

Students' Perception towards Online-Class during COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

Effect of COVID-19 on educational institution has interrupted the traditional method of teaching and learning which ultimately created the demand of online class. In this background, study aim was to find out the perception of students towards online-class during COVID-19 pandemic. The study was based on descriptive research design. The study was carried out by using the structured questionnaire survey, and self-administered online Google form was developed to collect the data. The data were collected from 109 students of two colleges; one public and one private college. The reliability test of collected data was checked by calculating the Cronbach's Alpha value. Frequency, percentage, and mean was used to analyze the data. Finding of the study revealed that 81.7% students adopted online class first time in their learning career. However, majority of respondents felt confident to use online-class function and adopt content. Similarly, 58.1% respondents reported that they faced the technical problem during Online-class, more than 59% respondents believed that online class was one of the easiest platforms to share the knowledge and collect the required information. Most of the respondents intended to use online-class platform to enhance their learning and communication skill. One of the main benefits of online class was that it has saved the students from risk of transmission of COVID-19 and contributed to the regularity of teaching and learning of college. Considering such critical time, colleges should provide the adequate knowledge of Information Technology (IT) to their students and teachers to enhance their technical skill.

Keywords: Covid-19, Online-class, pandemic, perception, students.

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic affects everyone and everywhere. Threat of the pandemic as a result of COVID-19 is causing a series of transformations in the different spheres of social, political, labor, and economic life (Espino-Díaz, Fernandez-Caminero, Hernandez-Lloret, Gonzalez-Gonzalez, & Alvarez-Castillo, 2020). The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic severely damaged the world's most developed countries and is becoming a major threat for low- and

middle-income countries (Lone & Ahmad, 2020). Different countries have established different forms of quarantine, interrupting numerous ordinary routines and affecting work, free movement, trade, and, in particular, education (Alzahrani, Alrusayes, & Aldossary, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic has created the largest disruption of education systems in history, affecting nearly 1.6 billion learners in more than 190 countries and all continents (United Nation, 2020).

The education sector in Nepal and across the world has been one of the hardest hits owing to the pandemic which has deeply affected learning outcomes for children. Nepal is still combating the COVID-19 pandemic in the world, like other nations. The Government of Nepal implemented a lockdown starting on March 24 to close schools, colleges, universities including all Educational institution (Sherchand, 2020). Because of the compulsory closure of schools and universities for a considerable period of time, the education system has changed dramatically, with the distinctive rise of e-learning whereby teaching and learning is undertaken remotely and on digital platforms (Dawadi, Simkhada, & Giri, 2020). Many universities and colleges worldwide suspended classroom teaching due to the novel corona virus pandemic and switched to online teaching (Mahdy, 2020). In Nepal Online class has been a reality since COVID-19 pandemic and served as an alternative educational tool (Gupta, Shrestha, Shrestha, Acharya, & Pandey, 2020). Many education institutions shifted to Online class through Zoom, Microsoft Team, Google meet, Google Classroom. In the context of Nepal, the practice of online classes is new to many colleges (teachers and students) and also there is no good access to electricity and internet service in most parts of the country (Subedi, Nayaju, Subedi, Shah, & Shah, 2020). In this scenario it is importance to understanding of how students perceive and react to the practice of Online -Class along with how to apply these approaches most effectively to enhance effectiveness of Online-Class.

There are number of researches undertaken to identify the impact of COVID-19 on education sectors. Some the studies conducted in Nepalese context are: 'Impact of COVID-19 on the Education Sector in Nepal - Challenges and Coping Strategies', conducted by Gupta et al. (2020), next, 'Perception of BDS students of Kathmandu University on online learning during COVID-19 pandemic', Conducted Dawadi et.al. (2020), 'Effects of COVID-19 Pandemic on Medical Education in Nepal', conducted by Jeevan Bahadur Sherchand (2020). However, none of these studies provides a clear picture of student's perception towards Online-Class during COVID-19 Pandemic with reference to management students. Thus, this study attempts to fill this gap.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The main objective of this study is to analyze the students' perceptions towards the Online-Class during Covid-19 lockdown period.

