Perception and Attitude of Matriculation School Teachers towards Online Classes

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic situation upended the education sector with the closing of schools, colleges, and universities everywhere in India. Considering the alternative of no school closure, the virtual classroom has been an important tool to sustain educational objectives. The researcher analyzed challenges and perceptions of matriculation school teachers (those who are taking classes between IX standard to XII standard) towards online teaching in the Virudhunagar district by adopting a simple random sampling method. The important challenge associated with online teaching is boredom and monotony induced by increased exposure to the screen as well as the modus operandi of sitting at one particular place for prolonged hours and it also leads to some health problems. This article highlights the challenges, problems, and attitudes of matriculation school teachers towards online classes.

Keywords: Online Class, Perception, Attitude, COVID-19, Technology

Introduction

Education in any society does not depend so much on anyone else as on the teacher. The importance and the key position of the teacher in an educational system are recognized by everyone. The teacher is the most important factor for improvement in school education. Today teachers are greatly responsible for the student's future. Therefore the teacher should be physically and mentally strong so that they can achieve their objectives successfully. The Covid-19 pandemic situation upended the education sector with the closing of schools, colleges, and universities everywhere in India. Approximately, 1.72 billion learners worldwide and around 32 crore students in India have been affected due to the closure of educational institutions during the Covid-19 lockdown. It results in high socio-economic costs for education stakeholders. The uncertainty caused by the pandemic seems to discourage not only the parents but also the educators as well from being hopeful that the quality of the education process will be guaranteed. From March 2020 onwards students cannot physically attend classes but have to attend classes virtually. It leads to new types of problems for all the stakeholders, whichever faced before during the traditional classes. In this situation,

the teacher's role is more challenging and requires more involvement. The success of online education always depends on the teacher. Therefore the teacher should take extra effort for the successful implementation of virtual classes.

Statement of the Problem

The sudden epidemic of a deadly disease namely Covid-19 shook the entire world. This situation vastly affected and challenged education institutions across the world and compels educators to shift to a virtual mode of teaching. Many academic institutions that were earlier reluctant to change their traditional pedagogical approach had no option but to shift entirely to virtual teaching-learning. There was an overnight shift of normal classrooms into e-classrooms, that is, educators have shifted their entire pedagogical approach to tackle new market conditions and adapt to the changing situations. Now teachers are teaching students with the help of internet access by sitting at their home place. But it is not an easy one. It requires more preparation and innovative ways of teaching to attract the students as well as actively engage the class than the traditional classes. So there is a need to analyze the perceptions and challenges faced by teachers during online classes.

Scope of the Study

The teacher is the most important factor for improvement in school education. The quality of education always depends on the teachers and their quality. During the coronavirus pandemic situation, almost all higher education were forced to pivot their instructions online to allow teaching and learning to continue. Virudhunagar district is one of the famous districts as well as an industrial centre in Tamilnadu state. In the Virudhunagar district, many parents give more importance to their children's education. So they admit their children to matriculation school. They also expect quality education during the COVID-19 lockdown with innovative presentations. Considering the alternative of no school closure, the virtual classroom has been an important tool to sustain educational objectives. In online teaching, teachers need serious preparation to use online tools and platforms. But most of the teachers are not all ready for the new situation, which further opens the issues with our overall education. So there is a vast scope for the researcher to analyze challenges and perceptions of matriculation school teachers (those who are taking classes between IX standard to XII standard) towards online teaching in Virudhunagar district.

Review of Literature

Mohamed Hassan (2020) highlighted that the sudden changes to online classes lead to many challenges for the stakeholders of educational institutions. The main challenge is that some countries suffer infrastructure problems like internet availability and speed. Similarly, teaching members do not have updated study material suitable for online teaching and the problem relating to online examination and its reliability.

Shivangi Dhawan (2020) narrated that natural disasters can stimulate our motivation for the adoption of highly innovative communication technology and e-learning tools. To make e-learning effective in such difficult times, we need to focus on the use of technology more efficiently, that is, the usage of that technology that has minimum procurement and maintenance costs but can effectively facilitate educational processes.

