CHALLENGES IN ONLINE EDUCATION – AN EVIDENCE FROM ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGE STUDENTS IN NAMAKKAL

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Abstract
Online education is a flexible instructional delivery system that encompasses any kind of learning that takes place via the Internet. Online learning gives institutions an opportunity to reach students who may not be able to enroll in a traditional classroom course and supports students who need to work on their own schedule and at their own pace. The online education has some core varieties such as computer-based training, web-based training, internet-based training, online training, electronic learning, mobile learning, computer-aided distance education. The quantity of online education in most disciplines is large and increasing rapidly whereas colleges and institutions that offer online education are also increasing in number. But the advantages are getting suppressed by the challenges during the online education. In this regard, this study has been made to explore the challenges in online education among arts and science college students in Namakkal. This study is based on descriptive research design and survey method. The researchers have approached the random sampling method to select the sample size of 140 students of Arta and Science colleges. The primary data collection has been implemented through developed a structured questionnaire which used five points Likert scale to get the opinion of the college students challenges during online education. The collected sample data have been entered into MS-Excel and have been utilized for statistical analysis. The analysis has been carried out by applying the statistical tools such as percentage analysis, mean score, standard deviation and ANOVA test with the help of SPSS 22.0 software. The study showed from analysis that the developed hypothesis is rejected and there is a significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to gender, degree studying and studying year of the students.

Keywords: Arts and Science College, Students, Challenges, Internet and Online Education.

1.   Introduction

In the last 20 years, the online has grown from being nearly non-existent into the largest, most accessible database of information ever created. It has changed the way people communicate, shop, socialize, do business and think about knowledge and learning. Much more than just a new twist on online education, institutions are changing the face of traditional classrooms and making education more accessible than ever before. Online education is a form of education where students use their home computers through the internet. For many non-traditional students, among them all those who want to continue working full time or raising families, online graduations and courses have become popular in the past decade. Often online graduation and course programmes, some of which are conducted using digital technologies, are provided via the online learning portal of the host university.

Although the online education is convenient, the college students find it difficult to adapt to the online learning environment immediately after the traditional classroom learning environment. The college students who have always been studying in the traditional classroom mindset are not able to focus on the online platform at once. It is important for them to accept the new learning environment with an open

Research Paper
Impact Factor: 6.462
Peer Reviewed & Indexed Journal
www.ijmsrr.com

IJMSRR
E- ISSN - 2349-6746
ISSN -2349-6738

mind. Now-a-days online education is using Artificial intelligence to adjust the content according to individual needs. It helps in providing personalized courses to identify their weaknesses and strengths for better learning outcomes. Many students are not well equipped with a high internet connection that is required for online learning. Due to this, they face challenges in going live for online education and other platforms that require an internet connection. They face technical issues in online classes as they are not much aware of technology and computer applications. Lack of computer education is a major concern in today's world. The students of Arts and Science college find difficulty in managing their time with online education whereas it is completely new for them and requires intensive work. They need a scheduled planner to manage their time in an effective manner.

2.   Statement of the Problem
The learning that takes place online or over the internet is called online education. Online education is a form of education where students use their home computers through the internet. For many non-traditional students, among them all those who want to continue working full time or raising families, online graduations and courses have become popular in the past decade. It is the type of education that requires computers, laptops, or smartphones and a high-speed internet connection. A lot of institutions conduct online education to students who do not have access to a physical classroom. This method is beneficial in cases where students are living in a remote location. Also, students who wish to enhance their skill set but do not have the time or resources also engage in this type of education. Online learning offers some of the benefits for college students who seek flexibility while attending college. Although challenges faced by the students while attending online education like without face-to-face classes, losing its tradition attraction and reverting back in the same speed as it got established. In addition, adaption to the online learning environment immediately, high internet connection, lack of awareness about online technologies. In this situation, this study aimed to anlayse the challenges in online education among Arts and Science College students, Namakkal.

3.   Objectives of the Study
- To study the demographic profile of the Arts and Science College students in Namakkal.
- To analyse the challenges in online education among arts and science college students.

4.   Hypothesis of the Study
- There is no significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to gender of the students.
- There is no significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to nature of college of the students.
- There is no significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to status obtained by college.
- There is no significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to department studying of the students.
- There is no significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to degree studying of the students.
- There is no significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to studying year of the students.

5. Research Methods

This study discussed about the challenges in online education among Arts and Science College students, Namakkal. This study was based on descriptive research and survey method. For this study, the structured questionnaire has been administered and distributed among students of Arts and Science colleges for gathering the primary data. The sample size has consisted of 140 college students who have been selected by random sampling method. The collected sample data have been coded by using MS-Excel software and analysed by statistical tools namely percentage analysis, mean score, standard deviation and ANOVA test through SPSS 22.0 software.

