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Awareness And Usage Pattern of Learner's On ELearning Platform: A Survey

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ABSTRACT

During this covid-19 pandemic situation, virtual e-learning environment is more effective and useful for learners' *and for any educational system to cater the needs*. E-Learning provides opportunity to the learner's regardless geographic location, independent of time and place. E-Learning platform helps the learners to enhance their learning skills, employability skill development, subject expertise, and research skills by which the teaching and learning strategy get increases. Learning through e- platforms develop the technical skills, exploring the knowledge, interest of learning and way to change teaching style. Through this paper, an attempt is made to understand the learner's perception, their interactive pattern with the e- learning platforms and the organization/universities offering courses during the covid-19.

Keywords: E-Learning, UGC-Moocs, Swayam, Coursera, educational modelling, Virtual learning environment, learning activities, learner's perception, learning interactive pattern.

1 INTRODUCTION

During this pandemic situation of Covid-19 our education system has shifted to virtual or online classroom. Many countries and educational institute already adopted online learning system and now it has been adopted globally. E-learning platform provides a more dynamic and manageable learning environment than physical spaces.

This virtual learning environment is a web based platform or mode used for the digital aspect of the study in e mode. The resources, materials and mode of interactions used in the course structure provide the instructor as well as learner to assess at various stages.

This survey is based on the online learning platform and various courses offered for the learners to keep them engage in learning and skills upgradation. *The study will help* to know about what are the benefits of online learning from the user perspectives. How they utilize their knowledge when they complete their courses.

2   LITERATURE REVIEW

(Algahtani, 2011), gave his point about effectiveness of e learning at two university of South Arabia, through male learner's perception. The study shows the positive and negative perception about the e learning, its requirement and barriers, along with user perception about e learning that they are also willing to learn independently using all available advanced technology to meet the increasing demand for learning. Various barrier were studied and suggestion to improve the learning pattern are given.

(Gunasekaran, A, 2002) suggested that emerging digital technology and digitization led to elearning technology through internet, web based application, online tools & programming language etc. They studied eLearning scope with perspective to business/market force, as per available technology and how we can implement them.

(Syed Hussain Ali, 2003), paper based on survey method to know about the perception level of respondent on eLearning & concluded that eLearning education system in Saudi Arabia is under stress to increase literacy rate. There public is not in favor of eLearning over the formal/traditional classroom learning. This paper also studied the perception of distant eLearning in south Arabic and advantages of internet learning over traditional and distance learning methods.

(Arkorful 2015), gave his point about the e-learning advantage & disadvantage and suggested that the implementation of e learning in education system has made a strong impact in the teaching & learning. It helps in understanding more use of technological tools to enable learners study anytime and anywhere.

(Zhang et al., 2012), through his paper shared the importance of eLearning environment in context of psychological level of communication of thoughts and asking of query, study was conducted via online discussion forum to improve the self-efficiency among the student group. In this study they found out that students ask question when they are feeling psychological safe to communicate, In tradition face to face learning they hesitate to communicate there query while learning. This barrier are removed in the e-learning/online learning environment as students can openly communicate their thoughts without representing themselves in front of large public.

(Mohammadi, 2015), studies what methods should be adopted to attract the learners towards the eLearning via facilitating a collaborative environment with online chats, conferences and feedback methods. And how to engage them with TAM and IS success model. Moreover, he also discussed about the improvement in the eLearning, where teachers should change their way of perception and adapt e-leaning methodology.

(Costello et al., 2012), in his paper represent a GVRE model which is working on learning from the experience, which is helpful to students in their research area. Created an e-learning environment for personalized learning approach for the researchers via GVRE model. They wanted to share with new researcher to know the previous students experience which will be helpful for them in the learning. By sharing their experience online, other will learn more and get to know, what is correct for them and helps in enhances the learning experience.

(Costello & Shaw, 2013), studied how blended learning environment is useful for the learners at any level of learning, also shows how rich learning material/resources engage students in their research journey and provided a RDF (Research Development Framework) to measure the development of the e-learning.

(Saba, 2012), conduct an empirical study for the positive outcome from e-learning system over the traditional method of teaching. She concluded that learner satisfaction is important for the successfulness of the e learning, as one has to be self-efficient and self-manageable to maintain the e-learning processes, and the given/studied information increases their knowledge level. Successful of any kind of e-learning model depends on the learner behavior and usage.

