Research on the Online Teaching for International Students in COVID-19

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Abstract: In 2019, the sudden emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic undoubtedly resulted in devastating socio-economic challenges across the world, especially in the education sector. To manage the contagion, many countries have implemented restrictive measures to reduce social gatherings to promote social distancing. Similarly, this meant the closure of higher learning institutions and a major shift from traditional classroom-based teaching and learning to virtual and online approaches. While higher education has transformed and moved online due to Covid-19. This study tries to find the outcome of online teaching through a short survey. This survey was conducted on international students from Inner China. The conducted survey result clearly indicated that many students considered it is better idea and learning process was really positive during the outbreak. Therefore, it is known that this transformation produces positive teaching and learning outcomes. The outcome result concluded that only a few students think that online learning is not useful. But most students pointed out that online learning positively impacts students' education. This study is conducted to elicit relevant evidence on E-learning and E-teaching outcomes, challenges, and opportunities in the era of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Introduction

The unexpected Covid-19 pandemic outbreak affected various sectors of the economy and every single aspect of human life, not only in developing countries but across the world [1,2,3,4]. While every country is impacted by this pandemic, it was anticipated that most developing countries would be severely impacted due to a lack of coping mechanisms such as health facilities, infrastructure and technology [5,6,7]. This would further widen inequalities between world countries, regions and communities [8,9,10,11]. However, it is evident that regions initially severely affected by major outbreaks include China, Europe, Iran, South Korea, and the United States among others [12,13,14].

