Paper Title:

Online Teaching during Covid19 Pandemic: Perspectives of Stakeholders

Track-Building Resilience

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Abstract
The present paper studied the experiences and problems confronted by students and teachers of higher education institutions of India for online teaching during Covid19 pandemic. The researchers through online survey, and interviews collected the data. The students' engagement was characterized by reading of digital study materials, asking questions for doubt clearing, reading of PPTs, noting down important points in the class and preparing class notes. The teachers' engagement was characterized by preparation of class note and PPTs, asking questions to students for making the class interactive, sharing of reading materials, delivery of lecture on the content, clarifying students' doubts and collection of assignment and feedback from students; and reflections for improving teaching. Both students and teachers preferred online classes and viewed that it is preferred for self-motivated students. Regarding its benefits, both teachers and student viewed that online teaching saves time in course coverage, improves their self-learning habits and exposed to wide variety of digital materials and collaborative technologies and have increased presentation, communication and interpersonal skills. Students are confronted with serious problems like, poor network connectivity, high rate of data consumption and physical discomforts. The prominent problems confronted by the teachers are poor students' attendance, poor participation, missing liveliness of teaching and no pedagogical orientation on online teaching.

Keywords: Online Teaching, Higher Education,Covid19,Students' Experiences, Teachers' Experiences

Introduction
All higher education institutions remained shutting due to nationwide lockdown for contagious Corona virus. The pandemic situation compels the higher education institutions to experiment with online mode of teaching and learning for the continuity of academic inputs to students. It is important to observe that the sudden shift from face-to-face education to online teaching, termed as emergency remote teaching, is quite different from online education (WADIA, 2020.The teachers and institutions were hardly ready to fulfill the requirements of online teaching.Students had no choice and many had scarcity of devices to attend online classes (Mishra and Mohanty, 2020). However,The University Grants Commission(UGC)(2020) as the higher regulatory body, advised all higher education institutions to conduct online teaching as an immediate strategic solution for the academic year 2020-21.*(*Source:UGC,547th meeting held on 29th May 20*)*.As a result all the Central and State Govt. institutions conducted online classesbest of their expertise and infrastructural facilities. The teachers and students participated in the online classes as per the institutional arrangements. The present paper intends to study how do the teachers and students experience the online classes and how do they perceive online classes. The study will also intend to record the problems confronted by the teachers and students and institutions for the smooth conduction of online classes.The similar attempt has been made by the researchers in different states of India and aboard as well.The researchers try to analyse the findings of those studies in three broad directions.

- Experience and Perception of Students
- Experience and Perception of Teachers
- Institutional Readiness for Online Teaching

While reviewing the researches on experiencesand perception of students regarding online teaching-learning, the researchers found that online mode of learning is easily accessible and can even reach to rural and remote areas.It is considered to be a relatively cheaper mode of education in terms of the lower cost of transportation, accommodation and overall cost of institution-based learning (Dhawan,2020 and Nawale,2021).Students are comfortable with online classes and are getting enough support from teachers but they do not believe that online classes will replace traditional classroom teaching (Kulal&Nayak, 2020). Similarly,students accept the online education during the COVID-19 but response is not very much positive which shows that students are not considering online education as an alternative to offline regular education. Most of the UG and PG students have a difference in opinion regarding online education. Perception does not vary based on the course of study but varies due to locations (Kumar &Tiwari, 2021). The students are facing academic and psychological challenges in online teaching during Covid19 (Kaur&Kaur, 2021).

