Discussion

Different geographically located respondents of different facullies are included in Table 1. A total of 199 respondent participated in the study. Where, 9.0% were from the Faculty of Education, 19.6% were from the Faculty of Humanities and 71.4% respondents were from the Faculty of Management. Similarly, 8.0% were from Province one, 6.0%, 62.8%, 6.0%, 15.1%, 0.5%, 1.5% were from Province two, three, four, five, six and seven respectively. The table 1 shows that the majority of students have come from Bagmati province and Lumbini Province so that college has to expand its advertisement in other provinces to encourage students for enrollment.

Table 1: Characteristics of the sample on the basis of Faculty and Permanent Address

		Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Faculty	Education	18	9.0
	Humanities	39	19.6
	Management	142	71.4
	Total	199	100.0
Permanent Address	Province 1	16	8.0
	Province 2	12	6.0
	Province 3	125	62.8
	Province 4	12	6.0
	Province 5	30	15.1
	Province 6	1	0.5
	Province 7	3	1.5
	Total	199	100.0

Table 2: Types of Device use and Alternative of Internet for online learning

		Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Device Use	Mobile	154	77.4
	Laptop/computer	17	8.5
	Mobile and Laptop	21	10.6
	No device	7	3.5
	Total	199	100.0
Alternative of Internet	Mobile phone data	143	71.9
	Cyber center	2	1.0
	Wi-Fi internet	48	24.1
	No alternative	6	3.0
	Total	199	100.0

Likewise, table 2 shows that the percentages of devices are used to get access to online class. Where, 77.4% got access by using Mobile devices, 8.5% were from Laptop/Computer, 10.6% were using both Mobile and Laptop, and 3.5% were not using any devices. What type of internet the respondents have used to take online class is interestingly displayed in Table 2. While only 1% of respondents used cyber centers, 71.9% used mobile phone data. Additionally, 24.1% of internet users used Wi-Fi, while 3.0% preferred not to use any internet at all.

Anomalies Associated to Online Teaching and Learning

Various software, apps and online platforms are growing and it is difficult to select, download, issues with installation, log in, audio and video etc. There is much more to learn about the use of the internet and various devices in education that many teachers find it difficult to know where to begin. Without getting working knowledge of technologies, online learning and teaching become complicated as well as challenging for both teachers and students. Therefore, many universities and colleges provided training to both teachers and students to use technology in conducting online teaching and learning processes during the covid-19 pandemic.

Online learning becomes boring and monotonous for many students if it is based on a lecture method. Whether classes are virtual or physical, interaction requires them to be interesting and lively. During this situation sharing is important among friends and teachers to forget their worries and prepare them for learning. Students may not join such classes; therefore, faculties need to use various teaching methods and techniques. They can use breakout rooms for pair or/and group works. They can prepare slides including related pictures, videos etc. They can also use quizzes and pull in the class to check their understanding to make classes lively.

Similarly, it could be trying for students if they are not given training on time management skills. Lessons need to be designed carefully to give varieties in classes. Similarly, instructions create confusions among students if they are not written properly. Students feel that lack of community, technical problems, and difficulties in understanding instructional goals are the major barriers for online learning (Song et al., 2004). Lack of reliable supply of electricity creates another problem in online learning. Students cannot join online classes due to power cut-off and it is expensive to manage an alternative source of energy. There is not reliable power supply in many developing countries like Nepal which creates another difficulty in synchronous teaching and learning processes.

There are many challenges to involve some students in the synchronous learning process, too. Some of the challenges that a teacher faces particularly are students not speaking in online classes, not responding to questions or queries, and not asking any questions during the classes. But some students are more active or dominating others. Students who are familiar with technologies dominate the classes. However, students having low technological knowledge or skills are less active. Similarly, academically underprepared and low-income students cannot get much benefit from online learning because they may not get access to devices to join the classes regularly (Jaggars and Baisley, 2010). Once students become familiar with such technicalities they will participate in the interaction. In other words, they might need time to learn various skills as well as knowledge to cope with the difficulties. Moreover, a teacher has a great role in making students active in virtual classes.

Research studies show that students are found unwell prepared for online classes in the beginning of the virtual classes, lacking technical skills in accessing materials on the learning management system and uploading assignments. It means they need to be familiar with the learning management system. In other words, there is a low-level preparedness among the students concerning the usage of Learning Management Systems (Parkes et al., 2014).