(Samir Abou El-Seoud et al., 2014), explained that e learning is supplementary method of learning with combination of the traditional learning. Just as technology developed in this recent years the usage and importance of eLearning has increased rapidly with the growing demand in higher education. They explained the efforts/strategies and preparation of an instructor, to make before delivering a lecture to their e-learner using different multimedia tools for effective delivery of knowledge. Explained the benefit of e-learning over the traditional method. Not only learner's, instructor feedback must be taken so that a better e-learning system can be developed to meet the future higher education demands.

3   OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objective of the paper to examine the learner's perception and interactive patters with e learning platforms when they enrolled themselves in any course, related course content, affiliation of degree, free or paid courses etc. If they doing any course what are the interesting things to make learning more efficient like content of lectures, representation of lectures, assignments or projects, Time of lectures, medium of online class, there perception level after complete the courses.

In the study, it has been examined the most extensive and preferred platform used by the learners, demanding course level, subject area, reasons to enroll in the courses and many more.

4   METHODOLOGY

The questionnaire method is used to collect the information from users for the survey. A set of question is shared via google form with different group of users related to education system.

Fig: 1.0 Google Questionnaires for the respondents

5   DATA ANALYSIS

Approx. 1000 questionnaire was sent via google form to collect the data. Out of 1000, 359 respondent were received in which 91 responses were duplicate and removed. Total 268 responses were considered for the study. The data collected and used to analyze and interpret in meaningful way.

The overall responses 268 (100%) which include working professional 164 (61%), Faculty 28 (11%), students 72 (27%) and other groups 4 (1%). The Fig 2.0 shows the responses from different age group of learners.
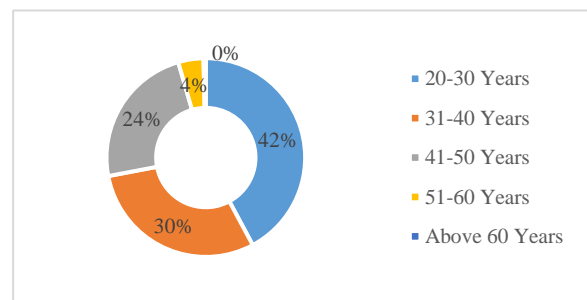

Fig 2.0: Categories of the learners based on their age

6   RESULTS ANALYSIS

6.1   Awareness on eLearning platform

A questionnaire was sent to different category of users to share their thoughts to promote e-learning platform, result shows that 96% respondent are aware about the e-learning platforms and remaining 4 % were not aware.
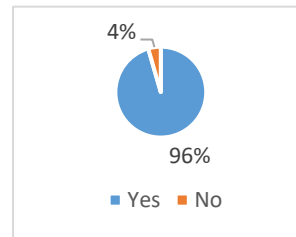

Fig 3.0 Respondent awareness response about eLearning platform

6.2   Most preferred eLearning platform

In Figure 4.0 below , questions was asked from the respondents about their preferred and used e learning platfoms through a multioptional option based answers.And the results comes-Swayam -190 (40%); NPTEL – 102 (21%); Coursera- 63 (13 %); UGC- MOOCs – 33 (7 %); Udemy- 30 (6%); edX- 26 (6%); Other – 33 (7%).
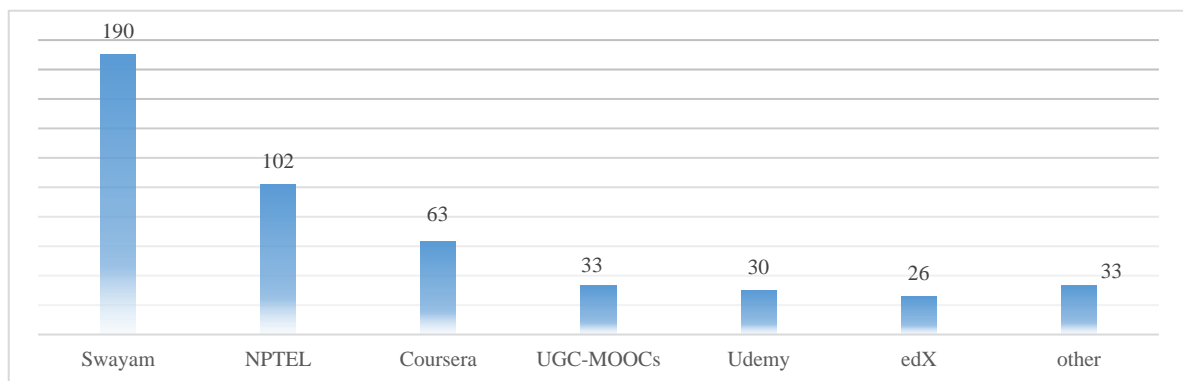

Fig 4.0 Responses about the preferred e learning platform

6.3   Mode of course

70% learners erolled themselves in freely avaiable course while 30 % preferd to pay the fees for the erolled course.

