Teachers' Perceptions of Online Classroom Teaching in India

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Abstract

Online blended learning has significantly impacted the teaching and learning processes in India during pandemic. Much of the recent studies focused on this aspect especially from the lens of remote learning-teaching in India. The present study makes an attempt to know the online classroom perspectives of teachers which may help in finding appropriate solutions for online classroom realities in India. The researchers wanted to convey through the research that online classrooms are not only about using technological resources but also about the need to use those resources for effective teaching and learning processes. A self-prepared questionnaire based on the recent research was used for the quantitative analysis. A total of 30 teachers (school & college level) participated in the online survey. The findings revealed interesting facts that the realities of the online classroom are contrary to the teacher perspectives. Teachers opined that online teaching acted as continuing professional development and helped them to be innovative in their approaches. Contrary to that, online classrooms are yet to be technologically supported. Without this foresightedness gap between the teacher perspectives and classroom realities remain wide. The study has got implications for bottom-up approach to CPD programmes, learner training and teacher preparedness.

Keywords: online blended teaching, teacher perception, teacher preferences

Introduction

Though online learning and teaching remained as the only alternative during pandemic times, there are many raising concerns related to its overall efficiency as a learning and teaching approach. Moser et al. (2021) mentioned that the learners can reap benefits from online teaching when required help and also resources are provided to teachers. Joshi et al., (2020) identified four problem areas of online teaching. They are environment, Institutional support, limited awareness of technology and lack of motivation. Jena (2020) mentioned that online platforms used during pandemic like zoom and Google meet will not remain sufficient for regular online classroom teaching and learning processes. Selvaraj et al. (2021) found in their detailed study

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that online learning can be made more effective with effective use of available online tools and meeting the communicative needs of learners. They also emphasise that any kind of stress with online learning should be properly resolved. Along with investment in online learning should be taken up by institutes. Khanna & Kareem (2021) present the views of primary school teachers about the pandemic teaching. The researchers observed that pandemic teaching helped teachers to take a different role and it helped them professionally. They suggest through their study that the online learning opportunities should be equally provided among different sections of society. It is also important to fix the online platforms to avoid learning or teaching inconsistencies.

Online Blended Teaching

Blended teaching in online mode is categorised into Synchronous and Asynchronous. Synchronous mode of teaching has yet to be explored and asynchronous mode of teaching has helped teachers and learners to fulfil the need of continuing the education. So, not all the objectives of teaching and learning can be achieved in these situations. But the future of online blended teaching and learning should be planned and executed well. Though institutional support is highly important there are other aspects which should be considered under the category of teacher and learner training for online blended learning environments. Bordoloi et al., (2021) highlights the fact that online blended teaching can be the best solution for any emergent situations like Pandemic, only when it is understood and implemented properly. Albrahim (2020) mentions six types of skills needed for teachers to teach online: 'pedagogical skills, content skills, design skills,t echnological skills, management and institutional skills, and social and communication skills.'

Objectives

The main objective of the study is-
➢ To know the teachers' perception related to online blended teaching
➢ To know teacher preferences of components of online blended course

Research Questions

1. What is the teacher' perception of online blended teaching?
2. What are teacher preferences of components of online blended course?

Methodology

This research includes the questionnaire developed by using the ideas from three current research articles (Afacan Adanır et al., 2020; Albrahim, 2020; Khan et al., 2021). The questionnaire consists of demographic details and 15 questions- 8 Likert scale questions, 2 open-ended questions, and 5 objective questions. A total of 30 respondents from different institutions provided responses to the online survey.

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Data Analysis

The respondents represent different levels of teaching:

Table 1: categorisation of respondents

Level	Number
School teachers	15
Lecturers	2
Assistant professors	11
Heads	2

Research question 1 is addressed through the following responses to the questions provided in the survey.

Question-wise Analysis

1. Which of the following skills are important for online teaching?

For this question all the teachers except two opted for 'All of the above' option that is 'pedagogical skills, technological skills, social, and communication skills'. Two of the teachers who teach at under graduation level opined that technological skills are essential for online teaching.