The study conducted by Wangdi, Dema, and Chogyel (2021) found that the cost of internet in Bhutan is too expensive for students and teachers were not well-equipped with knowledge and skills to manage online classes. The study also showed that about a great majority of students do not have their own personal smartphones/laptops to attain online classes. Online classes have added to the already existing feelings of vulnerability among students. The digital divide has not only led to the exclusion of students from poor and marginalized backgrounds from digital learning but also pushed many underprivileged students towards depression and death (Sarkar, 2021,Khan &Mohakud, 2020)

While reviewing the researches on experiences and perception of teachers regarding online teaching-learning, the researchers found that the effectiveness of online learning depends on the designed and prepared learning material, the lecturer's engagement in the online environment, and lecturer–student or student–student interactions (Bao, 2020).The teachers are facing problems in conducting online classes due to a lack of proper orientation.There persists certain technical issues which need to be addressed for the effectiveness of the online classes (Kulal&Nayak, 2020).Technical issues are the most important, followed by teachers' lack of technical skills and their teaching style improperly adapted to the online environment (Coman, Țîru, Meseșan-Schmitz, Stanciu, &Bularca, 2020).The teachers are ready to learn new technology and methodology of the teaching. The teachers are facing challenges like,reaching the students in the remote area and teaching numerical subjects. Even after facing all the challenges, numbers of teachers were satisfied with online teaching and ready to face many challenges to make learning feasible for the students(Gurung,2021). Teachers believe that online education is actually diversifying knowledge of the teachers and increasing their technical knowledge but it has increased the working hours of the teachers.The young teachers are more actively participating in the online education to teach the students (Dubey and Singh, 2020).

While reviewing the researches on institutional readiness for online teaching, the researchers found that the higher education institutions in Romania were not prepared for exclusively online learning. The hierarchy of problems that arise in online learning changes in the context of the crisis caused by the pandemic. However, the last place was assigned by students to the lack of interaction with teachers or poor communication with them (Coman, Țîru, Meseșan-Schmitz, Stanciu, &Bularca, 2020). Another study findsthat lack of facilities, infrastructure, technical tools and the internet access are the major drawback for conducting online sessions. The suggestions and recommendations are provided to improve the current online teaching methods to outreach many students and improve quality teaching/learning experience (Naik, Deshpande, Shivananda, Ajey, & Patel, 2021). Most of the research findings and the thoughts of the experts centered round the ideas that it is an opportunity for the higher education institutions and the Govt. to redefining the higher education and change the policies accordingly (Kanwar,&Carr, 2020).

The review of the contemporary researches on online teaching and learning in higher education institutions during Covid19 pandemic focused on varied experiences, perceptions, problems and challenges confronted by the students and teachers. In some cases, students experience online teaching as an alternative arrangement and feel that online classes can't replace face to face teaching-learning. Students are facing problems like, non-availability of devices,

academic and psychological problems, etc.Similarly, teachers are facing problems of lack of technical knowledge and few research studies supports that online classes areincreasing technical skill and diversified knowledge of teachers.Institutions lack facilities, infrastructure, technical tools and the internet access.The present study will focus on the following research questions.

1. How do students and teachers experience online teaching in Higher education during Covid19 pandemic?
2. How do students and teachers perceive the benefits of online teaching in Higher education during Covid19 pandemic?
3. What are the problems confronted by students and teachers during online teaching in Higher education during Covid19 pandemic?

Methodology:

The present research is based on descriptive survey design to study the status of online classes in the higher education institutions (HEIs) during Covid19. The stakeholders are teachers and students of higher education institutions. This online survey was supported by Google form.Students pursuing higher education courses and the teachers teaching to those students were the target population. A questionnaire having 18 restricted items and one open-ended item for suggestions were included in the study. Items are formed on the demographic and professional information of the respondents, their experiences relating to content delivery and pedagogical skills, engagement during and after class, problems confronted by them and their suggestions for improvement of the online classes.The link of the questionnaire was shared through different online platforms to HEIs. All the students and teachers with whom link of the questionnaire are shared may be defined as accessible population. The questionnaire link was open for five days and finally 700 students and 207 teachersresponded the questionnaire.

Result

Profile of Respondents

Table-1: Profile of students Respondents*

HEIs		**Courses**			**Gender**		**Location**				**Social Category**		
Universities	Colleges	UG	PG	M. Phil &PhD	Male	Female	Urban	Semi Urban	Rural	Remote and Hill	Gen	SC	ST
55	143	63.1	35	1.9	20.7	79.3	42	20	36	2	75.1	15.3	9.6

*Figures are in percentage

Table No.-1 shows that 55 universities and 143 affiliated colleges participated in the survey. Students pursuing UG and PG or above courses proportionately represented in the sample. But the sample seems more crowded with Urban and female student representation. Location and social category participation is also not representative adequately.