Shabnam Gurung (2021) pinpointed that, some teachers conducting online classes is itself a great challenge because they are habitual of conducting

classroom teaching for many years. The most important challenge faced by teachers in online teaching is to reach/teach students of remote areas because there is the unavailability of strong internet access Even after facing all the challenges in online teaching teachers are motivated to learn the new technology and make the best possible use of all resources for effective teaching.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of this study are:

1. To understand the demographic profile of the respondents

2. To analyze the problems faced by the respondents during online teaching.

3. To identify the expectation of teachers in online teaching.

4. To analyze the health-related problems faced by the teacher due to online teaching.

5. To give suggestions for implementing online classes efficiently and effectively.

Methodology

To fulfil the objectives of the study, the researcher has collected both primary and secondary data. Primary data has been collected from the respondents through a pre-tested interview schedule. The interview schedule (designed in Google Forms) has been modified in light of the experience gained through the pre-testing. Secondary data has been collected from various studies, books, magazines, journals, the internet, newspapers, etc to supplement the present study.

The sampling design was formulated by the researcher to collect the data from the matriculation school teachers. The researcher selected 30 reputed matriculation schools in the Virudhunagar district by adopting a simple random sampling method. After that, 10 teachers from each school were selected by adopting the lottery method.

Analysis and Interpretation

Demographic Profile

Demographic factors lead to differences in attitudes and beliefs (Cianni & Romberger 1995, Mor Barak, Cherin & Berkman 1998) among the respondents. Demographics include such factors as gender, age, salary levels, and marital status. The researcher normally includes those factors which are assumed to have explanatory value in the research. The demographic profiles of the respondents are portrayed in the following table 1.

Table-1: Demographic Profile

Demographic Factors	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Gender wise Classification		
Male	123	41.00
Female	177	59.00
Marital Status		
Married	184	61.33
Unmarried	116	38.67

Experience		
Less than 5 Years	58	19.33
5 to 10 Years	93	31.00
10 to 15 Years	84	28.00
More than 15 Years	65	21.67
Monthly Income		
Less than Rs.15,000	108	36.00
Rs.15,000 to 20,000	84	28.00
Rs.20,000 to 25,000	67	22.33
More than Rs.25,000	41	13.67

Source: Primary Data

Table 1 reveals that out of 300 respondents interviewed, 59 per cent of them are female, 61.33 per cent of the informants are married, 31 per cent of the teachers possess 5 to 10 years of experience and only 13.67 per cent of the teachers are earning more than Rs.25,000 per month.

Reasons for Choosing the Teaching Profession

Choosing a carrier is one of the important decisions in one's life. The teaching profession is always an interesting, challenging, and service-oriented profession. The reasons for selecting teaching differ from one person to another person. The interviewer gathered the information about the reasons for choosing the teaching profession and displayed it in table 2.

Table-2: Reasons for Choosing Teaching Profession

S. No	Reasons	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Passion	52	17.33
2	Like Teaching Profession	94	31.33
3	Social Respect & Honorable work	58	19.33
4	Chances for Continuous Learning	29	9.67
5	Limited Work than other jobs	36	12.00
6	More Holidays and limited working time	31	10.34
	Total	125	100.00

Source: Primary Data

It is lucid fact from the above table 2 that, 17.33 per cent of the respondents selected the teaching profession because they feel teaching profession as passion, 31.33 per cent of the respondents are like teaching profession than any other so they choose this profession, 19.33 per cent of the informants are attracted by the social respects, 9.67 per cent of the informants given importance to the chance for continuous learning, 12.00 per cent of the respondents consider the working hours and the remaining 10.34 per cent of the respondents are attracted by the leave facilities.

Professional Problems

A teacher is a kingpin in the entire system of education. Almost all cultures of the civilized world have considered their teachers in very high esteem. The success of the education and students' future always depends upon the quality of the teacher. The teacher discharges their duties effectively only when they feel safe, having adequate freedom, and for career development. So the interviewer collected the information about the professional problems faced by the teacher and these details are set out in table 3.