6.4   Accreditation body of the Online Course

While selecting the courses on E-learning platform, host of the courses/programs, accrediting bodies are also an important aspect at the time of selection and it gives weightage. In fig 5.0, 67% participants enrolled in the University accredited courses, followed by 26% to institute accredited, 3% to School & others, 2% to Industry, 2% to others.
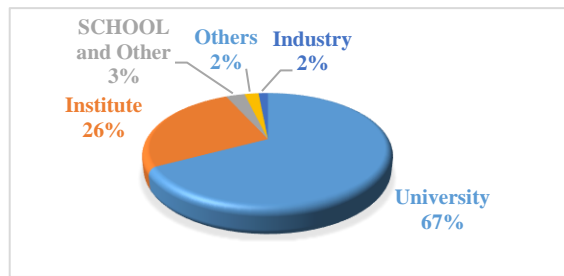

Fig 5.0 Accreditation body of the courses

6.5   Motivation behind the Online Courses

Learner's perception behind the selection of online courses- most of the learners engage themselves for courses to learn something new and some wanted to upgrade or explore more, increase their level of knowledge in respective fields. From the results it has found that most of the participant's choses e-learning mode to understand the new areas and subjects then prefers the feed creativity and critical thinking for selecting the course. Data shows (18 %) for a*cademic requirement*; (22 %) to *build professional competency*; (22 %) for *Feed creativity and critical thinking* , (6 %) for *novel content*, (28 %) *for understanding new areas and subjects* and (4 %) for *other reasons*.

Subject Area	Faculty	Student	Working Professional	Other	Total Response	Response %
Academic Requirement	12	25	63	0	100	18
Build professional competency	12	34	77	1	124	22
Feed Creativity and Critical Thinking	17	37	69	1	124	22
Novel content	3	11	19	0	33	6
Understanding new areas and subjects	17	42	96	1	156	28
Other	2	5	15	1	23	4
Total	63	154	339	4	560	100

Table 1.0 Responses about the motivation behind the courses enrolled

7   PERCEPTION

7.1   Level of course learners enrolled

When a learner get enrolled in any course, they must be aware about the value of course/degree and it is expected that after completion of the course, something new will be added to the existing knowledge of the learners which will impact the practical or theoretical aspects of knowledge in the respective domain of the learners. 46% of the learner's enrolled in certificate courses followed by 26 % to a professional degree courses, 8% to specialization courses, 8% to diploma courses and 12% to others.
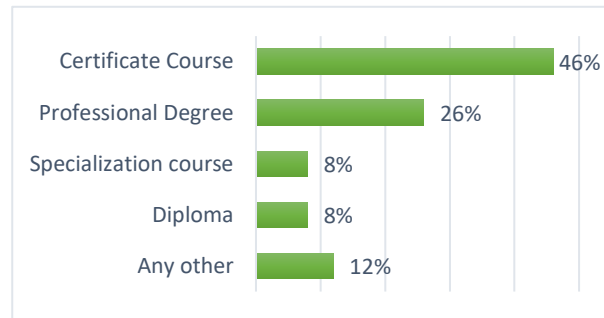

Fig 6.0 Level of Courses learners enrolled

7.2   Criteria for selection of the course

There are many factors behind the selection of the best courses to get enrolled by the learners. In fig 7.0, responses received for the selected criteria are mention in detail.
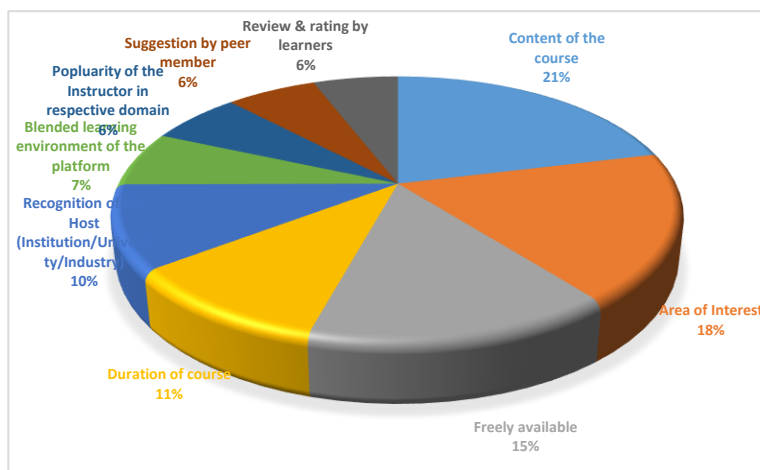

Fig 7.0 Criteria selected for the courses by the respondents

(21%) are selected based on the *content of the course* which followed by (18%) *area of interest*, (15%) for *freely available*, (11%) for *duration of the course*, (10%) for *Recognition of the Host (Institute/ University/ Industry),* (7%) for *Blended learning environment of the platform*, (6%) due to *popularity of the instructor in respective domain,* (6%) *suggestion by peer members* and (6%) for *Review and Rating by learners*.