Table No.2 :Profile of Teacher Respondents*

Designation			**Gender**	
Professor	*Associate Professor*	*Assistant Professor*	*Male*	*Female*
11	18	71	61.3	38.7
Social Category			**Highest Qualification**	
SC	*ST*	*OBC*	*GEN*	*M.A*	*M.Phil*	*Ph.D*
8.4	3.3	13	75.3	15	18.3	66.7
Type of Management			**Type of Institute (in frequency)**	

Self Financing	*Fully Govt aided*	*Semi Govt aided*	*University*	*Degree College*	*Professional Institute*
18.1	61.9	19.4	18	102	10
Location of the Institute			**Participation of Dibyanga**		
Urban	*Rural*	*Semi Urban*	*Dibyanga*		*Not Dibyanga*
64.7	22.2	13.1	1.3		98.7

*Figures are in percentage

Table No.2 depicts that 71% of the total respondents were Assistant Professors whereas, theremaining 29% were either Associate Professors or Professors, which better proportionate with the prevalent situation of higher education of India.The gender situation better represents the almost the real ratio of the male and female employed in the higher educationinstitutions.The number of general category is skewed positively. Relating to qualification of the respondents, it can be said that as there are 29% of the Associate Professors and Professors were participated and Ph.D is must for them as per UGC guidelines, thus the remaining 33.3% of the Assistant Professors having Ph.D degrees. About 82% of the respondents are from Govt.or Govt. aided universities or colleges which has good resemblance with the current situation of the higher education of India especially for liberal and traditional courses. The participation of university and degrees colleges in the sample also fine. But the number of the universities and colleges included are more from urban or semi urban areas. Thus, the sample is skewed positively towards urban representation. The number of the dibyanga teachers in the sample also coincides with the current situation.