Table-3: Professional Problems

S.No	Professional Problems	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Lack of Job Security	73	24.33
2	Low Salaries	69	23.00
3	Little Opportunity for Career Development	36	12.00
4	Inadequate Annual Increment	64	21.33
5	Job Mobility	36	12.00
6	Lack of Incentives	22	7.34
	Total	300	100

Source: Primary Data

It is inferred from the above table 3 that, out of 300 respondents, 24.33 per cent of them have confronted with the problem of lack of job securities, 23 per cent of them are not satisfied with their salary level, 12 per cent of them have cited the problem of lack of career development, 21.33 per cent of them are facing the problem of the incremental policy of the management, 12 per cent of the informants pointed out the problem of lack of job mobility in the teaching profession and the remaining 7.34 per cent of them have indicated the problems in lack of attractive incentives schemes.

Online Teaching Profile

The covid-19 pandemic situation affected the working system of the Indian education sector. The classroom teaching techniques were changed. Now the teachers are taking classes in virtual mode. The researcher gathered the basic information relating to online teaching techniques and presented it in the following table.

Table-4: Online Teaching Profile

Online Teaching Profile	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Platform Used		
Google Meet	83	27.67
Zoom	97	32.33
Cisco Webex Meet	61	20.33
Whatsapp	26	8.67
Google Classroom	24	8.00
Others	9	3.00
Teaching Tools Used		
Whiteboard	101	33.67
Powerpoint and other Microsoft Products	134	44.67
Pre-recorded videos	39	13.00
YouTube and other videos	22	7.33
Others	4	1.33
Number of Hours per Day		
Less than 3 hours	8	2.67
3 Hours	98	32.67
4 Hours	164	54.66
More than 4 Hours	30	10.00
Place		
At Home	64	21.33
At School	236	78.67

Source: Primary Data

It is obvious from the above table 4 that, out of 300 respondents 32.33 per cent of the respondents are using the Zoom app and 27.67 per cent of the teachers are taking online classes through the Google meet platform.

Out of 300 teachers, the majority of the respondents (44.67 per cent) are using PowerPoint and other Microsoft products for their presentations while taking online classes and one-third of the respondents are using whiteboard at the time of taking online classes.

Out of 300 informants, 54.66 per cent of the teachers are teaching 4 hours per day, and more than three-fourths of teachers were taking online classes at their school.

Occupational Problems Relating to Online Classes

The primary role and responsibility of a teacher are multitasked in the present-day school system. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, educational institutes were compelled to pivot their instruction online to allow teaching and

learning to continue. Online teaching poses a different set of challenges for teachers. To ascertain the problems faced by the teacher, a study was made and the responses are analyzed by adopting the Ranking method and its results have been given in table 5.

Table-5: Occupational Problem

S. No.	Work-Related Problems	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	Total
1	Lack of Classroom Atmospheres	35	34	36	34	31	31	27	25	24	23	300
2	Lack of Network and Power Problem	25	34	32	43	46	33	31	24	17	15	300
3	Inability to focus on Screen	49	47	41	36	32	26	22	18	15	14	300
4	Unable to Monitor Students Behavior	46	42	44	41	34	27	21	19	16	10	300
5	Not familiar with Online Teaching Applications	47	42	41	39	41	34	26	15	9	6	300
6	Not possible to Interact with Students	41	45	49	41	36	31	23	12	12	10	300
7	Unwanted Interruption by Students	21	23	14	21	32	42	41	39	33	34	300
8	Homework and Attendance Verification	21	15	17	16	19	36	42	47	51	36	300
9	Difficult in preparing Presentations	12	13	18	19	16	28	36	44	52	62	300
10	Distributions from the Family Members	3	5	8	10	13	12	31	57	71	90	300
	Total	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	300	

Source: Primary Data

The orders of merit given by the respondents were converted into ranks by using the following formula.

Percentage position= [100 (Rij-0.5)/Nij]

The percentage position of each rank thus obtained is converted into scores by referring to the table given by Henry Garret Ranking Technique. Then for each factor, the scores of individual

respondents are added together and divided by the total number of respondents for whom the scores were added and presented in table 6.

