

# COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF COLLEGE GOING STUDENTS PRIOR AND AMIDST THE OUTBREAK OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC- PRAGNYASA SWAIN (2285014)

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## **ABSTRACT**

Along the outbreak of the pandemic of covid-19 virus, majority of the aspects of our society has changed on a drastic scale. Let it be the dimensions of the society, economy or academics, things have conformed in a dynamic way. With this context, this paper aims to specifically analyze the notable changes in the academical aspect of the college going students & make a thorough comparison between the academic performance prior and amidst the outbreak of the pandemic. This paper reports on a survey done on the college going students. Consequently, the paper alludes the factors responsible for the remarkable academic conformation of the youth. Furthermore, it also covers the comparative analysis of the academic experience of the students, prior pandemic & amidst he pandemic. An empirical study has been adopted to determine the factors & criteria responsible for this notable change and in addition to that, a comparative analysis of both the scenarios has been enumerated.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The notable change in the academic performance of the students can be stated as one of the reasons behind the study of the same. It goes without saying with the total lockdown of the nation during the outbreak of covid-19 virus, the experience of the shift of occupation to a digital platform and the maintaining of the virtual life was not an easy phenomenon. It is pretty evident that students faced most of the chaos adjusting to the digital mode of education. But whether or not the adjustments made in the shift of mode of studies acted as an aid to the academics or bane, is yet to be discovered.

This paper aims to gain new insights into the digital mode of academics. It further targets to categorize the pros & cons of the virtual mode of education. For this purpose, an empirical study in the form of questionnaire, based survey is presented. 50 law students of 2017 batch who went through the phase of shift from physical mode of learning to virtual mode have participated in the survey. The respondents also indicated their experience, the academical perspective and the convenience/non convenience of digital platform of learning in this project.

The results of the study provide novel empirical evidence about the notable transformation of academic performance of the college students. Results are presented and analyzed for comparing the digital & physical mode of learning, comparison of the accessibility of materials in digital & physical form of learning, the comparison in understand & doubt clearance in physical & virtual mode of education prior and amidst covid-19 pandemic. They can be very useful for other researches to formulate hypothesis for new studies and to explore areas for further research.

## **CONCEPTUALIZATION**

Gaining insights into the individualistic experiences of the virtual mode of learning is a essential criteria of research and empirical studies are necessary to achieve it. Eminent contributions have been made in this criterion but there still lies abundant scope of further more researches. The concept of this paper is to make a comparative analysis between the physical mode of teaching and digital mode of teaching and identify the factors responsible behind the dramatic change in the academic performance of the students amidst pandemic as compared to pre pandemic scenario. Various aspects have comparatively analyzed which includes the academic experience, experience of doubt clearance & the type of problems faced, if any, accessibility of materials & so on. Thus, we will be drawing a systematic comparison of all these essential factors in a scenario prior to covid 19 lockdown & during covid 19 lockdown.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Brief study of the prior theories established for comparing the academic aspect of undergraduate students will be made to establish the area that has not been explored. The prior literature research and findings will be taken into account to conclude a exploratory topic on the research gap prevailing under this notion. A few existing literature reviews has been studied and the finding of the study has been briefly stated in the column below for easy determination of few of the existing research topics and their contributions.

<b><u>TOPIC</u></b>	<b><u>CONCLUSION</u></b>
1. "A Review on Impact of COVID-19 on Education in India - International Journal Of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)"	Pandemic carried more pressure and depression to the educational faculties and educational framework. It has additionally given us the alternative to tackle new difficulties. We have adjusted a great deal and prepared ourselves for this new normal.

2. "Higher Education during Lockdown: Literature Review and Implications on Technology Design- Educational Research International"	The point of this study was to look at concentrates on HEI progress to online instructing due to COVID-19 pandemic by means of a bibliometric approach and afterward to manually go through the examinations to determine plan suggestions for educational innovations in the pandemic time.
3. "A Literature Review on Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Teaching and Learning- SAGE Journals"	The lesson learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic is that teachers and students/students ought to be situated on utilization of various online educational instruments. After the COVID-19 pandemic when the ordinary classes resume, teachers and students ought to be urged to utilize such digital tools to improve teaching and learning.
4. "Impact of Covid-19 on higher education in India: A literature review-Journal of positive school psychology"	A review to show the effect of Covid-19 on advanced education and to figure out the positive and adverse consequence of covid-19 on the educating learning and assessment process at college and college level in India.
5. "COVID-19 and its impact on educational environment in India- National Library of Medicine"	Government should accept legitimate drives in giving position to the students who have followed through with their tasks during the pandemic time frame. Government should step up & safeguard the interest of students and educational foundations should accept utter consideration to elevate the positive perspective of students towards teaching & learning conduct & to make new beam of expectations on assessment and appraisal in this pandemic circumstance.

