CHALLENGES FACED BY UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN ONLINE LEARNING DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract

Nowadays the education system has dramatically changed from traditional classroom teaching to remote online teaching due to this COVID-19 crisis. This study aimed to estimate the challenges in Online Learning among undergraduate l students studying in various Aided colleges during this lockdown period due to the COVID-19 crisis. The study was conducted by employing a questionnaire prepared using 'Google form'. An aggregate of 136 undergraduate students participated in this survey. For hypotheses testing both descriptive statistics such as 'Mean, SD' & inferential statistics such as t – test' were employed. Analysis showed that there is no significant difference between Problems faced by UG students in terms of gender, place of living, and academic year. The study confirms that girl students have more than boy students in the online learning process.

Keywords: *The COVID-19 Pandemic, Online Learning, Undergraduate Students*

1. Introduction and background

The Covid-19 Pandemic has disrupted teaching in educational institutions throughout the world. Governments across the world on the advice of health experts enforced a strict lockdown to control the spread of the pandemic. Like all the institutions, educational institutions were also closed. The new norm of social distancing restricted any possible face-to-face interaction. As the infection was found to be transmitted by touching and exchange of materials, health experts advised against any kind of gatherings. As the pandemic spread across the globe from developed and developing countries, the restrictions on human interaction become stricter day by day. As can be expected, in such a grim scenario, the learning process in educational institutions by traditional face-to-face method came to a halt. As the pandemic seemingly showed no signs of decline, alternative methods of learning had to be explored to give a start to the worst-hit sector of education. Thanks to the advances in

technology, the technique of online learning came to the rescue of deprived students and anxious teachers alike.

Online learning is defined as the use of information and communication technology to improve the quality of education. It is also defined as electronically supported learning that relies on the internet for teacher/student interaction and the distribution of study material (**Cojocariu et. all. 2014**). However, the success of online learning also called e-learning depends upon many factors including access to gadgets and the internet, course content, usage of appropriate methodology, teacher as well as student skill (**Huang et.. (2020).** As the pandemic continued to stall any opportunity of regular classroom teaching in near future, even after five months of online learning, it was a worthwhile exercise to find out the perception of students regarding this electronic mode of learning as compared to the traditional face to face learning. With this motive in mind and to find the ways and means to improve the learning process, this study was conducted in Non- government Aided Degree College of undergraduate students in Jajpur District in Odisha.

2. Literature review of the study

Bashir (2020) published an abstract entitled "Online Learning among College Students in Jammu and Kashmir during Covid -19 Pandemic: Student Satisfaction and Challenges". A survey regarding the objectives of the study was carried out after administering an online questionnaire to the students and observation was conceded based on the response from the students of the Department of the Education of the Government Degree College for Women Pulwama. The major findings are (1) the students expressed satisfaction with regards to online learning as a useful tool of education during a pandemic situation. (1) Face-to-face learning was a preferred methodology of education and was regarded as more satisfying by students.

Mahyoob (2020)) published an abstract entitled "Challenges of e-Learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic Experienced by EFL Learners". The study was conducted at the undergraduate level for English language learners in the Faculty of Science and Arts–Alula, Madinah, Taibah University, Saudi Arabia. It was performed after completing online teaching classes and during the final examinations in the second semester of 2020. The sample comprised 184 students: 85 male and 99 female students in all bachelor's degrees with English majors. The study reveals that the major challenges encountered by EFL learners in online learning were technical issues. Some learners faced internet connectivity problems,

accessing classes, and downloading courses' materials problems. Online exams could not be opened on learners' mobile phones. Regarding language communication issues, learners could not effectively interact with teachers during virtual classes of English language skills, as revealed in learners' responses to open-ended questions. EFL learners' satisfaction with online learning is low; less than 50% are satisfied with online learning, whereas 14% of learners are not satisfied with online learning, and 43 % of learners are not fully supporting continuing online education

Subedi et al.(2020) published an abstract entitled "Impact of E-learning during COVID-19 Pandemic among Nursing Students and Teachers of Nepal". A descriptive cross-sectional online survey was conducted. Teachers and students of Nursing Faculties were selected from 13 different nursing colleges of Nepal who were conducting online classes during the COVID-19 Pandemic lockdown. **Result:** Almost half of the teachers (42.3%) got disturbed for their online class because of the electricity problem, 48.1% because of internet problems. More than half of the students (63.2%) were affected because of electricity and 63.6% had internet problems, only 64.4% of the students had internet access for their online classes. However, 64.3% of students used a data pack for their online class, 58.4% used mobile (cell phone), and there is a significant association of Selected Demographic variables of the respondents with most of the Statements (Attitude and Problems/Activities). (P-value<0.05).

