



International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Growth Evaluation



International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Growth Evaluation

ISSN: 2582-7138

Received: 04-11-2021; Accepted: 20-11-2021

www.allmultidisciplinaryjournal.com

Volume 2; Issue 6; November-December 2021; Page No. 239-241

Online Education: A struggle for rural students in Fatima College, Madurai during covid-19 pandemic

S Rajalakshmi

Assistant Professor, Department of History, Fatima College, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India

Corresponding Author: S Rajalakshmi

Abstract

Online or Virtual Education has become a widely used terminology in the field of education due to the COVID-19 pandemic. From a conventional education many educational institutions in India shifted towards virtual learning. Urban students could quickly adapt to this mode. But it is still a major issue for the rural students.. This paper discusses the issues of rural students in this pandemic period. Rural students are not completely equipped with utilities like fast internet, uninterrupted power supply and electronic devices.

There have been improvements regarding basic infrastructural facilities but many of them are still grappling with these challenges to make education completely digital or online. They depend on their family members' mobile phones for learning and attending classes, making it an arduous exercise. Many rural Students who have been always using the traditional method of learning in classroom are not able to focus on online platforms.

Keywords: Online Education, covid-19 pandemic, Fatima College, improvements

Introduction

Online or Virtual Education has become a widely used terminology in the field of education due to the COVID-19 pandemic. From a conventional education many educational institutions in India shifted towards virtual learning. Urban students could quickly adapt to this mode. But it is still a major issue for the rural students in Tamil Nadu.

Background of the Research

This paper discusses the issues of rural students in this pandemic period. Many students studying in urban institutions and staying in hostels have returned to their native villages due to the lockdown. In rural areas they face challenges to access the online classes conducted by their educational centres mainly due to poor data connectivity, lack of access to laptops and smartphones, and power cut issues. All the rural students are not equipped with facilities like fast internet, uninterrupted power supply and electronic devices. Teachers conduct online classes through Google meet, Zoom Meet, and uploading of materials in the Google classroom and what's app groups.

Aim of the Research

Aim of the research is to sensitize the society about the issues of online classes faced by the rural students.

Research Methodology

Universe: The Researcher is working as an Assistant Professor in the Department of History, Fatima College, Madurai. So she took the Students of History department for her study. It reveals many difficulties currently prevailing in online education. The College is located in Madurai. The students are coming from villages located at an average distance of 30 kms from the college.

Tools for data collection: The Researcher has used Questionnaire as a tool for the collection of data.

Sampling: Since the universe is defined, Census method is used to collect the data. Total strength of the students in the Department of History in this academic year is 183 (I year students 56, II Year students 55, III year students 56, I PG students 5, II PG students 11. Among them 98 students are from coming from rural areas.

Research Objectives

1. To Know about the availability and usage of electronic gadgets for the online class by the rural students
2. To find out the problems faced by the rural students in attending the Online Classes
3. To know about the impact of online classes on their health

Summary of Findings

Ownership of laptop and Personal Mobile Phone

Generally, laptops or desktops are the preferred mode of accessing online classes. Most PG students who responded to survey, have their own phones and laptop. Among the students who have responded, students have mobile wireless data connection, only 2 percentages of the students have fixed broadband connections like Digital Subscriber Line (DSL), Fiber To The Home (FTTH) etc.

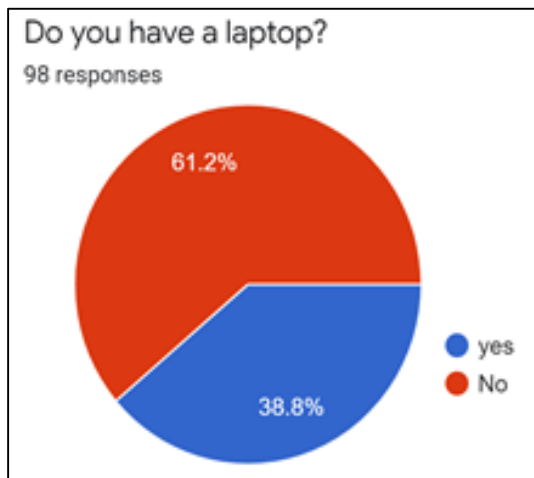


Fig 1

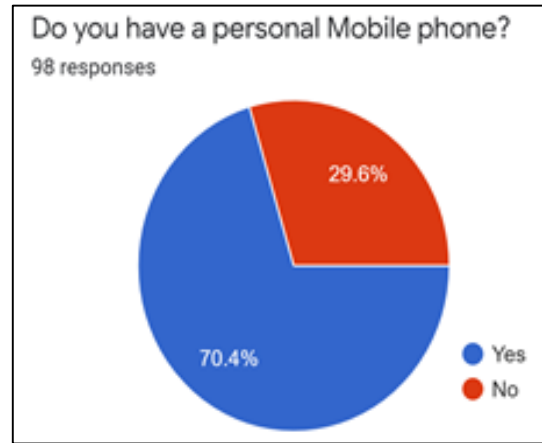


Fig 2

Nearly 29 percentages of students depend on their family members' mobile phones for learning and attending classes. They depend on the mobile phones of their parents, especially siblings. In case they have to do any urgent duties, the phones are not available to the students. So they missed their classes.

Health issues

Watching small screens in the mobile phones for longer hours could be detrimental to students' health. 72 percentage of students faced health problems. Nearly 61 percentages of them faced eye problem. Other problems are like headache, body pain, obesity, depression.

Obstacles in attending online classes and submission of papers

Among the 98 students, 87 students faced issues in attending online classes. The issues varied like network issue, house hold duties, financial issues or power cuts etc. Online classes required high bandwidth or the strong internet connection. But many don't have those facilities.