6. Results and Discussion

This section has assessed that the demographic profile of selected students of Arts and Science Colleges, Namakkal. The researcher has computed the collected details about the challenges faced in online education of college students with the help of 5 points Likert scale technique whereas mean score with respect to selected variables have been furnished in the following table.

7.1 Demographic Profile of the Students

The details of demographic profile of the selected students of arts and science colleges have been discussed in the following table.

Table 1: Demographic Profile and Challenges in Online Education of the Students

No.	Variables Name	Number of Respondents	Percentage	Mean Score
1	**Type of the College**			
	• Government College	35	25.0	3.93
	• Self-Financing	61	43.6	3.72
	• Aided	44	31.4	3.57
	Total	**140**	**100.0**	
2	**Nature of College**			
	• Gents	48	34.3	3.59
	• Women	29	20.7	3.74
	• Co-education	63	45.0	3.83
	Total	**140**	**100.0**	
3	**Status Obtained by College**			
	• NBA	73	52.1	3.67
	• NAAC	42	30.0	3.71
	• ISO	25	17.9	3.91
	Total	**140**	**100.0**	
4	**Department Studying**			
	• Arts	58	41.4	3.75
	• Science	82	58.6	3.69
	Total	**140**	**100.0**	
5	**Degree studying**			
	• UG	52	37.1	4.04
	• PG	69	49.3	3.71
	• M.Phil. / Ph.D.	19	13.6	3.63

Research Paper
Impact Factor: 6.462
Peer Reviewed & Indexed Journal
www.ijmsrr.com

IJMSRR
E- ISSN - 2349-6746
ISSN -2349-6738

No.	Variables Name	Number of Respondents	Percentage	Mean Score
	Total	**140**	**100.0**	
6	**Studying Year**			
	• 1st Year	49	35.0	3.90
	• 2nd Year	67	47.9	3.60
	• 3rd Year	24	17.1	3.71
	Total	**140**	**100.0**	

- From the above table, it is assessed that 25.0% of the students are studying in government colleges, 43.6% of the students are studying in self-financing colleges and 31.4% of the students are studying in aided colleges.
- It is observed that 34.3% of the students are studying in gents colleges, 20.7% of the students are studying in women colleges and 45.0% of the students are studying in co-education colleges.
- It is showed that 52.1% of the students are studying in NBA accredited colleges, 30.0% of the students are studying in NAAC obtained colleges and 17.9% of the students are studying in ISO colleges.
- It is evaluated that 41.4% of the students are studying in Arts department and 58.6% of the students are studying in science department.
- It is divulged that 37.1% of the students are studying UG, 49.3% of the students are studying PG and 13.6% of the students are studying M.Phil./Ph.D.

7.2 Challenges in Online Education

The researcher has focused that the challenges in online education among Arts and Science College students. For this purpose, six statements have been framed to know the challenges in online education among the college students studying in Arts and Science Colleges, Namakkal. The Cronbach Alpha value for the statements of challenges in online education is 0.821. This shows that the reliability of the challenges in online education is good and fit for analysis of this study. It could be measured that most of the college students opined that they need training programs to help efficiently use online education platform and virtual classes with the mean score and standard deviation of 3.87 and 1.11 respectively followed by acquiring online education skills is necessary for every student which leads some difficulty among some of the students with the mean score and standard deviation of 3.82 and 1.13 respectively.

7.3 Relationship between Demographic Profile and Challenges in Online Education

This section has analysed that the relationship between the demographic variables and challenges in online education of selected students. In order to analyse the relationship between selected independent variables and challenges in online education, a hypothesis has been developed and tested by using ANOVA test.

Type of the College and Challenges in Online Education

H_0 : There is no significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to gender of the students.

Table 2: Type of the College and Challenges in Online Education

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	'p' value
Between Groups	2.570	2	1.285	3.964	0.021**
Within Groups	44.401	137	0.324		
Total	46.970	139			

Note : ** - Significant at 5% level

From the analysis, it is inferred that the 'p' value is lesser than 0.05 so the null hypothesis has been rejected. Hence, there is a significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to gender of the students.

Nature of College and Challenges in Online Education
H_0 : There is no significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to nature of college of the students.

Table 3: Nature of College and Challenges in Online Education

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	'p' value
Between Groups	1.564	2	0.782	2.359	0.098[NS]
Within Groups	45.407	137	0.331		
Total	46.970	139			

Note : NS - Not Significant

From the analysis, it is observed that the 'p' value is greater than 0.05 consequently the null hypothesis has been accepted. Therefore, there is no significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to nature of college of the students.

Status Obtained by College and Challenges in Online Education
H_0 : There is no significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to status obtained by college.

Table 4: Status Obtained by College and Challenges in Online Education

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	'p' value
Between Groups	1.137	2	0.569	1.700	0.187[NS]
Within Groups	45.833	137	0.335		
Total	46.970	139			

Note : NS - Not Significant

From the analysis, it is explored that the 'p' value is greater than 0.05 while the null hypothesis has been accepted. Hence, there is no significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to status obtained by college students studying.