MATERIALS & METHODS

The present study is descriptive in nature (Mahat & Mathema, 2018). This study was conducted in the public (Shanker Dev Campus) and Private (Times International Collage)

collage of Kathmandu District. The study collected the primary data to solve the research problem. However, secondary data were also used to discuss and justify the finding of this study. Management students studying under Tribhuvan University who were willing to participate, attending online-class were the primary respondents of this study. The study had used the structured survey questionnaire having with five-point Likert scale. Data was collected from 109 students of selected college. Self-administered online Google form-based survey questionnaire was sent via email, Messenger, Microsoft team to the students. Frequency, Percentage, Mean, Standard deviation were used to analyze the data by using the SPSS (20 versions). The researcher used Cronbach's Alpha to test the reliability of data because it is one of the important tools used to check the internal consistency of data. The Cronbach's alpha value of data was 0.908 which indicates the excellent quality of data.

RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

The study had examined the demographic information of Students, like Gender, Age, Education, Experience of Online-Class, IT skill. The data presented in the Table 1 shows that majority of respondents were Male (53.2%) and 46.8% were Female.

Table1: Demographic Information of Respondent

			Frequency		Percent
Gender	Female		51		46.8
	Male		58		53.2
	Total		109		100
Education	+2 Level		32		29.4
	Bachelor Level		45		41.3
	Master Level		32		29.4
	Total		109		100
Previous experience in Online-Class	Yes		20		18.3
	No		89		81.7
	Total		109		100
IT Skill	High		8		7.3
	Moderate		89		81.7
	Low		12		11
	Total		109		100
Descriptive Statistics					
Age of Respondents	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
	109	17	35	21.46	3.50

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Education level of respondents as mentioned in above Table 1 which shows that in total 32 (29.4%) respondents belong to +2 level, 45 (41.3%) respondents belong to Bachelor level, similarly 32(29.4%) respondents belong to Master Level. Thus, this study shows that the highest

number of respondents belong to Bachelor, whereas +2 level and Master level have equal number of respondents.

In case of experience in Online Class, the data shows that 20(18.3%) respondents had previous experience in online class whereas 89(81.7%) respondents reported that they had no previous experience of online class. Likewise, the study also explored IT skill of students. Out of 109 respondents, 8(7.3%) had high skill, 89(81.7%) respondents had moderate skill, and 12(11%) respondents had low skill. The study found that the age of students was minimum 17 years to maximum 35 year. The average age of students was 21.4679 years.

I. Usefulness of Online Class

Increase in the COVID pandemic worldwide has also added to the importance of online classes (Kula & Nayak, 2020). Although e-learning offers the convenience, flexibility and ability to access classes remotely on the participant's own time, participants may feel isolated. This is because online learning is an individual act of joint activity, which may give the feeling that they are acting entirely on their own (Fatonja, et al., 2020). The perception of students on usefulness of online class was presented in below table.

Data was collected from the respondents by asking the question that studying through online mode provide them flexibility time to learner, data shows that there was minimum percentage (3.7%) of respondents who responded on 'strongly disagree' with the statement. Apart from this, 17.4% of respondents disagreed, 31.2% of respondents had neutral response with the statement. Similarly, 43.1% of respondents replied 'Agree' with the statement and 4.6% marked on 'strongly agree'. On aggregate, more than 47% of respondents agreed that online class has provided flexibility time to learn whereas 21.1% respondents were disagreed with the same statement. The result indicates that comparatively higher number of students were happy with the online class which provided flexible time to learn.

