

Uses and gratification of webinars on quality education for college teachers during pandemic: An Evaluation

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Abstract: During the times of pandemic COVID-19, the significance of learning through online methods is increasingly encouraged in the field of education. Nowadays online end users in education include both teachers and students. Highlighting the theory of Uses and Gratification, this study aims to find out the level of gratification obtained by college teachers through exposure to webinars, thus gaining knowledge. The study wants to find out scientifically the satisfaction of teachers and data collection is done through survey method by circulating structured questionnaire. The reliability and validity of data is tested through chi-square test and percentage analysis using SPSS software. The study clearly explains the utility of 120 webinars which includes Faculty Development Programme and workshop benefitted for the respondents. The present study was carried out only among a group of teachers as demographic variable which only focussed on the satisfaction and usefulness of webinars over traditional seminars. The analysis of this study can contribute for better performance of online modes of education due to its characteristics of monitoring proper feedback from the respondents.

Key Words: Pandemic, Uses and Gratification Theory, webinars, online learning.

1. INTRODUCTION:

In the pandemic times, online and digital learning methods are increasingly becoming popular in higher education and qualitative professional training. The utility and effectiveness of webinars are seen broadly discussed everywhere. Webinars are defined as the services which offer offline learning environment that end users can utilise from anywhere using computer devices (Ebner & Gegenfurtner, 2019; Gegenfurtner, Zitt, & Ebner, in press; Tseng, Cheng, & Yeh, 2019).

1.1(a) The role of webinars for teachers in enriching their knowledge level.

In the case of quality education for faculties in higher education scenario, it provides strategies, ideas and tools to adapt with current situation which in turn brings teachers to improve themselves for teaching and imparting qualitative learning. It also allows the instructor to be equipped themselves with changing technological advancements and prepares them with available resources for content preparation

1.1(b) Individual Intentions during COVID-19

During the time of crisis when we don't make choices where choices are made for us and when things get unpredictable humans are supposed to form their own intentions in any productive or destructive ways. By mentioning the theory called broaden and build theory of positive emotions by B.L. Fredrickson which clearly states that human beings needs to inculcate positive emotions in the time of pandemic.

1.2 Research questions

- What are the crucial demographic variables related to the gratification obtained from exposure to webinars?
- What is the utility level of webinars when compared with offline seminars?

1.3 Objectives of the study

- To measure the different levels of gratification obtained from webinars in learning enhancement for college teachers
- To find out whether the webinars primarily contribute for knowledge gaining for teachers.
- To understand the relationship between the purpose of webinars to different groups of college teachers.
- To understand the technological awareness of college teachers to adapt with changing mode of education

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

World Economic Forum (2020) in the article, "Three ways the coronavirus pandemic could reshape the education" clearly said that the pandemic had changes the education scenario by recurring nudge and push to change which can bring innovations and surprises in the field of education. The study even says that COVID -19 acts as a catalyst for educational institutions worldwide to bring innovative solutions to overcome the crisis. Andreas Geganfurtner, Christian Ebner (2019) in the study, "Webinars in higher education and professional training: A meta-analysis and systematic review of randomized controlled trials" clearly mentioned that webinars are considered as better

and effective tool of learning than learning management systems and offline mode of traditional method of learning. This study clearly brings out a meta- analysis method to find out the effectiveness of webinars on quality education. Tien Mai, Michelle Ocriciano (2017) in the study, “*Investigating the Influence of Webinar Participation on Professional Development of English Language Teachers in Rural Vietnam*” explained that uncertainties faced by teachers when asked about the effectiveness of webinars needs to be psychologically dealt. The respondents also shared that the knowledge sharing sometimes makes them in dilemma in choosing the proper source of knowledge. Barbara L.Fredrickson(2001) in the article, *What Good Are Positive Emotions in Crises? A Prospective Study of Resilience and Emotions Following the Terrorist Attacks on the United States on September 11th, 2001* clearly said the significance of positive emotions which can really bring back the depressed group who are faced with crisis.