A. Engagement of teachers

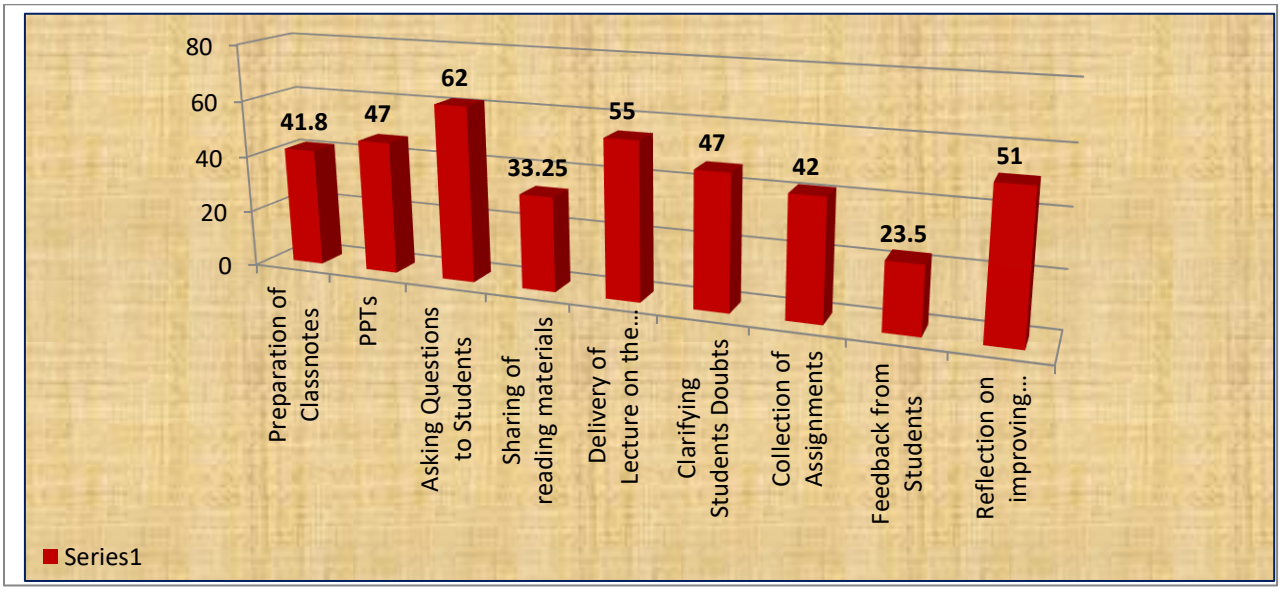

Fig.No.1 Teachers' Engagement

Fig.1 represents the preparation of the teachers for Online Classes. It is found that more than 41% of the teachers prepare class notes to deliver a lecture. It is also found 47% of teachers prepare PPTs to conduct their online classes.During delivery of the lectures, 62% of teachers ask few questions to students for ensuring their participation and making the class more interactive. It is also found that 33.25% of the teachers share some digital reading materials to the students before conduction of online class. The analysis reveals that 55% of teachers deliver lectures during online classes.47% of teachers clarify the students doubts by using supplementary reading materials,charts,diagrams and asking supplementary questions to class. The analysis also reveals that the most common practice of the activities accomplished by the teachers after class is collection of the assignments on the lesson delivered through online class and also shares the results with students. It is also found that 23.5% of teachersresponded that they chat with few students and collect feedback about online classes conducted by them.

51% of the teachers reflect on the strength and weaknesses of the classes conducted by them. Thus, it is clear from the discussion that more than 50% of the teachers like to reflect on their class for improvement.

B. Engagement of students

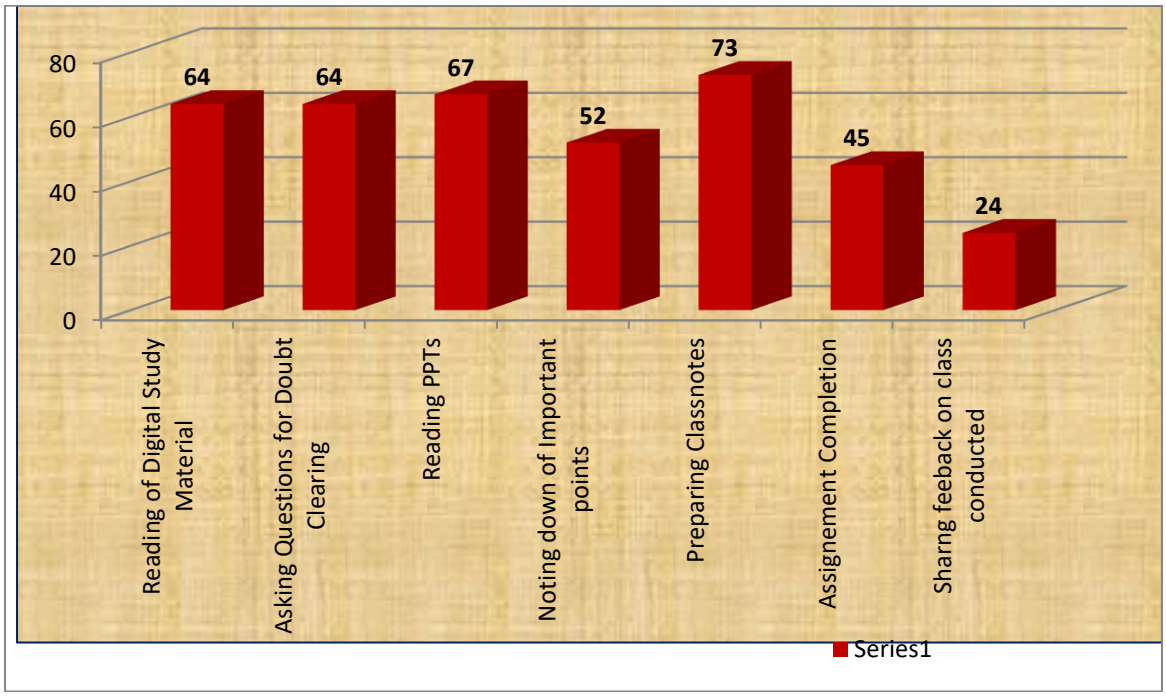

Fig. No.2: Engagement of students

Fig.No.2 shows that 64% of students engage themselves in reading digital study materials before coming to class and ask questionsto clarify doubts. 67% of students read the PPTs prepared by their teachers. About half of the students (52%) note down the main points in their diary.The analysis also reveals that 73% of the students prepare the class notes after the class. They also engage themselves in completing the assignment given by the teachers. 24% of students share their feedback to teachers through chat,phone, and email or Google form about the classroom teaching.