Table 2: Students perception on usefulness of Online-class

Statements		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Studying through online mode provides flexibility time to the learner	Count	4	19	34	47	5
	%	3.7	17.4	31.2	43.1	4.6
Online-Class can enable students to study irrespective of where they are located.	Count	7	15	12	45	30
	%	6.4	13.8	11	41.3	27.5
There are technologies available to take tests and submit assignments electronically.	Count	2	6	11	63	27
	%	1.8	5.5	10.1	57.8	24.8
There are electronic tools available to communicate with lecturer.	Count	4	10	11	63	21
	%	3.7	9.2	10.1	57.8	19.3
Students have no technical problems at the time of Online-Class.	Count	37	46	17	6	3
	%	33.9	24.2	15.6	5.5	2.8

Source: Field Survey, 2021

During the time of questionnaires survey, respondents were asked if Online-Class can enable students to study irrespective of where they are locating or not. It can be interpreted that, about 6.4% of respondents Strongly disagreed followed by 13.8% disagreed with the statement. About 11% respondent had neutral response and remaining 41.3% agreed followed by 27.5% respondents strongly agreed with the statement. In all, most of the respondents 44.8% agreed with the statement that online class was one of the medium for them to study from their chosen location and only 20.2% respondents disagreed with the statement.

Respondents were asked that there is technology available to take tests and submit assignments electronically due to online class. In this statement, in total 57.8% of respondents agreed while 24.8% respondents strongly agreed and 10.1% respondent gave neutral response, whereas 5.5% disagreed followed by 1.8% strongly disagreed with the statements. Researcher had divided the respondents into two categories: Agree and Disagree. It was found that, majority (82.6%) of respondents agreed followed by 7.3% disagreed and rest had neutral response. The result shows that majority of students agreed that there was easy to submit assignment and to attend in the exam through online technology.

Similarly, in the question about the availability of electronic tools to communicate with lecturer, in the response of this question, in total 57.8% of respondents agreed while 19.3% respondents strongly agreed and 10.1% respondent's response neutral answer whereas 9.2% disagreed followed by 3.7% strongly disagreed with the statements. Researcher had divided the respondents into two categories: Agree and Disagree. It was found that, majority (77.1%) of respondents agreed followed by only 12.9% disagreed which indicates that there was easy availability of electronic tools to communicate with lecturer.

Similarly, researcher asked that students had no technical problems at the time of Online-Class. In this question, in total 33.9% of respondents strongly disagreed while 24.2% respondents disagreed and 15.6% respondent had neutral response whereas 5.5% agreed followed by 2.8% strongly agreed with the statements. In totality, it was found that, majority (58.1%) of respondents disagreed followed by 8.3% agreed which indicates that most of the students face technical problems like difficulty in connection, electricity problem, weak internet, difficulty to submit assignment on time and so on.

II. Self-Efficacy of Using Online-Class

Self-efficacy beliefs determine how people might feel, think, be motivated and therefore how they act and behave (Alqurashi, 2016). Student self-efficacy seems particularly important in challenging learning environments (Peechapol, Na-Songkhla, Sujiva, & Luangsodsai, 2018). So, the study had also asked to the students about their perception on self-efficacy of using online class.

Table 3: Students perception on self-efficacy of using Online-class

Statements		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel confident while using online	Count	9	14	43	32	11

Class system.	%	8.3	12.8	39.4	29.4	10.1
I feel confident while operating Online-Class functions.	Count	5	20	31	44	9
	%	4.6	18.3	28.4	40.4	8.3
I feel confident while using online-learning content.	Count	7	20	32	47	3
	%	6.4	18.3	29.4	43.1	2.8

Source: Field Survey, 2021

The study collected the data from the respondents by asking the question that whether they felt confident while using Online class. In total, comparatively higher numbers (39.4%) of respondent had given neutral response while 29.4% respondents agreed and 10.1% respondent responded strongly agree, whereas 12.8% respondents were disagree followed by 8.3% were strongly disagree with the statements. Researcher had divided the respondents into two categories: Agree and Disagree by computing the data of same kind. It was found that, 47.8% of respondents agreed followed by only 21.1% disagreed; from data it is clear that majority of the students felt confident while using online class whereas next larger numbers (39.4%) of respondent's responded neither disagree nor agree.

Respondents were asked that whether they feel confident while operating online class. In this response, in total 40.4% of respondents agreed followed by 8.3% strongly agreed while 28.2% respondent had neutral response whereas 18.3% respondent responded disagree followed by 4.6% strongly disagreed with the statements. In total, it was found that, majority (48.7%) of respondents agreed followed by only 22.9% disagreed. From the above result of data, it is clear that most of the students were confident to operate online class.