8   INTERACTIVE LEARNING PATTERNS OF THE LEARNERS

The interactive learning patterns have important weightage towards the selection of the online courses and it varies from learner to learner. Selected features of the online platform are considered for evaluation in the study.

8.1   IT skills/Competency of the learners

In today's environment, ICT has impacted every spheres of the learning in various domain and to map with the skills or knowledge in respective domain, one has to acquire or acquaint themselves with the IT skills or competency level of understanding the digital contents. In the figure 8.0 below, the result shows that 95 % learners strongly agree that IT skills/competency is very important.
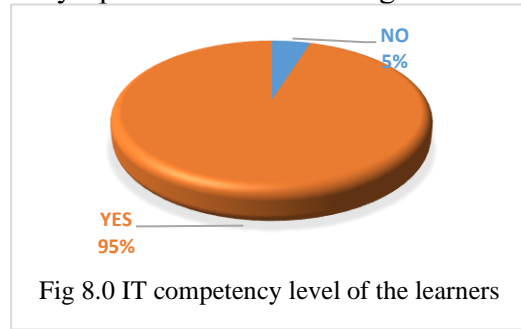

Fig 8.0 IT competency level of the learners

8.2   Visual learning tools and multimedia helps in understanding the contents of the course

In fig 9.0 below, 92% responses which sum up 46 % each '*strongly agree*' and 46 % '*agree*' opined that the visual learning and multimedia tools are useful, 8 % opined for '*neutral*'. These responses directly explain that the visual learning and multimedia tools features are crucial and have a significant impact on learning pattern in the online mode.
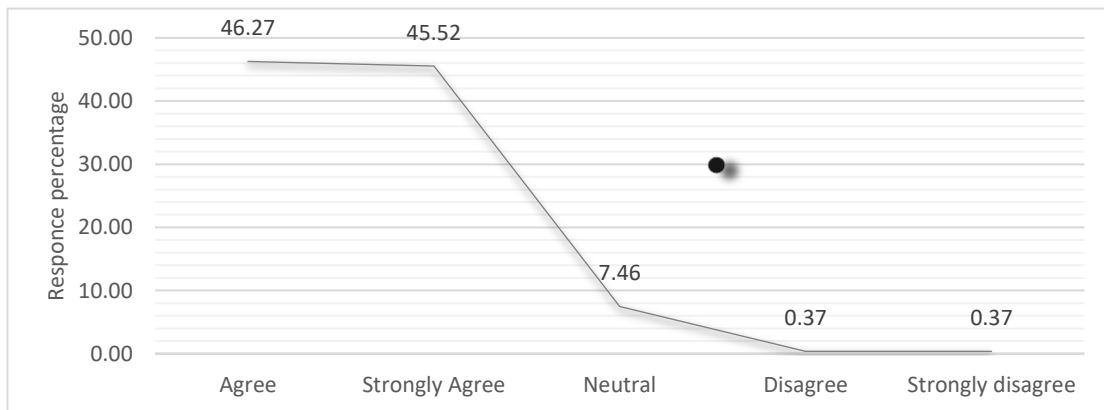

Fig 9.0 Users responses towards visual and multimedia tools

8.3   Assignments and Projects

To engage the learners through exercise like projects or assignments, gives instructor as an assessment tool to mark the level of understanding of the learners and assess how they reciprocate to the shared contents over the platform. It also increases and motivate the interest among the learners. The result represent that 95% agree and found the useful way for the assessment and 5% disagree.

9   CONCLUSION

During this pandemic time, many institutes, publishers, organizations and many more bodies came forward to promote learning at the time of pandemic which results, learning has not stopped or ended at learners level, though many medium or modes of learning are enhanced or new platforms have been emerged which act as catalyst for the education system.

Result showed from this study found that 96% users are aware about the available eLearning platform and its uses, 95 % learners strongly agree that IT skills/competency is very important. The results implicate the significant importance of the platform among learners. This study was an attempt to explore that perception and interactive patterns of the learners. The study may further help the other researchers who are working or study in the domain of e learning to touch upon those areas which are not included in the study.

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