3. Significance of the study

As explored by the detailed investigation of the available literature relating to this research work, it was found that though a large number of studies on problems and prospects of online Learning have been undertaken by researchers and experts across the globe, following major gaps have been identified with the area under consideration.

1. A very little work has been done on the problem and prospects of online Learning from the perspective of higher education. The research could not come across any noticeable work relating to online Learning in Higher Education in Indian context.

2. There is no much research focusing on the identification of a suitable model for successful implementation of online learning in higher education in India has been undertaken

    1. There was no study conducted on Problem Faced by Undergraduate Students in Online Learning during COVID Pandemic for Stream of Education and no such studies were conducted on state Non-Government Aided College students of Odisha

So after going through such types of studies and research gaps, it is a pertinent question before the investigator i.e. Problem Faced by Undergraduate Students in Online Learning during COVID Pandemic of Non-Government Aided College students of Odisha for gender & academic year of education.

4. Research Question

1. Is there a significant difference in mean scores of online learning problems between boys and girls?

2. Is there a significant difference between the problems encountered in online learning in relation to the place of living?

3 How does the problem of online learning relate to the academic year?

5. What is the relationship between the level of difficulty of online learning and gender?

5. Objectives of the study

(i) To assess gender-related online learning issues among undergraduate students.

(ii) To evaluate the problems encountered by undergraduate students in onlearning versus the place of living

(iii) To compare the problems experienced by undergraduate students in online learning about the academic year.

(iv) Examine student satisfaction with online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

6. The hypothesis of the study

(ii) H01-There is no significant difference in mean scores of online learning problems between boys and girls.

(iii) H02-There is no significant difference between the problems faced by undergraduate students in terms of place of living.

(iv)H04-There is no significant difference between the problems faced by undergraduate students in online learning compared to the academic year.

8. Delimitation of the study

(i) The investigation was delimited to 136 numbers of UG students. For data collection.

(II) The investigation was confined to the Jajpur district of Orissa in its geographical area.

(iii) The investigation was delimited to Aided Colleges in jajpur district.

(iv) The investigation was delimited to the Arts stream only.

(v)The investigation was delimited to online mode for collecting the data.

9. Design of the Study

The investigator has selected a descriptive survey method for the present study.

A descriptive study involves the collection of data, measurement, classification, analysis, comparison, and interpretation of data. The present study is a type of descriptive survey which includes the academic, Family, and technical UG college students.

9.1 The population of the Study

In the present study, Non-Government Aided College UG Students of Jajpur District of Orissa come under the population of the study

9.2 Selection of Sample

In the present study, a total of 136 UG(First Year students=17, Year students= 75, Year students=44) in 5 colleges were selected by adopting random sampling techniques to collect their opinion about problems in the online learning process during the COVID-19 pandemic of the Jajpur district of Orissa. Details of the distribution of the sampled respondents have been shown in Table No 1

SL No	Name of the college	Block	Gender wise Distribution		Total
			M	F	
1	A.P. College, Sujanpur	Jajpur	5	18	23
2	K.C.Mohavidyalaya, Korai,	Korei	6	24	30
3	Dharmasala Mohavidyalay, Jaraka	Dharmasala	11	22	33
4	Biraja Women's college,Jajpur	Jajpur	7	18	25
5	Brahmabarda Mohavidyalay, Jajpur	Jajpur	3	22	25
Total			32	104	136

Table1 .Distribution of Sampled UG students

9.3 Tools Used

In the present study, the researcher has used **Google Form** to collect the data from UG students. .. The tool was a 3 points Likert scale having 136 items in it.

9.4 Statistical Techniques Used

For hypotheses testing both descriptive statistics such as 'Mean, SD' & inferential statistics such as t-test' were employed.