Similarly, students were asked whether they felt confident while using online learning content. In the response of this question, in total 43.1% of respondents agreed followed by 2.8% strongly agreed while 29.4% respondent had neutral response and 18.3% respondent's response on disagree followed by 6.4% strongly disagreed with the statements. In total, it was found that, majority (45.9%) of respondents agreed followed by only 24.7% disagreed in the response of level of confidentiality while using the online-learning contents. From the result of data, it is clear that most of the students were found confident to using online learning content.

III. Ease Use of Online-Class

A previous review study reviewed the 96 peer-reviewed research articles published between 2006 to 2016, and revealed that a majority of studies witnessed an increased reliance on online platforms due to ease of use and availability of online services. For both students and teachers, they felt comfortable to communicate with each other due to fast and efficient connectivity provided by the online communication system (Froment, Javier, & Rocio, 2017). In this connection, the study also collected data to know the ease use of online class. The data is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Students perception on ease use of Online-class

Statements	Strongly	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly
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		Disagree				Agree
I believe Online-Class platforms are user friendly.	Count	10	13	31	48	7
	%	9.2	11.9	28.4	44	6.4
It would be easy for me to find necessary information when using an Online-Class platform.	Count	6	12	26	55	10
	%	5.5	11	23.9	50.5	9.2
I believe that using Online-Class service can simplify the-learning process.	Count	12	18	27	38	14
	%	11	16.5	24.8	34.9	12.8
The set-up of the online-learning service is compatible with the way I learn.	Count	8	30	32	36	3
	%	7.3	27.5	29.4	33	2.8

Source: Field Survey, 2021

During the time of questionnaires survey, respondents were asked “I believe Online-Class platforms are user friendly”. It can be interpreted that, about 9.2% of respondents Strongly disagreed followed by 11.9% disagreed with the statement. About 28.4% respondent had neutral response and remaining 44% agreed followed by 6.4% respondents strongly agreed with the same statement. In total, most of the respondents (50.4%) agreed with the statement that online class was user friendly and only 21.1% respondents disagreed with the statement.

Respondents were also asked that “It would be easy for me to find necessary information when using an Online-Class platform”. In this statement, in total 50.5% of respondents agreed, 9.2% respondents strongly agreed and 23.9% respondent gave neutral response, whereas 11% disagreed followed by 5.5% strongly disagreed with the statements. Researcher had divided the respondents into two categories: Agree and Disagree by computing the value of agree and disagree. Then, it was found that, majority (59.7%) of respondents agreed followed by 16.5% disagreed and rest had neutral response. The result shows that majority of students agreed that online class platform was easy medium to find the necessary information that they want.

Similarly, students were asked that “I believe that using Online-Class service can simplify the-learning process”. In the response of this question, in total 34.9% of respondents agreed followed by 12.8% strongly agreed while 24.8% respondent had neutral response and 16.5% students responded on disagree followed by 11% strongly disagreed with the statements. In total, it was found that, majority (47.7%) of respondents agreed followed by only 27.5% disagreed. From the result of data, it is clear that most of the students believed that online class had supported to simplify the learning process.

Researcher asked that “The set-up of the online-learning service is compatible with the way I learn”. In the response of this question, in total 33% of respondents agreed followed by 2.8% strongly agreed while 29.4% respondent had neutral response and 27.5% respondent’s response on disagree followed by 7.8% strongly disagreed with the statements. In total, it was found that majority (35.8%) of respondents agreed followed by 34.8% disagreed. From the result of data, it is clear that most of the students were found compatible in online class.

IV. Behavioral Intention of Using Online-Class-learning

The outbreak of COVID-19, educational institutions of the affected countries across the globe have stopped taking classes physically and shifted to online mode in order to contain the spread of the virus. Although different forms of online learning have been there in the scenario for quite some time, the current situation of a full-scale online learning can have certain consequences (Khan, Zainuddin, Mahi, & Arif, 2020). Focusing of this special issue on students' perspectives, it is very necessary to know the behavioral of using online class following table presented.