**RESEARCH GAP-** After analyzing the existing literature review, we come to a conclusion that there has been no specific research of a comparative analysis of the specific factors responsible for the remarkable change in the academic performance of college going students prior and amidst pandemic.

#### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The empirical study that is presented in this paper corresponds to a part of a survey of covid 19 impacts on the academic sector and individualistic perspectives of students. It was performed using the quantitative approach of data analysis for comparison of variable factors that corresponded to the study.

The following method was used for the research process that was performed & discussed the validity of the survey.

#### **RESEARCH PROCESS**

#### **OBJECTIVES DEFINITIONS**

The first stage of the study involves the collection of data from the college going students through a questionnaire. This paper addresses further understanding of the perspective of students in the pandemic.

The research objectives analyzed are listed below-

- RO1- Comparison of the academic environment
- RO2- Comparison of attendance/Class regularity
- RO3- Comparison of amenities- books, doubt clearing, study materials
- RO4- Comparison of academic performance

**SURVEY DESIGN-** This survey is an empirical and exploratory survey that was administered by using the method of web based close end questionnaire.

**DEVELOPMENT OF A SURVEY INSTRUMENT-** With the remarkable changes in academic students in the online mode of learning as compared to physical mode of learning, there was an inspiration to explore the insights of these notable changes. In addition to the background information, respondents were asked to indicate their preferable mode of learning, their experience in both the modes of learning, their attendance details in both forms of college and their performances in digital as well as physical mode of learning. Before listing the questions, a description of the survey was provided. It must also be directed that more questions are to be preferably asked for a wider survey on the same notion. The author was initially responsible for data collection, the universe of the population was college going students and all of those respondents were the batch of 2017 belonging to kiit law school who witnessed both online & offline mode of academics in their 5 year course of law. As all the respondents were law students, the questionnaire was prepared in English. The expected time for completing the questionnaire of this survey was between 10-15 mins.

**DATA COLLECTION**

Respondents were selected on the basis of purposive sampling as the study involves solely college going students within the author's institutional network. It was aimed to have responses from different individual of 2017 batch of law as that was the only batch which witnessed college in physical mode prior the outbreak of pandemic till 2020 march and then shifted to the digital mode of learning post march 2022 till the graduation of the mentioned batch. The shift from physical mode of learning to digital form of learning was newly introduced to the students of 2017 batch undergoing any 5 years of course and therefore all of the population took time initially to adjust to the technological advancements in the mode of digital college, that was conceptualized mandatorily for the first time in the history of education in India for students of all age and all course from all sectors due to the outbreak of covid 19 pandemic.

**ANALYSIS**

53 responses were obtained but 3 were rejected due to lack of information and inconsistency. There were valid 50 responses that was analyzed. Post overall rating of the type of responses, partition of answers involved determination of various factors such as the perspective of respondent, the experience of the responded, the academic performance and attendance of the respondents. This will be further analyzed according to the scope of the paper. Few criteria for determination of results to report and analyze are stated in the table below.

**CRITERIA OF DETERMINATION OF RESULTS TO ANALYZE**

CRITERIA	RESPONSE
No. of respondents that are more comfortable in online environment of studying	18
No. of respondents that more comfortable in offline environment of studying	32
No. of respondents having more attendance in online mode during pandemic	43
No. of respondents having more attendance in offline mode before the outbreak of the pandemic	7
No. of respondents having better academic performance in digital mode	45
No. of respondents having better academic performance in physical mode	5
No. of respondents having easy access of books & doubt clearance on digital mode	11
No. of respondents having easy access of books & doubt clearance on physical mode	39

After taking into account the number of "yes" and "no" responses in different criteria, a comparative analysis has been done on the academic sector prior and amidst covid-19 pandemic.

**RESULT AND INTERPRETATION****COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH TOPIC FROM THE RESPONSES OBTAINED**

This section of the paper presents the results that we got from the respondents chosen and a comparative analysis between academic situations prior and during covid 19 pandemic. The table above shows the number of respondents that chose online learning preference and the number of respondents that chose offline learning preference. These responses are further taken into account for drawing a comparative analysis between the varying factors in online and offline mode that aided the notable change in academic performance of all the undergraduate students.

As we can see, 18 students out of 50 were more comfortable in online mode of teaching whereas rest 32 students responded that offline environment of studying is more comfortable. Thereafter, in the case of more attendance, 43 out of all of the 50 students responded to have more attendance in the online mode than the offline mode and only 7 students responded to have better attendance offline. Coming to the academic performance of the students, majority of the sample taken stated to have better academic performance in the virtual mode of examinations than in the physical form. 45 students reciprocated to have had better results in online mode of examination than the physical form, whereas, only 5 students stated to have had better performance prior pandemic than amidst pandemic. When it came to accessibility to books, study materials & doubt clearance, 39 students responded that it was more convenient and easier to access amenities during the physical mode of college as compared to the digital form and 11 students responded to have easy access in the digital mode of learning to the essential amenities.