10. Analysis & Interpretation of Data

10.1. Gender challenges facing UG students.

To assess gender-related online learning issues among undergraduate students. the researcher had calculated the Mean, SD, and t -value. The same is presented in table 1

Table 2.Difference between boys and girls UG students in their on-line learning.

Gender	N	M	SD	df	t-value	t_{ctr}- value	Remarks
Boy	32	57.21	7.86	134	0.21	1.98	NS
Girl	104	57.06	5.53				

Note-N-Number of student-Mean, SD-Standard deviation, df-Degree of freedom, NS-Not significant

Figure 1. showing comparision of online problem in term of gender
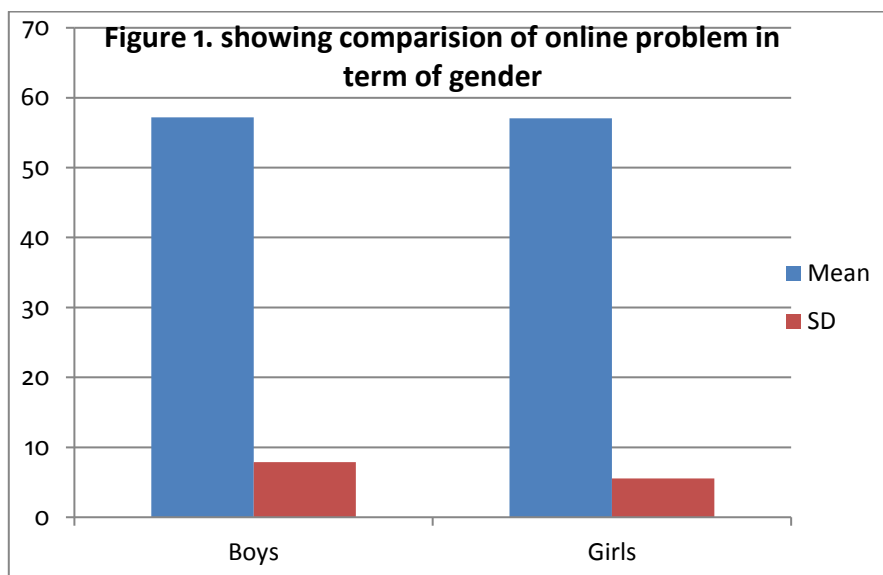
From table 1 it is inferred that boy UG students (mean = 57.21, SD= 7.86) were slightly better than girls UG students (mean = 57.06, SD= 5.53) in their **online learning problem**. Figure 1 indicates that the Mean value is not differing due to Gender variation. The obtained t -value (0.21) was not significant at 0.05 significance level for the df 134 due to the table value for df 134 is 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance. Though t- value is not significant. Hence the null hypothesis **H01**"There is no significant difference in mean scores of online learning problems between boys and girls is accepted.
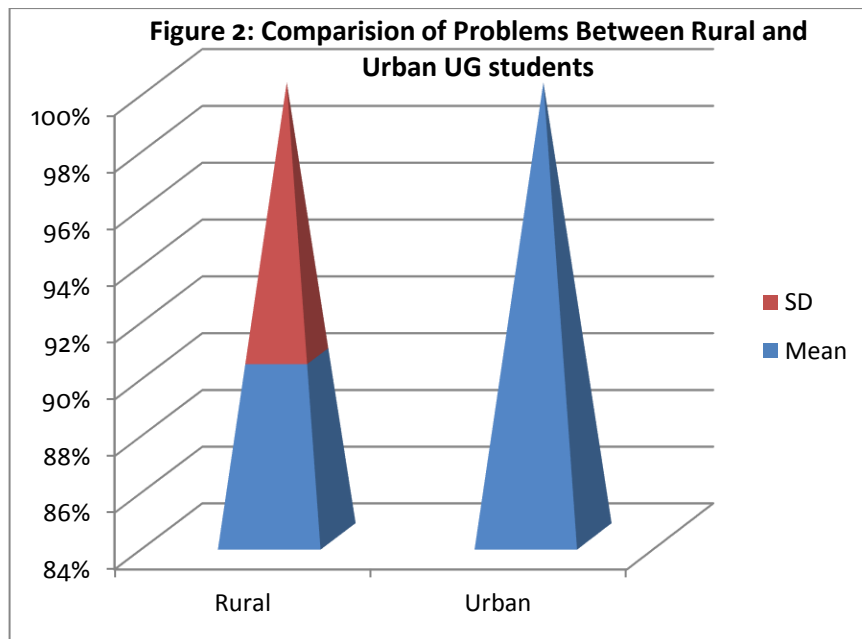
10.2 Problems faced by UG students in terms of place of living.