Data were collected from the respondents by asking the question that “I intend to use online-class to develop my learning habit”, data shows that 10.1% of respondents who responded on ‘strongly disagree’ with the statement. Apart from this, 17.4% of respondents disagreed, 19.3% of respondents had neutral response with the statement. Similarly, 46.8% of respondents replied ‘Agree’ with the statement and 9.2% marked on ‘strongly agree’. On aggregate, more than 56% of respondents agreed that online class has provided flexibility time to learn whereas 24.8% respondents were found disagree with the same statement. The result indicates that using of Online class developed students learning habit.

Table 5: Students behavioral intention of using Online-class learning

Statements		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I intend to use online-class to develop my learning habit.	Count	11	16	21	51	10
	%	10.1	14.7	19.3	46.8	9.2
I intend to use online-class to saves time, money and effort.	Count	6	15	19	37	32
	%	5.5	13.8	17.4	33.9	29.4
I intend to use Online-Class as an autonomous (free) learning tool.	Count	5	11	26	52	15
	%	4.6	10.1	23.9	47.7	13.8
I intend to use Online-Class to enhance my communication skill.	Count	7	11	21	53	17
	%	6.4	10.1	19.3	48.6	15.6
I intend to use online-class so to study in comfortable (Homely) environment.	Count	10	10	22	46	21
	%	9.2	9.2	20.2	42.2	19.3

Source: Field Survey, 2021

The study had collected the data from the respondents by asking the question “I intend to use online-class to saves time, money and effort”. In total, comparatively higher numbers (33.9%) of respondent had given agreed response while 29.4% respondents strongly agreed and 17.4% respondent responded neutral response, whereas 13.8% respondents were disagree followed by 8.5% were strongly disagree with the statements. Researcher had divided the respondents into two categories: Agree and Disagree by computing the data of same kind. It was found that, 63.3% of respondents agreed followed by only 19.3% disagreed; from data it is clear that majority of the students wanted to used online class to save time money and effort.

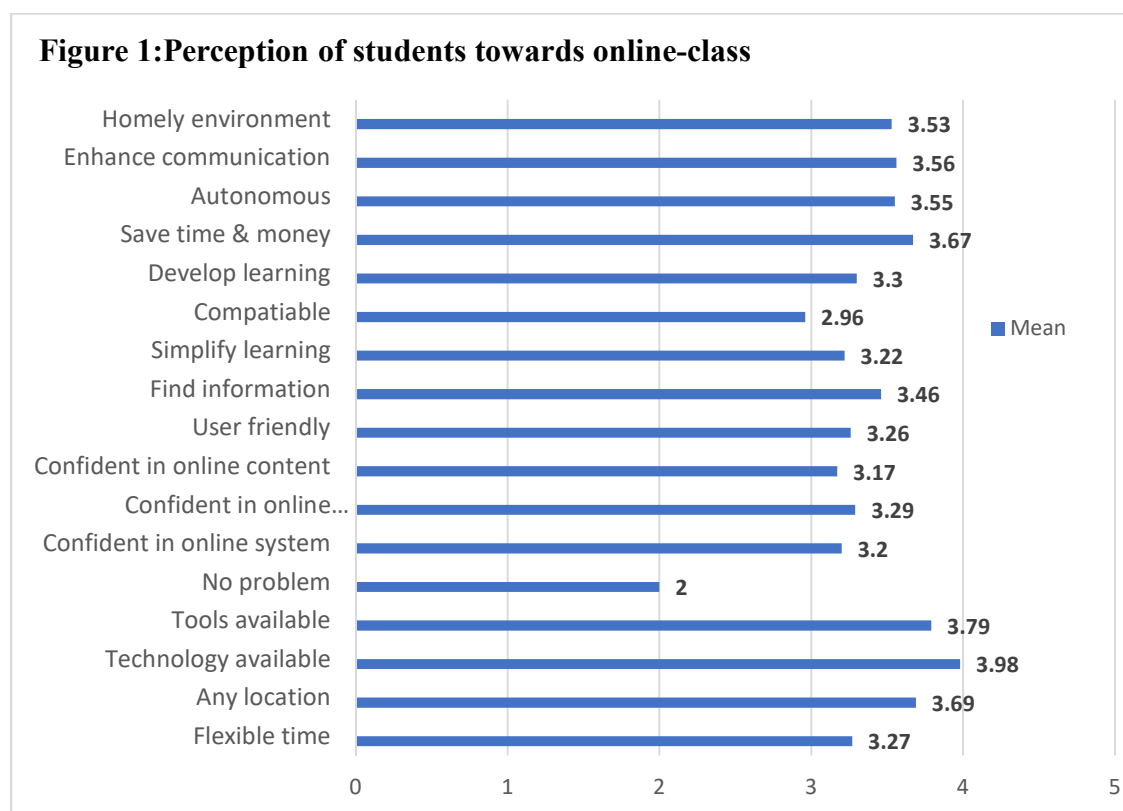
Respondents were asked “I intend to use Online-Class as an autonomous (free) learning tool”. In this response, in total 47.7% of respondents agreed followed by 13.8% strongly agreed while 23.9% respondent had neutral response whereas 10.1% respondent responded disagree followed by 4.6% strongly disagreed with the statements. In total, it was found that, majority (61.5%) of respondents agreed followed by only 14.7% disagreed. From the above result of data, it is clear that most of the student’s intention was to use online class as an autonomous learning tool.