The 2019 COVID-19 pandemic has restricted human-to-human contact, and social distancing is regarded as the most effective preventive strategy [16]. Online learning and classes are increasingly becoming part of the education system worldwide. The online channel has made education convenient and easily accessible by one and all. The education sector in Asian countries has been an ever-growing entity [17]. Though online and distance courses have been there for a long time, the introduction of the online mode of taking classes compared to the traditional face-to-face classroom approach in universities and colleges has been considered only in the last few years [18]. According to the World Health Organisation, school closures due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) have affected over 1.5 billion children and young people around the world. [1] This includes 270 million students in mainland China who were unable to start their spring semester (February – August 2020) on campus as planned [2]. To minimize the impact on education continuity, the Chinese Government introduced various measures applicable in the COVID-19 context. In late January 2020, mainland China postponed all educational activities and the Chinese Ministry of Education (MoE) urged schools and higher education institutions to use online delivery as an alternative to face-to-face teaching. Of significance, this marks the first time online delivery has been permitted, at great scale, as part of formal education delivery in China. In response to the call, the majority of provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions in mainland China pushed back the spring semester start date and transitioned to teaching classes online. One of the main concerns for International students studying in China during the COVID-19 pandemic is that their qualification. This concern is understandably shared by providers around the globe who wish to ensure that their offerings to International students continue to meet the needs and requirements of Chinese students and regulators. The MoE has been working with other
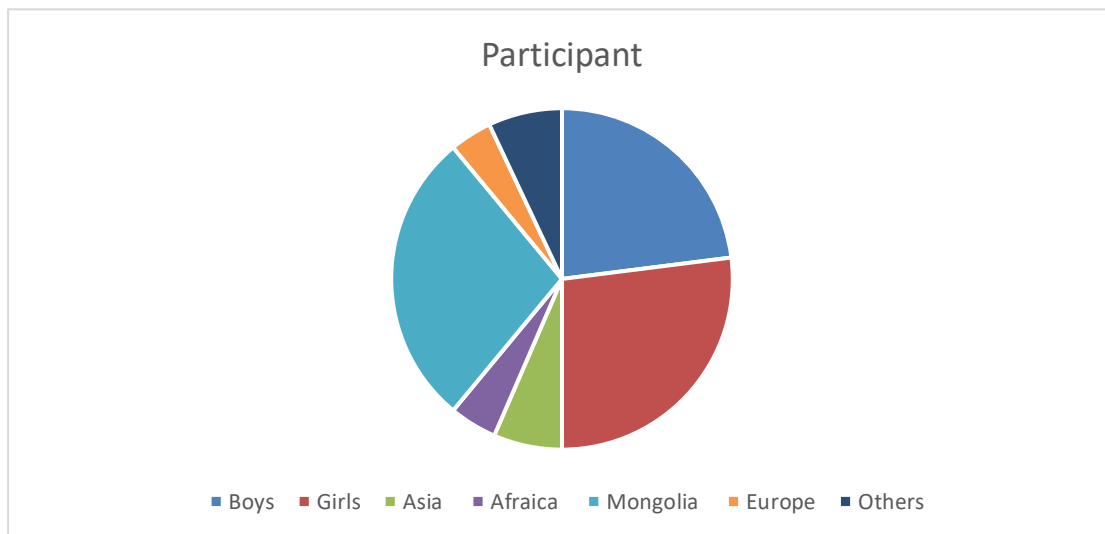
Chinese government ministries and agencies to support Internationa students by maintaining communication through the Universities and managment around the world.
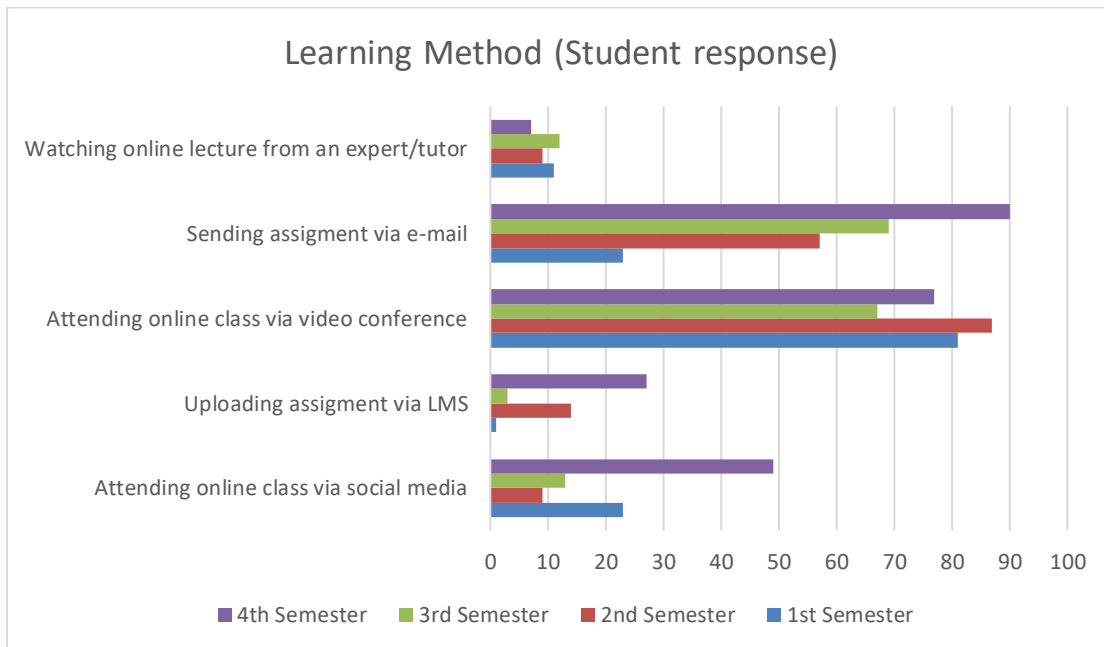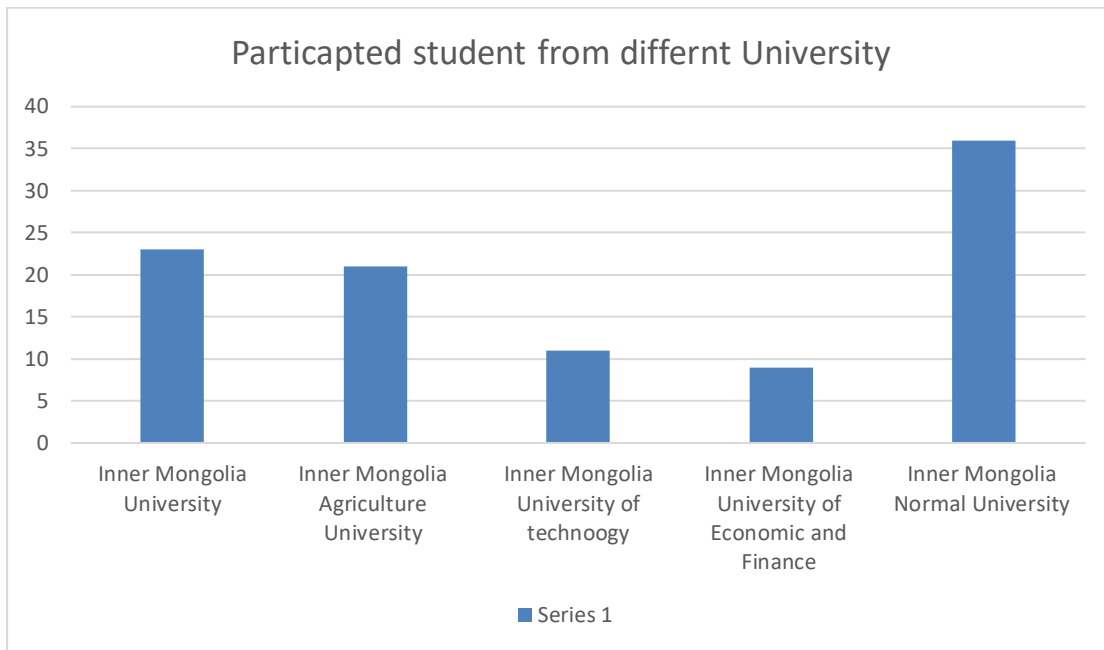
Study Area and participant:
This survey is conducted in different universities in China and Inner Mongolia. To conduct the survey, we conducted with international students. Most of the students were back in their home countries, and they were taking online classes. The survey was conducted online and included around 50 different questions related to their online learning, their behavior, their output, their involvement in the classroom, and their understanding of the lessons.