C. Benefits of Online Class

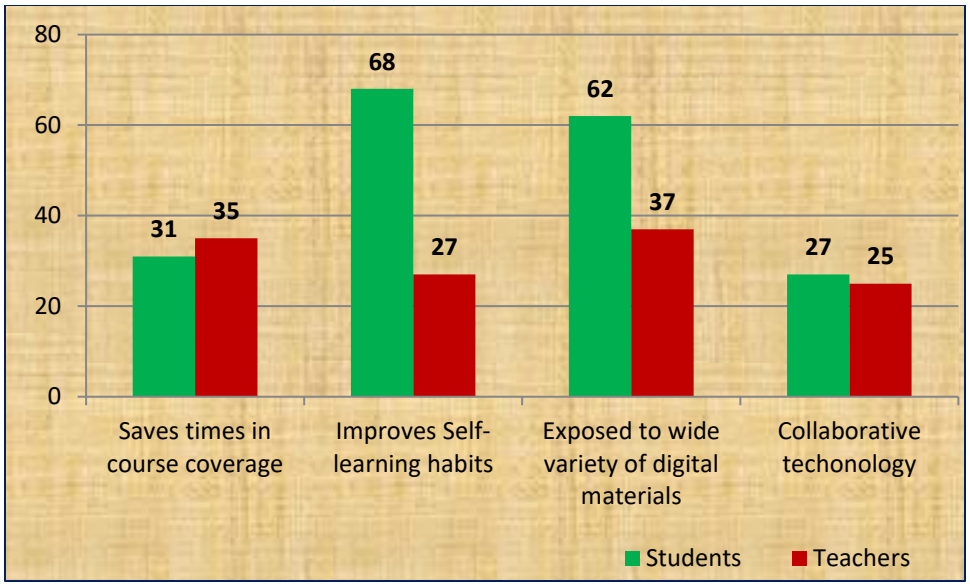

Fig. No.3 Students Perception about the benefits of Online Classes

It is found that 31% of studentsand 35% of teachers agreed that online classes save time for course coverage. It is also found that 68% of students and 27% of teachers agreed with the statement that online classes improveself-learning habits. Thus, thereis a great variation in the perception of students and teachers on the statement that online classes improveself-learning habit of the students.

62% of students and 37% of teachers agreed that online classesgives exposure to variety of materials than face to face mode.Thus, thereis a great variation in the perception of students and teachers on the statement that online classes give exposure to variety of materials than face to face mode.The responses of both students and teachers on the use of collaborative technologies slightly varies i.e. (25% to 27%).The teachers' responses increased by 2% only.