Similarly, students were asked that “I intend to use Online-Class to enhance my communication skill”. In the response of this question, in total 48.6% of respondents agreed followed by 15.6% strongly agreed while 19.3% respondent had neutral response and 10.1% respondent’s response on disagree followed by 6.4% strongly disagreed with the statements. In total, it was found that, majority (64.2%) of respondents agreed followed by only 16.5% disagreed. From the result of data, it is clear that most of the student’s intention was to use online class to enhance communication.

The study collected the data from the respondents by asking the questions “I intend to use online-class so to study in comfortable (Homely) environment”. In the response of this question, in total 42.2% of respondents agreed followed by 19.3% strongly agreed while 20.2% respondent had neutral response and 9.2% respondent’s response on disagree followed by 9.2% strongly disagreed with the statements. In total, it was found that, majority (61.5%) of respondents agreed followed by only 18.4% disagreed. From the result of data, it is clear that most of the student’s intention was to use online class for study in comfortable environment.

CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

The study has focused on the identification and exploration the perception of college students towards online class. The key findings presented in the below Figure 1 shows that technology available to submit assignment has highest mean value (mean = 3.98) which is closed to the ‘Agree’ response. Whereas the lowest mean was (mean=2.00) found on the response of ‘students have no technical problem during Online Class’. It means students had faced technical problem during online class.



Source: Field Survey, 2021

Findings show that majority of students had adopted online class first time in their learning career but they were enjoying in online class as well as felt comfortable to use online class system, online-class function and adopt content. It was one opportunity also to learn the use of information technology in teaching and learning. Though, majority of respondents reported that they faced technical problem during Online-class like internet speed issue, issue of electricity, operating Microsoft team and Zoom. Many students believed that online class was one of the easy platforms to share and collect the required information. Most of the respondent intended to use online-class platform to enhance their learning and communication habit. It was observed that majority of students wanted to study in homely environment, and also wanted to use online class as an autonomous tool of learning which saved their time, money and effort during the critical situation of COVID-19. One of the main importances of online class is that it has safe the students from the risk of transmission of COVID-19. The academic sector was bitterly affected by the COVID-19 due the uncertain lockdown, though the practice of online class continued the teaching and learning which has also contributed to reduce the mental stress of COVID-19 among the students.

Based on the above findings and discussion, the study has made the following recommendation for the further work:

1. Campus/College should manage high speed internet in order to reduce technical problem during online-class.

2. Campus/College should provide Information Technology (IT) training to their students and teachers regarding use of online class in order to enhance their confident.
3. Future researcher can study on the effectiveness of online class in academic achievement of college and school students. The findings can be compared with the effectiveness of physical class.

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