Effects of covid on Institutes
While this transition has been a mixture of positives and negatives for most private universities, government colleges and universities are still adapting. While technology makes things accessible and easier, it can also be limiting, especially in India, where many students face a challenge in terms of access to the internet. While in USA and Africa, most of the students faced difficulty due to the time difference gap. This leads to issues with attendance and participation in online sessions, thereby making adapting to online education channels a challenge. Meanwhile, a face-to-face classroom setting can provide immediate feedback to faculty members and students about the lesson's quality, delivery, and experience. In a classroom setup, a teacher can observe students' body language, and these non-verbal cues help the teacher to immediately adjust in their teaching approach to best suit the needs of the students. Additional questioning and individualized attention in the classroom environment to gain a more detailed idea about the student's clarity with concepts being taught is a major advantage compared to online channels [19, 20]. What might be easily perceived and approached in the classroom requires a little more probing and alertness in an online class. Investigating and analyzing how online classes should be designed and arranged by taking into consideration the students' and teachers' perspectives should be an integral part of building online teaching methodology as well as learning. Previous research studies have investigated students' perceptions and satisfaction with online learning and face-to-face learning. Fortune, Spielman, and Pangelinan (2011) investigated 156 students who took and enrolled in either an online learning section or face-to-face learning of the Recreation and Tourism course at a multicultural university in Northern California, United States, and found that no statistically significant difference in learning preference was found between those enrolled in the two different learning modes [21,22]. Another study by Tratnik (2017) indicated significant differences in student satisfaction levels when online classes were compared to face-to-face learning of English as a foreign language. Students taking the face-to-face course were found to be more satisfied with the course compared to their online counterparts [23].