D. Development of personal skills

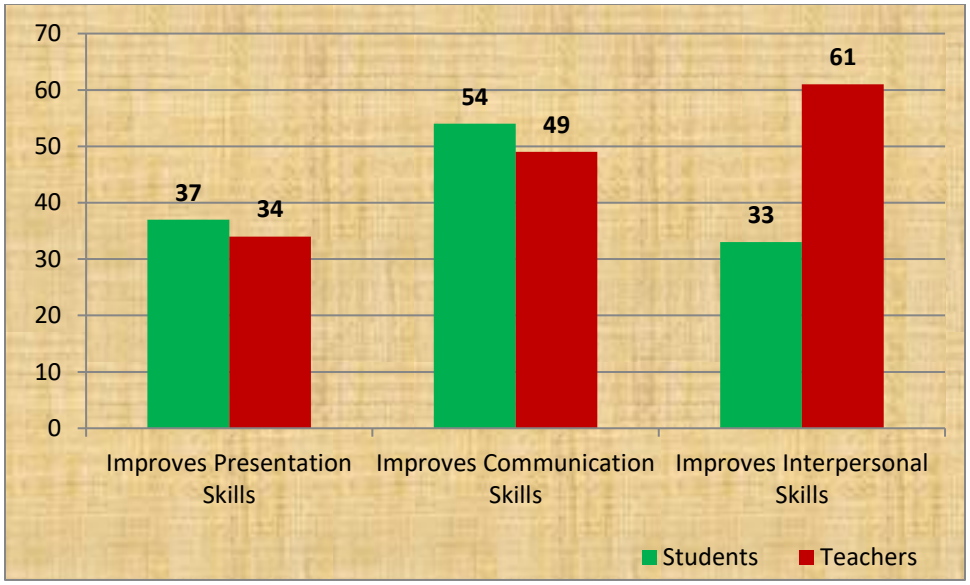

Fig.No.4 Skill Development as Perceived by students and teachers

The perception of students and teachers is almost in the same range (34% to 37%) on the point that online classes improve their presentation skills.More than 50% of the teachers responded that online classes have increased their communication skills whereas, 49% of students responded that onlineclasses improve their communication skill.33% of students responded that it has increased their interpersonal skills and 61% of teachers responded that it has increased their interpersonal skills.Thus, thereis a great variation in the perception of students and teachers on the statement that online classeshave improved their interpersonal skills.

E. Problems confronted by the Students

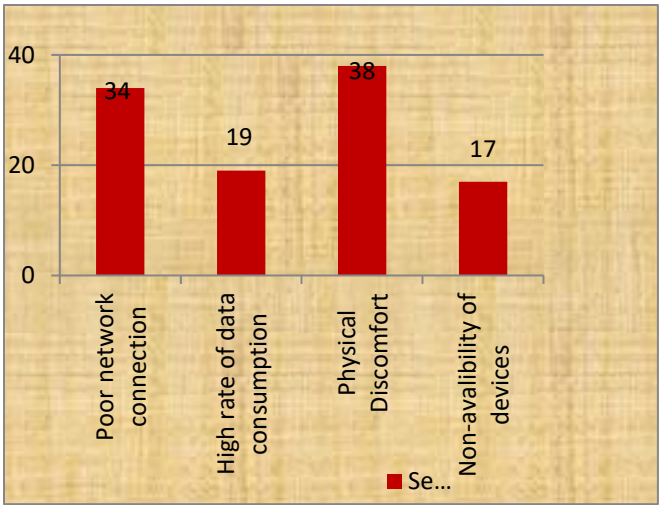

Fig.No.5**Problems confronted by the Students**

Fig.No.5 shows that 34% students faced network problem both from teacher and student side. 19% students faced problem due to heavy data consumption. 38% of students are facing problem of concentration, feeling boredom to seat before mobile or computer and suffering neck or eye or back pain. A sizeable proportion of students (17%) reported about the non availability of a device to attend online classes.

F. Problems confronted by the teachers

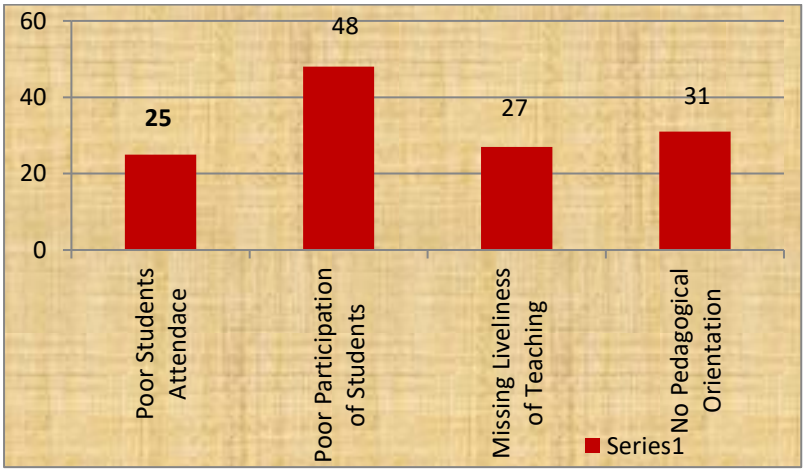

Fig. No.6 **Problems confronted by the Teachers**

The prominent problems faced by 25% of teachers is poor attendance of students in online classes and little more severe is 48% of teachers respondent that poor participation of students in the online classes. 31% of teachers responded that they are missing liveliness in teaching and 27% of teachers feel that they had no pedagogical orientation for better conduction of online classes.