2. Using Online Quizzes Will Help in -

Options provided for this question are checking learners' comprehension, engaging learners, promoting interaction, and all of the above. Except for one teacher (UG level), the remaining teachers opted 'all of the above'.

3. While Devising Lesson Plans Which of the Following Factor(s) Will You Consider?

Options provided for this question are Infrastructure issues, home environment, time constraints, non-availability of resources. For this question, 12 teachers opted for time constraints, 6 teachers opted for non-availability of resources, 2 teachers opted for home environment, 2 teachers opted for Infrastructure issues, and other 8 teachers opted for a combination of factors.

4. Which Mode of Online Teaching Do You Prefer?

Options provided for this question are: Synchronous, Asynchronous, and Blended (Synchronous, asynchronous). For this question, 6 teachers opted for synchronous, one teacher (school level) opted for asynchronous mode and the remaining 23 opted for blended mode of teaching.

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5.   Which Type ff Online Learning Best Suits Your Learners?

Options provided for this question are: Mobile-based learning, LMS based learning, and both. Two teachers (school level) opted for Mobile-based learning, one teacher (UG level) opted for LMS based learning and the remaining 27 teachers opted for 'both' that is both Mobile-based learning and LMS based learning.

6.   How Can Online Teaching Be Made More Accessible To Learners? Provide Your Views.

For this open-ended question, only 27 teachers provided responses. Those responses can be brought down to the themes- Infrastructure (T.V., technical devices, free internet to schools, user-friendly LMS), technological skills training for both teachers and students, continuous monitoring and evaluation, learner motivation, synchronous interactive sessions and asynchronous materials.

7.   How Does Your Online Teaching Differ From Your Offline Teaching?

For this open-ended question, only 29 teachers gave response. The responses include the advantages of online classes (innovativeness, availability of materials, easy to assess student's performance, learner-friendly, helps teacher's CPD (continuing professional development) and disadvantages of online classes (technical glitches, lack of control over classroom activities, unsuitable for large classes, lack of internet facilities, lack of connection with learners, lack of interaction among teacher and learners, distractions).

Research question 2 is answered through the Likert responses.

The survey has 8 Likert items which are analysed as following:

Table 2: Likert responses of the participants:

S. No.	Survey Question	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Neutral %	Agree %	Strongly Agree %	Mean Scores
1	Online teaching should include 'live' chats to promote learner-teacher interaction.	3.3%	3.3%	3.3%	40%	50%	4.3
2	Encouraging learner collaboration should be one of the objectives of online	3.3%	-	-	36.7%	60%	4.5

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	teaching						
3	Using online polls will help learners to get involved in the learning process (as used in 'Coursera' MOOC courses	3.3%	3.3%	13%	40%	40%	4.1
4	Using online games will motivate learners to participate in learning	3.3%	20%	10%	33%	33.3%	3.73
5	It is important to include scaffolding strategies (providing students time to respond, activating prior knowledge of learners) in online teaching.	-	-	6.7%	26.7%	66.7%	4.6
6	It is important to take feedback from learners regarding different aspects of online teaching through poll surveys	-	-	6.7%	33.3%	60%	4.53
7	Providing individual feedback to learners should be part of online teaching	-	-	16.7%	30%	53.3%	4.36
8	Stress management strategies should be made part of online courses	-	-	6.7%	46.6%	46.6%	4.4

Discussion

Due to the fact that remote teaching acted as continuing professional development of teachers, many teachers held clear ideas of the components of a blended online course. This will help teachers to have a control over the outcomes of such teaching process. But it is

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not a complete picture of what might happen with regard to online blended teaching and learning. The impact of 'digital divide' cannot be ignored. A continuous evaluation of success and failures of online blended courses should be done.

Conclusion

Online blended teaching is a new educational shift that happened in India during pandemic. Though it is a new learning environment, the future of the teaching and learning may turn to online blended mode. Though it has its own advantages and disadvantages, there is more scope for online blended teaching and learning to flourish to solve some of the problems of the education system such as lack of innovativeness and novelty.

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