Table-6: Weighted Average Points

S.No.	Problems	Garrett mean Score	Weighted Average Points	Rank
1	Lack of Classroom Atmospheres	15783	52.61	6
2	Lack of Network and Power Problem	15886	52.95	5
3	Inability to focus on Screen	17183	57.28	3
4	Unable to Monitor Students Behavior	17171	57.24	4
5	Not familiar with Online Teaching Applications	17428	58.09	1
6	Not possible to Interact with Students	17287	57.62	2
7	Unwanted Interruption by Students	13879	46.26	7
8	Homework and Attendance Verification	13168	43.89	8
9	Difficult in preparing Presentations	12122	40.41	9
10	Distributions from the Family Members	10093	33.64	10

Source: Primary Data

The above-ranking analysis pointed out that the shift to online learning is not an easy one. It requires restructuring course components using new pedagogical approaches, learning activities, and tech tools. It was new to many teachers. So many teachers are facing many problems to deliver their lectures through online mode in an attractive manner and it got the first rank. Interaction among the students is one of the most important elements for a successful education, but it is more difficult in online education and it has scored as 2nd rank.

Positive Attitude towards Online Teaching

The rise of the CoronaVirus lockdown has compelled education systems worldwide to find alternatives to the traditional classroom environment. Considering the alternative to traditional face-to-face classrooms, virtual schooling becomes an important technique to sustain skills development during school closures. This is not only new to the students but also to the staff members. The online teaching method increases the tech knowledge among the teachers. The study about the positive attitudes of teachers towards the online teacher and the result is presented in table 7.

Table-7: Positive Perception Towards online teaching

S. No.	Factors	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total Points
1	Increase ICT Knowledge	153 (765)	116 (464)	28 (84)	3 (6)	0 (0)	1319
2	Learn the innovative teaching tools	108 (540)	95 (380)	83 (249)	12 (24)	2 (2)	1195
3	Access new study material	46 (230)	60 (240)	74 (222)	61 (122)	59 (59)	873
4	Improve professional competency	51 (255)	64 (256)	81 (243)	76 (152)	28 (28)	934
5	Develop creative thinking	21 (105)	36 (144)	48 (144)	103 (206)	92 (92)	691
6	Feel comfort in taking a class at home	16 (80)	22 (88)	35 (105)	98 (196)	129 (129)	598

Source: Primary Data

It is obvious from table 1.6 that teachers strongly feel that the compulsion of online classes increases their tech knowledge, followed by that they understand and use the innovative teaching aids in their teaching paradigm. More overdue to online class the professional competency of the teachers is also increased.

HYPOTHESIS: 1

Ho: There is no significant association between the experience and positive attitude of the respondents towards online teaching.

H1: There is a significant association between the experience and positive attitude of the respondents towards online teaching.

To test the above Hypothesis, the researcher used the Chi-Square Test. The result has been displayed in table 8.

Table-8: Experience and attitude towards online teaching

Factors	Chi-Square Value	Significant	Accept/ Reject Ho
Increase ICT Knowledge	21.582	.042	Rejected
Learn the innovative teaching tools	21.570	.043	Rejected
Access new study material	31.833	.001	Rejected
Improve professional competency	6.542	.886	Accepted

Develop creative thinking	30.130	.000	Rejected
Feel comfort in taking a class at home	20.708	.014	Rejected

Source: Computed Data

Among the above six factors of positive attitude of respondents towards online education except "Improve professional competency", for the remaining factors P-value is less than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected at a 5% level of significance. So, the researcher concludes that there is a significant association between the experience and positive attitude of the respondents towards online teaching.

Staff Expectation

In the past, a large proportion of online courses were simple transfers of classroom materials and methods into an online environment. However, it is not possible for regular school education, especially matriculation school. Online education should be learner-centric. To fulfill the goals of online education the education institution must fulfill the staff's expectations. The researcher gathered information about the teachers' expectations to carry out online teaching effectively and efficiently. This piece of information is presented in Table 9.

