

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Students' Perception Towards e-Learning in Manipur

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ABSTRACT

The educational system across the world has immensely been affected due to the outbreak of Covid pandemic; it forced the shutdown of educational institutions resulting in a shift to online learning platforms. The present study aims to assess the perception of students towards e-learning in Manipur. The study was conducted during 2021 in the state using a structured questionnaire and data were collected through Online Google Form. About 121 responses were received and analysed. Out of total respondents' 62 percent were females while 38 percent were males. The findings of students' perceptions of 'usefulness', 'effectiveness', and 'ease of use' of e-learning have an overall score of 0.54 which reveals that e-learning has provided more opportunities to learn new ways and techniques for a better teaching-learning process. Gender comparison of perception towards e-learning showed that there is no significant difference in the perception of E-learning between male and female students; whereas, difference in the perception of E-learning between UG, PG, and Ph.D. students; and between students residing in urban and rural area were statistically significant.

Key words: E-learning; Education; Perception; Perception Index; Gender; Covid-19.

E-Learning is a network that enables the transfer of skills and knowledge and the delivery of education is made to a large number of recipients at the same or different times. A learning system based on formalized teaching but with the help of electronic resources is known as E-learning. It is primarily referred to as the use of technology and network communication for teaching and learning (*Economic Times, 2020*).

With the closure of educational institutions, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the need for a rapid transition from physical learning to the digital sphere of learning emerged. Educational institutions around the globe are now utilizing digital platforms to educate their students. (*Jyothi and Vijayabhinandana, 2021; Kapasia et al., 2020*). The online learning environment varies profoundly from the traditional classroom situation when it comes to learners' motivation, satisfaction, and interaction (*Bignoux & Sund, 2018*). However, almost a quarter of all homes have internet facilities, accessed via a fixed or mobile network using any device, including smartphones. Online education

is yet to develop as a common good and too-much reliance on this mode will only lead to a selective reach of education. The effectiveness of learning also depends on how the content is created to the online environment, also in understanding and addressing the constraints faced by the students (*Muthuprasad et al., 2021*). Online learning finds to be individualized, flexible, interactive, user-friendly, and easily accessible (*Madhuri and Sharma, 2022*). Distance education is perceived as an effective medium for education for all age groups, gender, and levels of experience. Individuals with higher aspirations and innovativeness are looking towards distance education for self-employment and alternative career (*Purnima et al., 2020*). The specific objective of the study was to assess the perception of the students of Manipur towards e-learning.

METHODOLOGY

Considering the different locations of the students, a structured questionnaire was designed using an online survey tool viz., Google Form for collecting

data. The state of Manipur was selected purposively for the study and the snowball sampling method was employed for the collection of data. Questionnaires were sent through g-mail and social media platforms like WhatsApp. A total of 121 responses were obtained. Perceptions of the students towards e-learning were measured using 5 points Likert Scale ranging with each of the points assigned a value as follows: SA =5, A=4, N=3, DA=2, SDA=1. Perceptions of the students were studied under three domains: Perceived Usefulness of e-learning, Perceived effectiveness of e-learning, and Perceived ease of use of e-learning (Juhary, J.,2014; Huang, C.H.,2020; Purnima, 2020; Jyothi and Vijayabhinandana 2020).

Students' perception was analyzed using the average score of the normalized value of the entire number of respondents of all three components which ranged from 0 to 1. Any mean score between the range of 0 to 0.33 was regarded as 'unfavorable'; any mean score between the range of 0.33 to 0.67 was regarded as 'moderately favorable' and any mean score higher than 0.67 was regarded as 'highly favorable'. Mann Whitney Test and Kruskal-Wallis Test were used to test the hypothesis. Formula for calculating Kruskal Wallis test (H) was used to determine the p-value of the test. Microsoft Excel and Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) were used to analyze the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The basic demographic information of the respondents including gender, age, place, level of education is presented in Table 1.

It was found that the majority of the respondents were females (61.98%); belonged to the age group between 21-25 years (69.40 %); and residing in Urban area (66.10%). Further, 47.10 per cent were pursuing PG; followed by UG (43.00 %) and Ph.D. (9.90%), respectively.

Perception of students towards e-learning : Perceptions of students towards e-learning were measured under the following three broad domains:

Perceived usefulness of e-learning: The majority of the students' perceived that they prepared notes for the topics being taught through online mode (0.651). This may be due to the easy access and convenience of seeking information through the internet. Students also perceived that online teaching motivates them to do more self-study to understand the concept thoroughly (0.591). The provision of accessing

Table 1. Demographic profile of the respondents (N=121)

Characteristics	No.	%
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	46	38.02
Female	75	61.98
<i>Age</i>		
15-20	18	14.90
21-25	84	69.40
>26	19	15.70
<i>Place of residence</i>		
Rural	41	33.90
Urban	80	66.10
<i>Level of education</i>		
UG	52	43.00
PG	57	47.10
Ph.D	12	09.90

information at their own pace and time makes online learning more self-dependent. Due to less face-to-face interaction, students are more reliant on educational resources which are available online rather than the lectures provided online.

Perceived effectiveness of e-learning: Students perceived that their knowledge and skills in the usage of different electronic educational tools have increased after attending online classes (0.659). During the Covid-19 pandemic, the usage of different e-learning tools by students and faculties rose remarkably. Students were introduced to different e-learning tools and platforms. It is also revealed that students were more comfortable responding to questions through email and other online platforms (0.572). Many students may not have enough courage and confidence to respond to their teachers face-to-face in the conventional classroom environment in front of his/her peers. However, in online classes, they feel more comfortable and confident to respond to questions/queries. The similar finding was also reported by Muthuprasad et al. 2021.