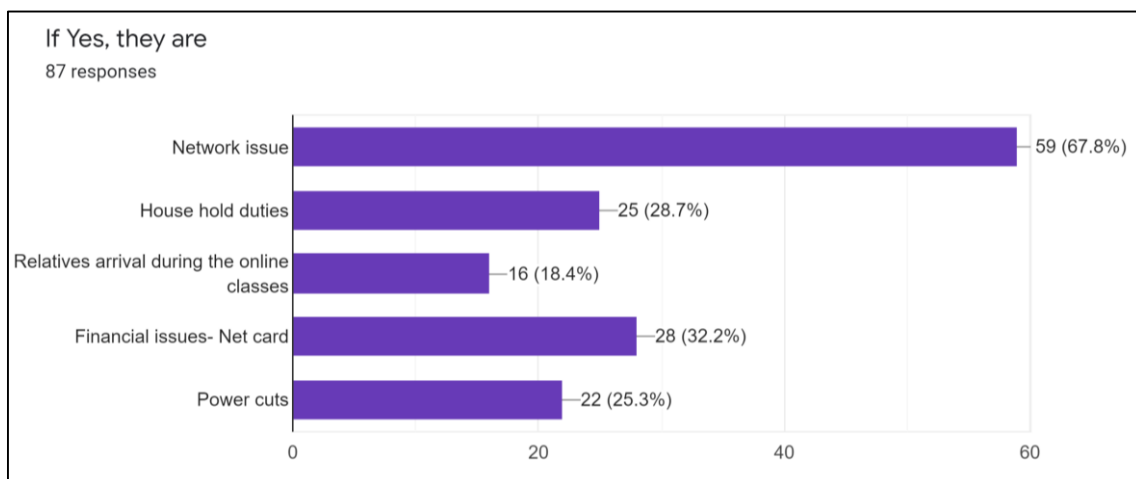


Fig 3

After writing the test, the students have to submit the answer scripts in their respective Google class room. In submission of test papers, assignments and quizzes nearly 50 percent of the students faced many problems like uploading issues, lack of knowledge of scanning the test papers [1].

Government Scheme

The state government of Tamil Nadu introduced the Tamilnadu Free Data card scheme 2021. The state government provided 2GB internet data per day to College students absolutely free for attending online classes [2]. More

than nine lakh students in Tamilnadu in government arts and science colleges, polytechnic colleges, engineering colleges and students in private colleges get free data to attend their classes.

Nearly 60 percentage students fully depended on this free data card given by the government and expressed about its usefulness.

Family of the Students

Family members support is essential for student’s educational growth. They have to attend their online classes from home. For this they need the support of their family members. Most of the students don’t have a separate room for their study, so there is lot of chances for disturbances like arrival of guest, others at home may watch TV programmes, house hold duties etc. Many students expressed that their parents compelled them to attend functions and to go outing.

Satisfaction about Online class

Apart from the problems, 61 percentages of the students felt satisfied with the online classes. 37 percentages of them felt that there was no need for the online classes to continue next year once the current corona virus crisis is over and eagerly waiting to come directly to college and learn.

financial problems. Family support is vital in attending online classes.

The survey says that the main struggle of the rural students to attend the online classes is poor data connectivity and lack of Laptops/Desktops to access the online classes. The Government of Tamilnadu has introduced a scheme to provide laptops to the higher secondary students and free data to the college students It solved the issue to a half level. There have been improvements regarding basic infrastructural facilities but many of them are still grappling with these challenges to make education completely digital or online. Local and national governments must work together with the IT to speed up the process of bringing innovative and cost-effective online education tools to rural India.

References

1. Data Collected from the Questionnaire.
2. Data Collected from Questionnaire.
3. Times of India, Chennai, 1.2.2021.

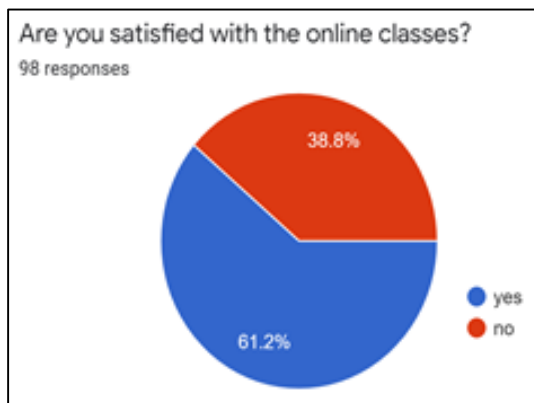


Fig 4

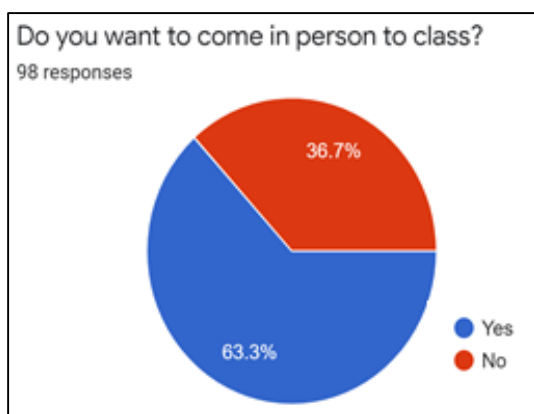


Fig 5

Conclusion

Students in rural areas have to deal with power supply issues and older electronic devices, which are often a hindrance to online classes. The rural students faced more struggles in online education than the students who are in urban. Small percentage of students in villages possess desktop or laptop computers .Furthermore, purchasing data plans for learning could also incur a lot of expenses for families who face