To evaluate the problems encountered by undergraduate students in On learning versus the place of living the researcher had calculated the Mean, SD, and t values. The same is presented in table 2.

Table 3 Distinction between rural and urban students in their online learning

Gender	N	M	SD	df	t-value	t_{ctr}-value	Remarks
Rural	123	57.17	6.10	134	0.096	1.98	NS
Urban	13	56.00	6.50				

Note-N-Number of student-Mean, SD-Standard deviation, df-Degree of freedom, NS-Not significant.

Figure 2: Comparision of Problems Between Rural and Urban UG students

From table 2 it is inferred that Rural UG students (mean = 57) were slightly better than girl UG students (mean = 56.00) in their **online learning problem**. Figure 2 indicates that the Mean value is not differing due to place of living. The obtained t -value (0.096) was not significant at 0.05 significance level for the df 134 due to the table value for df 134 is 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance. Thought- the value is not significant. Hence the null hypothesis **H02-** There is no significant difference between the problems faced by undergraduate students in terms of place of living is accepted.

10.3 Problems of online learning with the academic year of UG students.

To compare the problems experienced by undergraduate students in online learning about the academic year, the researcher had calculated the Mean, SD, and t values. The same is presented in table 3

Table 3 . Summary of online learning problems encountered by UG students relative to the academic year

Table 4 .Summary of online learning problems encountered by UG students relative to the academic year

	N	M	SD	t-Vale			Critical value of "t "			Remarks
				A1:A2 df=62	A2:A3 df=118	A1:A3 df=86	A1:A2	A2:A3	A1:A3	
Fist year	16	59.18	3.20	1.35	1.008	2.70	2.00	1.98	1.99	Significant
Second year	48	57.50	6.67							
Total	72	56.29	6.16							

Note-Al-First year students, A2-Second year students, A3-Third year students NS-No significant, Note-N-Number of student-Mean, SD-Standard deviation, df-Degree of freedom, NS-Not significant

Figure 3.**Comparison of the problem of online learning and the school year**
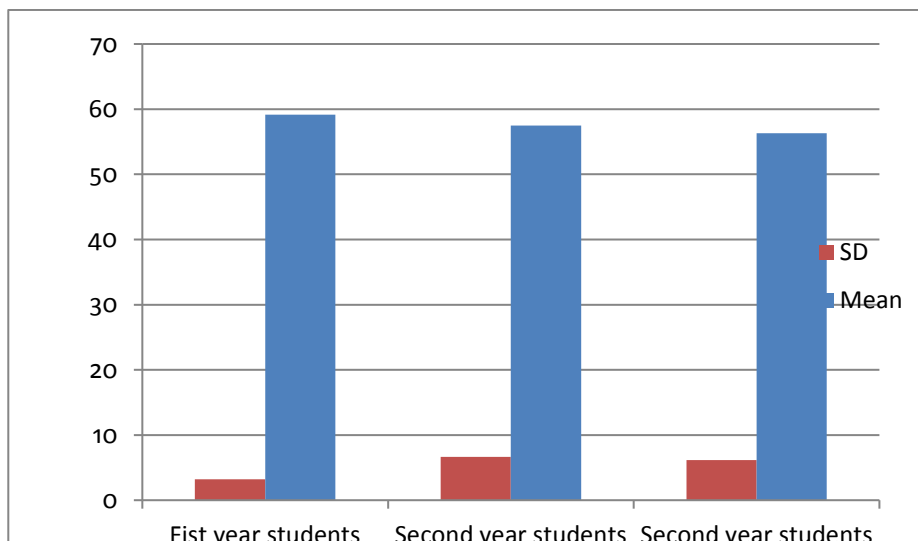
A1:A2 df=62