Table-9: Professional Problems

S.No	Professional Problems	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	ICT enabled Training Programme	69	23.00
2	Support from the parents	47	15.67
3	Developing adequate and updated technology in Schools	96	32.00
4	Assistance from colleagues and office staff	53	17.67
5	Reducing Workload	35	11.67
	Total	300	100

Source: Primary Data

The study reveals that, among 300 respondents, 23.00 percent of the teachers expect ICT enabled training programme to increase their tech knowledge, followed by 15.67 percent of the respondents expects proper cooperation from the parents, 32.00 percent of the informants required adequate and updated technologies in their school to carryout online teaching in an effective manner, 17.67 percent of the respondents are pointed out that, the proper support and necessary assistance from their colleagues and office staff help them to take the classes effectively and the remaining 11.67 percent of the informants expected that the workload should be reduced.

HYPOTHESIS: 2

Ho: There is no significant difference between the teaching experience and their expectations.

H1: There is a significant difference between the teaching experience and their expectations.

To test the above Hypothesis, the researcher used the Kruskal Wallis Test. The result has been displayed in table 10.

Table-10: Experience and their expectations

Age	Size	Mean Rank	Chi-Square Value	Significant	Accept/ Reject Ho
Less than 5 Years	58	78.53			
5 to 10 Years	93	69.39	12.017	.017	Rejected
10 to 15 Years	84	69.88			
More than 15 Years	65	74.50			

Source: Computed Data

Since the P-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected at a 5% level of significance. Hence, the researcher concludes that there is a significant difference between the teaching experience and their expectations

Health Problems due to Online Classes

Matriculation school teachers are engaging themselves to take online classes atleast 3 hours a day. During this time, they must sit in front of the system or mobile and continuously monitor the screen. It affects the health of the teachers. So, the researcher collected information about the health problems faced by the respondents. These details are set out in table 11.

Table-11: Health Problems

Health Problems	Some Time		Mild		Always		Sever		Very Severe		Mean
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Eyesight	43	14.3	48	16.0	65	21.7	80	26.7	64	21.3	3.25
Headache	60	20.0	63	21.0	65	21.7	55	18.3	57	19.0	2.96
Backbone	78	26.0	55	18.3	101	33.7	49	16.3	17	5.7	2.58
Body pain	114	38.0	69	23.0	53	17.7	29	9.7	35	11.7	2.34
Sleeping problem	92	30.7	113	37.7	55	18.3	31	10.3	9	3.0	2.17

Source: Primary Data

During online teaching, the teacher must observe the screen to take online classes and monitor the students. Continuous screening affects the eye power of the teachers. Out of 300 respondents, 14.3 per cent of the respondents are affected by eyesight problem sometimes, another 16.0 per cent of the respondents mildly has an eyesight problem, 21.7 per cent of the respondents are always having eyesight problem, 26.7 per cent of the

respondents are severely affected by eyesight problem and the remaining 21.3 per cent of the respondents are very severely affected by eyesight problem.

Among 300 respondents, 20 per cent of the respondents are sometimes facing headache problem, 21.0 per cent of the respondents are mildly affected by the headache problem, 21.7 per cent of the respondents are always having headache problems, 18.3 per cent of the respondents are severely affected by headache problems and the remaining 19.0 per cent of the respondents are very severely affected by the headache problems.

Because of backbone problems, 26 per cent of the respondents are affected by the backbone problem sometime only, 18.3 per cent of the respondents are mildly having backbone problems followed by 33.7 per cent of the respondents are always having backbone problems 16.3 per cent of the respondents are severely affected by the backbone problem and the remaining 5.7 per cent of the respondents are very severely affected by backbone problem.

Out of 300 respondents, 11.7 per cent of the respondents are very severely affected by body pain and only 3 per cent of the respondents are very severely affected by sleeping problems.

To recap the health problems, "EyeSight" problems were given the highest importance with a mean score of 3.25.

HYPOTHESIS: 3

Ho: There is no significant association between age and health-related issues due to online teaching.