Perceived Ease of Use of e-learning: Table 2 also revealed that students were more at ease and comfortable in using e-learning services (0.681) which may be due to their good acquaintance with using smart phones, laptops, and other ICT tools.

Any efforts to strengthen the effectiveness of online learning needs to understand the perception of the users in terms of favourable and unfavourable perceptions (Muthuprasad et al. 2021). Therefore perception index on E-learning by students of Manipur has been calculated and it is presented in Table 3.

Table 2. Perception of students towards e-learning (N=121)

Perception on e-learning	Score	MS
<i>Perceived Usefulness of e-learning</i>		
Learning electronically can improve my course performance as I do not need to travel to campus, but study at the comfort of my home.	0.527	0.5034
The online teaching motivates you to do more self-study in order to understand concept thoroughly.	0.591	
You are preparing the notes for the topics being taught through online mode.	0.651	
Online class makes it easier to learn and understand the subject than classroom environment.	0.376	
E-learning provide enough practical experience to the learners.	0.3967	
<i>Perceived effectiveness of e-learning</i>		
I am more comfortable responding to questions through email and other online platforms.	0.5723	0.5387
My knowledge and skills on different electronic educational tools have increased after attending online classes.	0.6591	
I am willing to ask questions in online sessions than the conventional classroom environment.	0.5227	
Online exams are sufficient to judge the knowledge of the students of a particular subject.	0.4008	
<i>Perceived ease of use of e-learning</i>		
I believe that using e-learning service can simplify the-learning process.	0.5475	0.5819
You are able to complete your remaining syllabus through online mode of learning/ teaching.	0.5165	
I find e-learning service easy and compatible.	0.6818	
Overall Mean Score		0.5413

Table 3. Perception Index of students towards e-learning (N=121)

Perception score	%
Unfavorable < 0.33	7.26
Moderately Favorable 0.33-0.66	70.25
Highly Favorable >0.66	24.79

It is found that the majority of the students (70.25 %) had a ‘moderately favorable’ perception towards e-learning; 24.79 per cent of the students had a ‘highly favorable’ perception towards e-learning. However, only 7.26 per cent of the students had an ‘unfavorable’ perception of e-learning.

Difference in perceptions of different educational category and gender on e-learning : Mann Whitney Test and Kruskal-Wallis Test were used to test the hypothesis that i) there is no perceptual difference on e-learning among educational categories i.e. UG, PG and Ph.D. ii) there is no difference in perception on e-learning among gender categories i.e. male and female and iii). there is no difference in perception on e-learning between rural and urban students. The results obtained from data analysis are presented in Table 4.

Perception of e-learning between different variables: Table 4 revealed that perception towards e-learning among male and female students was found to have no significant differences under the domain of *Usefulness of e-learning*, *Self-efficacy of using e-learning*, and *Perceived ease of use of e-learning* This may be due to both male and female students are equally exposed to the different electronic sources of information and are equally expertise in utilizing these tools for their personal and academic activities in Manipur. Whereas, *Mittal, 2021* reported that the male have more positive perception than female for e-learning male has better perception toward e-learning than female students in Panjab.

The perception on e-learning among the students who are pursuing undergraduate, postgraduate and PhD, particularly with respect to Self-efficacy of using E-learning and Ease of use of E-learning shows significant differences. It may be because of difference in the level of understanding of the subject matter, experience in utilizing the e-learning tools, and necessity for acquiring/exploring these tools for their academic activities.

Table 4. Perception of e-learning between different variables of the respondents

Perception variable	P-value
Male and female students	Usefulness of e-learning 0.157
	Self-efficacy of using e-learning 0.665
	Ease of use of e-learning 0.221
UG, PG and Ph.D, students	Usefulness of e-learning 0.157
	Self-efficacy of using e-learning 0.001*
	Ease of use of e-learning 0.046**
Residing in urban and rural area	Usefulness of e-learning 0.157
	Self-efficacy of using e-learning 0.655
	Ease of use of e-learning 0.001*

*Significant at 1% level of significance;

**Significant at 5% level of significance

The table also reveals that the perception level towards e-learning among students from urban and rural has no significant difference in terms of *perceived usefulness* and *perceived self-efficacy* of using e-learning. This may be because of the easy availability of different learning tools which are affordable to most students. These electronic tools and devices have become a part of everyone's life for their academic, personal, financial, and other matters thereby increasing the rate of adoption of these tools significantly. However, a significant difference was found among the students residing in urban and rural in terms of *perceived ease of use of e-learning*. This can be explained by the fact that internet and electricity connectivity in rural areas are still prevalent. Similar studies also reported that a lack of facilities, infrastructure, technical tools, and internet access was the major drawback in e-learning (Muthuprasad et al., 2021; Naik et al., 2021; Rahman A, 2021).

CONCLUSION

Due to the covid-19 pandemic, the educational system in different institutions in the country suddenly shifted from conventional to online learning. PG and Ph.D. students are more acquainted with e-learning tools than UG students. Therefore, students should be provided with training programs and workshops on different ICT-based pedagogical tools for the effective teaching-learning process. Setting a tangible and practically feasible academic calendar and curriculum is very essential to effectively disseminate knowledge and deliver information to the students. Conventional learning and e-learning are both equally important and have their own merits and demerits. However, the best approach for an effective teaching-learning environment will be to adopt the blended form of learning wherein we use both the conventional ways and the recent electronic educational tools thereby providing student platforms to interact, share, collaborate and enquire with the teacher and classmates even after the class hour.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors have no conflicts of interest.

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