Participant

Boys ■ Girls ■ Asia ■ Afraica ■ Mongolia ■ Europe ■ Others

Particapted student from differnt University

Learning Method (Student response)

Academics play a critical role in their respective higher education institutions as online learning facilitators. Due to a sudden COVID-19 outbreak and consequently, a sudden shift to online learning, ordinary academics did not have adequate time to adjust to the new teaching platforms [24, 25, 26]. Further evidence shows that some academics lack sufficient knowledge of information technology, and their understanding of online teaching is relatively poor [27, 28]. As a result, these academics encounter challenges in facilitating online learning. These challenges may include how to arrange online classes, how to carry out online teaching according to the plan, which online teaching platform to choose, and how to monitor the effect and quality of online teaching, which will lead to a decrease in user satisfaction [29, 30]. The sudden transition to online teaching also raised serious concerns for academics regarding their capabilities to engage with students in an online platform while maintaining the same level of interaction as face-to-face formats [31, 32]. It is for this reason that Bryson & Andres (2020) argued that replicating the classroom experience in an online platform is impossible and could undermine the learning

outcomes. Since the training was not provided to academics due to sudden shift to online learning, they are probably not familiar to online tools which constrain teaching [33, 34, 35].

Conclusions

In conclusion, the Covid-19 outbreak has introduced many challenges for higher education institutions worldwide. Lockdown and other Covid-19 regulations have suddenly shifted from face-to-face learning to online learning in many academic institutions. While this shift was considered a possible solution to higher education crises in the era of Covid-19, it is shown in this study that this shift came with numerous challenges for students and academics. As discussed in this study, these challenges include difficulties to adjust by lecturers and students, connectivity issues, an unconducive physical environment, mental health-related issues, lack of basic needs, and lack of teaching and learning resources. Despite these challenges, this study shows that there are Covid-19 induced opportunities such as innovation and capacity development. There is a lack of scientific research evidence on the impact of Covid-19 on academic outcomes. It is therefore recommended that further research should be conducted to measure the impact (short-term and long-term) of Covid-19 on academic outcomes.

The survey study explored the online learning experiences of a small group of international students at a research university in China. The in-depth interviews revealed the interviewees' overall satisfaction and how this satisfaction related to their perceptions of online learning environments and engagement in online learning.

Suggestions

This study confirmed whether the urgently performed online practical classes were conducted suitably from the perspective of educators and learners. From the results of this study, we found that timely and quality feedback should be provided for successful online practical classes and this study provided some suggestions for the successful execution of online practical classes in physical education:

(1) The university should provide sufficient time and technical support;

(2) educators need to be trained on the web-based environment before their online teaching;

(3) educators have to devise ways to encourage students' involvement and fairways to evaluate. Although it is not easy to conduct online practical classes, we can step closer to conducting such classes for physical education through timely and quality feedback. This study is worthy as it provides some suggestions for successfully executing online practical classes in physical education. However, this study has some limitations. Firstly, the number of participants was small. Secondly, the types of questions were insufficient, and their validation was not tested, although we estimated Cronbach's α to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire. Thus, more comprehensive research is needed with more participants and through more in-depth questionnaires.

(4) Significantly, Previously published studies revealed low emotional engagement among international students. Greater emotional engagement enhances behavior, cognitive, and social engagement, supporting improved learning satisfaction. Hence, we suggest universities and faculty members work together to create and sustain a positive learning climate, which cultivates international students' interest in and passion for learning while promoting international students' emotional involvement in online courses. A sense of community and belongingness can be formed and maintained where international students, in navigating their online journeys of intercultural learning throughout this difficult time, perceive that faculty and institutions well understand their concerns and difficulties and are ready to provide technical, academic, social, and emotional support.

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