H1: There is a significant association between age and health-related issues due to excessive travelling

To test the above Hypothesis, the researcher used the McNemar-Bowker Test. The result has been displayed in table 12.

Table-12: Age and health Problems

Health issues	Chi-Square Value	Significant	Accept/ Reject Ho
Association between age and Eyesight	49.147	.000	Rejected
Association between age and headache	20.708	.014	Rejected
Association between age and backbone problem	34.128	.000	Rejected
Association between age and body Pain	39.286	.000	Rejected
Association between age and sleeping problem	31.161	.001	Rejected

Source: Computed Data

Since the P-value of the association between age and health problems is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected at a 5% level of significance. Hence, it is concluded that there is a significant association between age and health problems due to online classes.

Recommendation

From the study, the following suggestions are made

1. The sudden move to online teaching was new to many teaching faculties. To make them familiar with online teaching the management must organize an e-tech-oriented training program for their staff members for increasing ICT knowledge.

2. The management should arrange the necessary infrastructure facilities in their school campus to carry out the online class effectively.

3. To monitor the students, assess and evaluate the students' performance the office staff and colleagues should help the teaching faculties. It reduces the excessive workload of the teaching faculties.

4. The management should reduce the workload of the teaching faculties and also provide adequate incentives to their staff members to induce them.

5. Sitting in front of the system or mobile and continuously monitoring the screen will lead to health issues among the teachers. To avoid these issues the teachers should relax while taking online classes continuously.

6. The teachers should also learn the innovative and recent teaching tools to handle online teaching attractively.

7. Interaction among students is one of the important concepts for successful online education. Therefore the teacher should prepare the study material seriously and should develop interactive online classes as well as share the class materials.

Conclusion

Learning is a continuous and life-long process in an individual's life. Learning helps the individual to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge in order to achieve his or her desired goals in their life. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic situation, every country in the world faced many challenges not only on the health and economic but also on the education scale. The rise of the CoronaVirus lockdown has compelled education systems worldwide to find alternatives to the traditional classroom environment. Considering the alternative of traditional face-to-face classrooms, virtual schooling becomes an important technique to sustain skills development during school closures. The sudden move to online teaching was a drastic step because not only the students were not ready for such a move, but the faculty and institutions as well. Compared with the other stakeholders of education, teachers face many difficulties to accomplish the objective of teaching and learning. In online teaching, many of the teachers mostly are facing problems like lack of technological knowledge, technological changes/up-gradation, lack of IT support, unoptimized software for mobile devices followed by security issues. Similarly, another biggest challenge faced by the matriculation school teacher is assessing students' progress. Even though matriculation school teachers frequently organize online tests, the success of the test is always questionable. Another issue relating to assessment is if the students upload their answer sheets online and the concerned teachers across different sections for the different subjects should download the answer sheet and verify the same by viewing the screen. It is not an easy one and it increases the stress among the teaching staff. Another important challenge associated with online teaching is

boredom and monotony induced by increased exposure to the screen as well as the modus operandi of sitting at one particular place for prolonged hours and it also leads to some health problems. In order to solve the issues, the management of the school should arrange ICT-enabled training programmes for their staff members to handle e-tech-related issues and develop adequate infrastructure facilities in the schools to carry out the online teaching effectively. The management also reduces the excessive workload and also provides adequate incentives to their staff members. It attracts staff members to take online classes effectively and efficiently. To conduct an online exam effectively the student's involvement and support from their parents are the more important ones. Apart from that the assistance from office staff and other colleagues to monitor the students help the online teaching and online test on the correct path. In order to break monotony/boredom or fatigue in online teaching, the teachers should interactively take the classes, and present their topic in innovative methods by using different ICT techniques. The teacher should also relax to avoid health-related issues. Due to COVID-19 and pandemic situations online teaching is the only tool to sustain educational objectives. Therefore teachers should be open-minded, interested, and flexible in developing themselves became self-taught, and try to improve their teaching skills to tackle the online teaching challenges and handle online classes effectively and efficiently.

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