Department Studying and Challenges in Online Education
H_0 : There is no significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to department studying of the students.

Research Paper
Impact Factor: 6.462
Peer Reviewed & Indexed Journal
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IJMSRR
E- ISSN - 2349-6746
ISSN -2349-6738

Table 5: Department Studying and Challenges in Online Education

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	'p' value
Between Groups	0.105	1	0.105	0.310	0.579[NS]
Within Groups	46.865	138	0.340		
Total	46.970	139			

Note : NS - Not Significant

From the analysis, it is examined that the 'p' value is greater than 0.05 accordingly the null hypothesis has been accepted. So, there is no significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to department studying of the students.

Degree Studying and Challenges in Online Education
H_0 :   There is no significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to degree studying of the students.

Table 6: Degree Studying and Challenges in Online Education

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	'p' value
Between Groups	2.389	2	1.195	3.671	0.028**
Within Groups	44.581	137	0.325		
Total	46.970	139			

Note : ** - Significant at 5% level

From the analysis, it is noted that the 'p' value is lesser than 0.05 thus the null hypothesis has been rejected. Therefore, there is a significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to degree studying of the students.

Studying Year and Challenges in Online Education
H_0 :   There is no significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to studying year of the students.

Table 7: Studying Year and Challenges in Online Education

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	'p' value
Between Groups	2.649	2	1.325	4.095	0.019**
Within Groups	44.321	137	0.324		
Total	46.970	139			

Note : ** - Significant at 5% level

From the analysis, it is confirmed that the 'p' value is lesser than 0.05 subsequently the null hypothesis has been rejected. So, there is a significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to studying year of the students.

7.   Findings
- It is found that most of the students are studying in self-financing colleges. From the analysis, it is indicated that high level of challenges in online education is perceived by the government college students.

- It is explored that most of the students are studying in co-education colleges. From the analysis, it is cleared that high level of challenges in online education is perceived by the co-education college students.
- It is obtained that most of the students are studying in NBA accredited colleges. It is noted from the analysis that high level of challenges in online education is perceived by the students studying in ISO obtained colleges.
- It is stated that most of the students are studying in Science department. It is found from the analysis that high level of challenges in online education is perceived by the students of Arts department.
- It is confirmed that most of the students are studying PG degree. It is determined from the analysis that high level of challenges in online education is perceived by the UG students.
- It is proved from the mean score analysis that most of the college students are need training programs to help efficiently use online education platform and virtual classes followed by acquiring online education skills is necessary for every student which leads some difficulty among some of the students with the mean score of 3.87 and 3.82 respectively.
- The ANOVA test showed that there is a significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to gender of the students.
- From the ANOVA, it is measured that there is no significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to nature of college of the students.
- From the ANOVA, it is indicated that there is no significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to status obtained by college students studying.
- The ANOVA observed that there is no significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to department studying of the students.
- From the ANOVA, it is inferred that there is a significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to degree studying of the students.
- The ANOVA concluded that there is a significant mean difference in challenges in online education with regard to studying year of the students.

8. Suggestions

- The findings observed that high level of challenges in online education is perceived by the government college students due to insufficient infrastructure facilities. So, the government should build required infrastructure facilities to conduct online education without interruption by the challenges will be reduced among students.
- It could be showed from the study that high level of challenges in online education is perceived by the co-education college students. So, institutions should identify the adequate training needs among the co-education college students and should provide training opportunities in online education. In addition, faculties of arts and science college should come forward to rectify the challenges faced by students in online education.
- From the study, it is divulged that maximum level of challenges in online education is perceived by the students studying in ISO obtained colleges because these institutions are not having essential online facilities. Hence, these colleges should ensure the online facilities and technologies such as proper internet connection, Wi-Fi connection, Webcam, etc. for diminishing challenges of Arts and Science college students.
- The Arts and Science college students should be provided access to support devices that can help them solve technical problems via call, email or live chat.

9.   Conclusion

This study aimed to analyze the challenges in online education among arts and science college students in Namakkal. This study confirmed that high level of challenges in online education is perceived by the students belong to government college, co-education college, studying in ISO obtained colleges and studying in of Arts department. The arts and science college students have faced many challenges while attending online education like without face-to-face classes, losing its tradition attraction and reverting back in the same speed as it got established. In addition, the students feel it difficult to adapt to the online learning environment immediately after the traditional classroom learning environment. Many students are not well equipped with a high internet connection that is required for online learning. Hence, lack of awareness of the students' requirements in this system and lack of understanding these needs by online education providers. In order to reduce these challenges of college students, they together with faculties, should work together and they should stay in touch with their faculties and inform them regarding their challenges faced towards online education in the study area.

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