From table 3 it is inferred that the first year mean (M=59.18, SD=3.20) was slightly better than the second year mean (M=56.29, SD=3.20) in their **online learning problem**. Figure 3 indicates that the Mean value is not differing due to the academic year. The obtained t -value (1.008) was not significant at 0.05 significance level for the df =62 due to table value for df =62 is 2.00 at 0.05 level of significance. Though t- value is not significant. Hence the null hypothesis **H02"There is no significant difference between mean scores of the first-year student and second-year student in the problems faced of undergraduate students in on-line learning compared to the academic year is accepted**

A2:A3 df=118

From table 3 it is inferred that the second-year mean (M=57.50, SD=6.67) was slightly better than the second-year mean (59.18, SD=6.67) in their **online learning problem**. Figure 3 indicates that the Mean value is not differing due to the academic year. The obtained t -value (1.35) was not significant at 0.05 significance level for the df =118 due to table value for df =118 is 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance. Though t- value is not significant. Hence the null hypothesis **H02"There is no significant difference between mean scores of second-year student and third-year student in the problems faced of undergraduate students in on-line learning compared to the academic year is accepted**
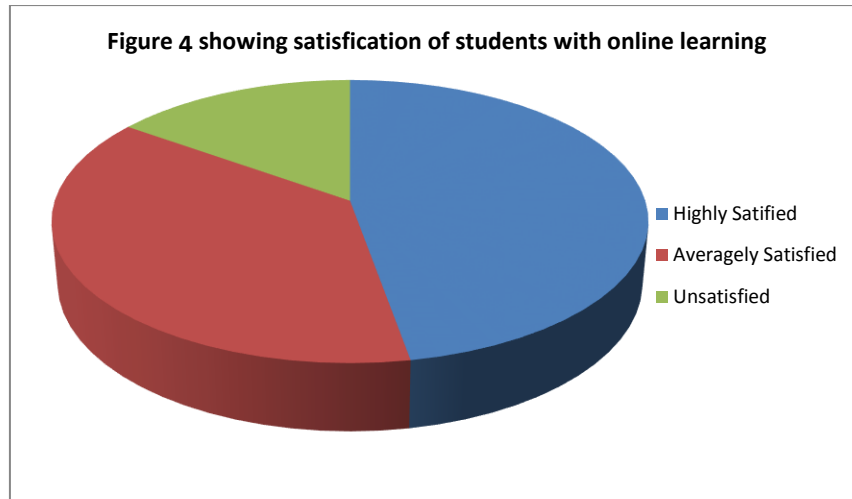
A1:A3 df=86

From table 3 it is inferred that the first year mean (M=59.18, SD=3.20) was slightly better than the third year mean (56.29, SD=6.67) in their **online learning problem**. Figure 3 indicates that the Mean value differing due to the academic year. The obtained t -value (2.70) was significant at 0.05 significance level for the df =86 due to table value for df =86 is 1.99 at 0.05 level of significance. As calculated t-value is higher than the table value. So it is significant at 0.05 levels. Hence the null hypothesis **H02"There is no significant difference between mean scores of first-year year student and third-year student in the problems faced of undergraduate students in on-line learning compared to the academic was reject**

H04-There is no significant difference between the problems faced by undergraduate students in online learning compared to the academic year was accepted

Objective-4

10.4   To analyze the satisfaction of students about online learning during the Covid-19 pandemic

Figure 4 showing satisfication of students with online learning

- Highly Satified
- Averagely Satisfied
- Unsatisfied

As far as the satisfaction of students is concerned, about 47.05% (n=64) students were highly satisfied, 37.50% (n=51) were averagely satisfied and 15.15% (n=20) reported as being unsatisfied with the online method of teaching.