From the responses of the students we received, it can be clearly observed that there has been a varying experience of digital mode of learning from individual to individual. After receiving the responses, the respondents were approached for an interactive session about their experience and taking into consideration the individual perspective, a comparative analysis has been made to reflect the notable difference in both the modes of learning.

More number of students were comfortable in the college campus environment than the virtual mode of college. This is evident because of the social nature of human beings. All the respondents agreed on the mutual fact that campus experience of college remains irreplaceable. Some of the respondents found the virtual mode of classes convenient to attend as it did not include mobility while the others longed the campus life amidst the outbreak of pandemic. Coming to the regularity aspect of students, it was observed that more, number of students attended the digital classes as compared to the physical classes. There was an inclination of attendance of majority of students in the virtual mode as compared to the digital mode. The respondents stated that amidst pandemic as the lockdown prevailed round the globe, none of the students had the mobility to go out. Along with being inside their respective homes, the virtual classes did not demand any effort from the students. By interacting with the respondents, it was mentioned by those students that, classes in video call were one of the most effortless methods of attending classes as they all did not have to do much to be in class. Everyone could stay at their homes, within their comfort zone and just have digital access to be present in the class. This was one of the reasons why attendance in virtual form was sky high as compared to physical mode of classes, where the students had to get up, travel and reach the classes on the allotted time to attend the respective class. This shows the reason behind lesser attendance in physical mode of college as compared to digital form of college.

Coming to the access and availability of amenities. More number of students found the physical mode to access books, study materials and doubt clearance more convenient and preferable as compared to the digital mode. It was stated by most of the respondents that, initially each one of them faced issues with technology in the process of learning, accessing materials and doubt clearance. With the due course of time the mechanisms were gotten used to. It was further more stated that prior pandemic, the education process was easier to understand and the learning experience of classroom teaching was more effective in comparison with the virtual mode of learning where the understanding of the subject became comparatively difficult due to technological defecates, communication gap & lack of interaction between the students and the teachers.

Lastly, arriving at the academic performance of the college students were jotted prior pandemic and amidst the pandemic. Surprisingly despite all odds, there was a drastic growth in the results of the students. The results of the students before pandemic when compared with their performance during pandemic gives us a clear picture about the boost of academic performance on virtual mode of learning. This can be explained by various factors that were provided by the respondents during the informal interactive sessions. Irrespective of facing difficulty with technology and having problems to access study materials or doubt clearance, majority of the total population performed better in the online examination amidst pandemic in comparison to the pre pandemic time. This was explained by the respondents to have happened because of the external aids they were getting in the digital form. It was clear that the online mode of examination provided students a comfortable platform to appear examination in, every student could appear their examination sitting at home. The method of examination was online and thus, it was easier to access direct answers during the exam which acted as an external aid. Lack of surveillance was stated to be one of the eminent reasons for the academic boost of the students. All the students were able to access help and discuss all the answers amongst each other through social media platforms and due to no physical restraint of accessibility of help, the results were inevitably way better than it used to be during the physical mode of examination prior out break of covid 19 pandemic.

### **CONCLUSION AND OPINION**

This paper has presented an empirical study on comparative analysis between the academic performance of college going students prior and amidst pandemic by means of questionnaire based explorative survey. The results of this survey determine the varying perspectives of academics in online and offline mode. After making a comparative analysis about the academic situation of college going students, it can concluded, that few of the aspects of digital mode of learning are worth appreciation. But it does not help the students to actually educate themselves. Though, there was an rampant increase in the attendance of students amidst pandemic but it was only possible because of the leniency to switch off one's video in the virtual mode of classes. This was the reason how students could represent themselves to be in class without actually being present in the class. It might have helped in increasing the percentage of attendance but it sure degraded the learning experience and the interactive sessions with the respective teachers. Similarly, the virtual mode might have aided the students to pass with flying colors but when it comes to determining the amount of knowledge gained in the digital mode, the answers remain uncertain. And it can be taken as an opinion that after analyzing the entire mode of education before and during pandemic, it is best to say that the online mode of education results in manufacturing more and more number of literate individuals but unknown number of educated individuals. Apart from the perks of attendance and external aids during examinations, the other factors such as college life experience and better accessibility to materials and other amenities remains unmatched in the physical mode of college. It goes without saying that despite all the benefits that came along the virtual mode of learning, all the students yearned for the in-campus college life experience. Along with that, it was specifically mentioned by the respondents in the interactive session post filling the questionnaire that doubt clearance and better understanding of the concepts stays unmatched in the physical form of learning. Summing up all the facets of online and offline mode of academics, it is best to state that no matter how captivating the digital grounds may seem, the "reality" remains unbeaten. The most immediate future work on this notion can be to determine the quality of learning in digital mode as compared to the physical mode and qualitative, empirical and exploratory research can further be made by the future researchers.

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