Discussion

A reasonable number of universities and affiliated colleges participated in the survey which are scattered around the country. Students pursuing UG, PG or above courses proportionately represented in the sample. But the sample seems more crowded with urban and female student representation. Location and social category though not represented adequately but such variables have created differences in the perception of students(Kumar &Tiwari, 2021).It is to note that teachers participated in the survey are from face to face mode and had little experience of online teaching.Neither the teachers nor the institutions are exposed to core principles of online classes.If online education will be a long term phenomena or adoption blended approach for imparting learning at higher education, then the teachers, students and other institutional human resources should be oriented on online pedagogy.

Activitiesof students andteachers are interdependent and linked with each other.It has been observed that more than 50% of teachers and students ask questions to each other during the online classes that means classes are interactive in nature.More than 50% of teachers deliver lectures and more than 40% of teachers prepare classnotes and PPTs before conducting the class.It shows pre-preparation of teachers for the class.As a result more than 50% of students noting down the main points during the class,Thus class activitiesfor both students and teachers are asking questions, delivering and listening the lecture, presentation of PPTs, noting down of main points from lectures and PPTs.It is also found that more than 40% of teachers weregiven assignments to students at the end of the class.Again the teachers were collecting feedback from students through chat,phone and goggle form though this practice is confined to teachers who intend to improve their online classes. One step further,50% of teachersreflecton the online classes conducted by using multiple sources of feedback apart from students only.

Both teachers and students perceive that online teaching saves time in course coverage and they exposed to the use of collaborative technologies during teaching.It is to note that only 33.5 % of teachers shared digital materials.Itimplies teachers were less exposed to digital materials than students. More than 50% of students in habit of self-learning thus exposed to more digital materials.

Both teachers and studentsresponded that online classes have improved students' presentation and communication skills.More than 50% teachers responded that online classes have developed the interpersonal skills of students but in contrary, only 33% of studentssupported it.It is obvious that students get more scope for interpersonal relationships in face to face mode than online.Other researchers also found that students losing social relationships in online classes (??support with citing findings).The expectationof students is more compared to teachers.

The problems confronted by the students are less pervasive i.e less than 50%.Poor network connection and physical discomfort is expressed by 34% and 38% students respectively.It may due to remote locations and physical discomfort may be due to increased number of classes allotted by the institutions or illness or fobia of online classes of students.Only 17% of students responded that they have financial problem meeting the cost of high rate data consumption and purchasing of a device to attend online class.Both the reasons are related to their poor economic status.

The problems confronted by the teachers are less pervasive i.e. less than 32%.The factors relating to teachers efficiency, interest and institutional practice and student factors may be the reasons for poor attendance of students.As teachers do not have pedagogical orientation of online teaching, thus, they fail to bring liveliness in teaching and could not ensure better participation of students. However, it is found that classes are more interactive that means teachers are expecting students participation more than asking questions.

Hence, subject and class specific contents can be selected for online teaching. Study materials through various e-dipositories should be made available to students. Training on online classes may be arranged for teachers. Smart board facilities with High speed internet connectivity may be arranged at institutional level. Policy makers must ensure uninterrupted internet facilities to the students. State should introduce a common software for online teaching

mode which can be available to all the teachers and students. Students from below poverty line must be provided with the facilities in terms of handsets along with data pack to attend the classes.Technological support, incentive and training must be provided to teachers & students.State has to step in a massive manner to augment the digital infrastructure. It must also distribute laptops to the needy and meritorious students.

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