11. Results & Discussion

(i) When there is comparison, the online problem of UG students to gender (From table 1) it is inferred that boy UG students (mean = 57.21, SD= 7.86) were slightly better than girl UG students (mean = 57.06, SD= 5.53) in their online learning problem. Figure 1 indicates that the Mean value is not differing due to Gender variation. The obtained t -value (0.21) was not significant at 0.05 significance level for the df 134 due to the table value for df 134 is 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance. Though t-value is not significant. Hence the null hypothesis. So, there is no significant difference between Problems faced by undergraduate students in terms of gender

(ii) When there is a comparison, online problem of UG students in relation place of living**,** **(**From table 2)it is inferred that Rural UG students (mean = 57) were slightly better than girl UG students (mean = 56.00) in their **online learning problem**. Figure 2 indicates that the Mean value is not differing due to place of living. The obtained t -value (0.096) was not significant at 0.05 significance level for the df 134 due to the table value for df 134 is 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance. Though t- value is not significant. Hence the null hypothesis **H02-** There is no significant difference between the problems faced by undergraduate students in terms of place of living.

(iii) When there is a comparison, online problem to school years of the students.

a) When there is a comparison, online problem to first-year and second-year students. it found that the first-year mean(M=59.18, SD=3.20) was slightly better than the second year mean(M=56.29, SD=3.20) in their online learning problem. Figure 3 indicates that the Mean value is not differing due to the academic year. The obtained t -value (1.008) was not significant at 0.05 significance level for the df =62 due to table value for df =62 is 2.00 at 0.05 level of significance. Though t- value is not significant. Hence the null hypothesis H02"There is no significant difference between mean scores of the first-year student and second-year student in the problems faced of undergraduate students in on-line learning compared to the academic year is accepted

b) When there is a comparison, online problem to second years and third Year students. it found that second-year means (M=57.50, SD=6.67) was slightly better than the second-year mean(59.18, SD=6.67) in their online learning problem. Figure 3 indicates that the Mean value is not differing due to the academic year. The obtained t -value (1.35) was not significant at 0.05 significance level for the df =118 due to table value for df =118 is 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance. Though t- value is not significant. Hence the null hypothesis H02"There is no significant difference between mean scores of second-year student and third-year student in the problems faced of undergraduate students in on-line learning compared to the academic

c) When there is a comparison, online problem with first years and third year Students. it found that the first-year mean(M=59.18, SD=3.20) was slightly better than the third-year mean(56.29, SD=6.67) in their online learning problem. Figure 3 indicates that the Mean value differing due to the academic year. The obtained t -value (2.70) was significant at 0.05 significance level for the df =86 due to table value for df =86 is 1.99 at 0.05 level of significance. As calculated t-value is higher than the table value. So it is significant at 0.05 levels. Hence the null hypothesis H02"There is no significant difference between mean scores of the first-year student and third-year student in the problems faced of undergraduate students in on-line learning compared to the academic.

(iv) When there is a comparison, online satisfaction of UG students towards online learning. about 47.05% (n=64) students were highly satisfied, 37.50% (n=51) were averagely satisfied and 15.15% (n=20) reported as being unsatisfied with the online method of teaching. So, there exists no significant difference between the satisfaction level of undergraduate students

in online learning and first year, second year, and third year and academic year of undergraduate students

12. Educational Implication

The present study has various educational implications which are listed below

1. This study will help the researcher for conducting further research related to it.

2. This study will help policymakers and Teacher Educators to take care of this area and more emphasis should be given to the development of online teaching-learning skills and competencies of UG students.

3. It also helps the administrators to organize various workshops, seminars, and skill development programs which will surely help to deal with related to online learning problems

4. Helps the UG students to find out the cause of online learning problems and try to resolve them.

5. It will help the governing bodies to provide Necessary infrastructural facilities like adequate classrooms, computers, and internet and communication technologies for teacher training institutions for smooth functioning.

6. It will help to plan well defined educational policy integration of technology with different levels of teaching and learning.

13 Suggestion for Further Research: The present study has certain limitations and the online learning area is so wide hence various suggestions regarding further study.

1. The present study was conducted on four institutes in Odisha, which can be extended considering the population at another place.

2. It was evaluating problem in online learning of 136 UG students, which can be extended to a large no of samples for more comprehensive results and better generalization.

3. It was conducted on UG. Students, further elementary teacher students, college students, vocational, differently able students can also be considered as the sample for future research.

4. The present study focused on variables like gender and academic year, which also can be conducted on other variables like socio-economic status, achievement level, discipline, etc.

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