Effectiveness of Online classes in educational opportunity

Table 3: Perception on Effectiveness of online classes

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Online classes are necessary for us	4.20	0.611
It makes learning easier, faster and pleasing	3.65	0.789
It makes our learning more interesting	3.66	0.889
I am getting more advantages from it	3.71	0.795
I enjoy the lessons during online classes	3.36	0.793
It should be conducted regular basis to all	3.77	0.796
Everybody gets equal opportunity to learn	3.70	0.990
All the teachers are equally skilled	3.60	0.979

All of the respondents gave a score that was higher than average score. When studying the above statements separately, it was seen that all the statements scored higher than the average agreeable score. Likewise, the mean value of online classes is necessary for us indicated 4.20 whose standard deviation was 0.611. Similarly, respondent rated 3.36 average value and standard deviation 0.793 to the statement "I enjoy the lesson during

online class". The respondents reveled that online class is necessary, which gives equal opportunity in regular basis.

Table 4: Perception on how comfortable in online classes

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am regular in online class	3.87	0.984
All the classes started on time	3.76	0.887
I am comfortable Microsoft Team 365	3.91	0.846
All the teachers provide learning material and resources	3.93	0.782

The participant responses in the item related to perception on how comfortable in online classes show that are higher than a neutral value to the overall regularity of the online classes. Based on the table 4, with the highest mean score of 3.93 and standard deviation of 0.782 on "all the teachers provide learning materials and resources". Similarly, mean scores 3.76 and standard deviation of 0.887 on "All the classes started on time". The respondents ensure that they found too many learning materials on online classes rather than face to face classes.

The participant responses in the item related to perception on uses of technology in online classes show that are higher than neutral value on online classes. Based on the table 5, with highest mean score of 3.96 and Standard Deviation of 0.771 on "I am familiar with modern technology". Similarly, mean score of 3.17 and Standard Deviation of 1.190 on "I have computer for doing online work". The respondents reveled that they feel comfortable with modern technology i.e., devices and internet, which is necessary for online classes.

Table 5: Perception on Uses different technology in online classes

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am familiar with modern technology	3.96	0.771
I feel comfortable working with devices	3.67	0.835
Internet is available easily from Wi-Fi	3.55	1.122
It is less expensive than other modes	3.56	0.891
I have computer for doing online work	3.17	1.190

The participant responses in the item related to perception on difficulties faced in online classes show that are higher to compare with neutral values of the online classes. Based on the table 6, respondent's internet and power supplies are the problems indicate mean score is 3.89, whose Standard Deviation of 0.966. Similarly, mean score of 3.12 and

Standard Deviation of 0.951 on " I feel difficulties to use e-devices". Furthermore, sometimes online classes monotonous and boring among the students are disagreed.

Table 6: Perception on difficulties faced in online classes

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
I feel difficulties to use e-devices	3.12	0.951
Sometimes it makes monotonous and boring	3.62	0.901
Internet and power supplies are the problems	3.89	0.966

Compensations associated to online teaching and learning

There are many advantages of online teaching and learning. Students can save time and use it in their studies. They can save time depending on how far they live from the college or the university. Similarly, online learning is flexible in terms of time and place. They can access materials as well as upload assignments from any time and places. They don't have to meet their teachers physically. Teachers can video record the classes and upload them in the app so that students can learn missed classes later in their convenient time.

Traditionally the teaching and learning process is basically a lecture method in which a teacher speaks mostly which does not address those students who are visual or kinesthetics. It means the students who could learn better through visual cues got no benefits. But online learning addresses both types of learners. Faculties can show them videos and other visual cues accompanying audio so that both types of students get benefits. For instance, while teaching a poem or story, a teacher brings pictures or drawings related to the chapter.

Online teaching and learning process teach students importance of learning technology. They learn extra skills which are very important in their later life. Students learn to use various devices in the learning process. They also become familiar with various search engines and ways of finding authentic resources on the net and to use them in their studies. This is the age of information and technology and without appropriate use of its students may not get success in their later life. Online teaching and assessment enhance their skills and understanding ways of using new technologies in their later professional life (Blackley & Sheffield, 2015; Boyles, 2011). It further makes students ready for engaging in virtual meetings in their job or occupation. Similarly, they learn different ways of interacting with their friends and faculty which ultimately develop confidence in interacting with people in various social platforms to find jobs or promote their education.

Conclusion

The findings of this study indicated that majority of the students convey a positive attitude towards online classes in the wake of corona. The online learning was found to be advantageous as it provided flexibility and convenience for the learners. However, the majority of students also stated that due of technology limitations, delayed feedback, and the instructor's failure to effectively manage information and communication technologies, online programs may be more difficult than traditional classroom ones. Therefore, to make an online course more useful and beneficial for the learner, all these variables should be taken into account. After the COVID-19 epidemic subsides, it's possible that educational systems may continue to use online platforms as study aids, though only in a hybrid manner in addition to conventional classes. Therefore, this study will be valuable for revamping higher education to include elements that employ the online method.

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