3. METHODOLOGY:

The study also finds that there exists a drastic and qualitative change of knowledge level by participating in such webinars for teachers. The sample size is 100 respondents in an around various colleges in Mumbai. The population chosen for the study is College teachers of Arts and Humanities subject in the major five colleges of Mumbai city in the time includes two months (24-03-2020 to 24-03-2020) of lockdown due to COVID-19 in Mumbai. Almost 125 webinars during the above time period is selected for the study.

A pilot study with 20 samples was conducted in the mentioned spot to understand the reliability and validity. The sampling technique adopted for the study is convenience sampling. Data Collection method includes structured questionnaire through survey. The major statistical technique selected for the study is **Bivariate chi-square test using SPSS** software. Google forms with likert scale questions were circulated among the respondents with proper monitoring of sample collection.

3.1 Hypothesis of the study

- There is no significant relationship between gender and level of gratification and utility obtained from webinars
- There is no relationship between the qualification of college teachers and the gratification obtained from webinars
- There is a strong relationship between the webinars and social contact development among teachers
- There is no relationship between the number of webinars attended and the knowledge level gained by the college teachers.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Test of hypothesis:

There were major four hypothesis tested using SPSS chi-square test which derived the following results

Sl. No	Variables	Chi-square test value	Test results
1	Gender and level of gratification from webinars	0.03579<0.05	Reject null
2	Knowledge level and gratification obtained	0.0150<0.05	Reject Null
3	Webinar brought strong contacts with fellow teachers	0.9939 >0.05	Accept Null
4	Number of webinars and knowledge level	0.9604>0.05	Accept Null

4.2. Major Results and findings in the study

a. Demographic details of the respondents (fig 4.3a)

There were more male respondents in the age group of 39-46 and the female group were more in the age group of 23-30. In the case of education as the variable majority of the participants were in the group of post graduate level of education. Male (53%, Female 48%). There was an observation that the trend of opting for higher education to improve their performance is in a seen increasing rate. Majority of the respondents in the study irrespective of gender were regular college teachers with earnings of more than 40,000 per month.

Fig 4(3)a is a single long table.

Independent variable (Age)		Gender		Total
		Male	female	
23-30	F	13	13	26
	%	50.00	50.00	100
31-38	F	12	11	23
	%	52.17	47.82	100

39-46	F	16	10	26
	%	61.53	38.46	100
46and above	F	13	12	25
	%	52	48	100
Independent variable (Education)				
		Gender		Total
		Male	female	
Graduate	F	5	3	8
	%	62.5	37.5	100
Post Graduate	F	21	19	40
	%	52.5	47.5	100
MPhil	F	9	11	20
	%	45	44	100
PhD	F	14	18	32
	%	43.75	56.25	100
Independent variable-Faculty type				
		Gender		Total
		Male	female	
Permanent	F	20	23	43
	%	46.51	53.58	100
Contract	F	5	8	13
	%	38.46	61.53	100
Visiting	F	12	20	32
	%	37.5	62.5	100
Ad hoc	F	4	8	12
	%	33.34	66.67	100

b. Webinars enriched knowledge level and resource building.Fig.4.3(b)

Respondents had a mixed response for the above statement where a major portion of the respondents said that in the initial days they all had observed an uncertainty and confusions over the proper selection of webinars for one’s personal development. Males (80%) and females (77%) admitted that the period made them learn many new things.

Fig.4.3(b)

Independent variable			Response					Total
			SA	A	N	D	SA	
Male	Highly productive period with better outputs	F	10	4	1	2	1	18
		%	55.6	22.2	5.6	11.1	5.6	100
	Made aware on technology more than normal times	F	12	3	0	0	0	15
		%	80.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100
Started accepting the crisis and focused on learning	F	6	0	4	1	1	12	
	%	50.0	0.0	33.3	8.3	8.3	100	
Female		F	12	7	1	0	1	21

	Highly productive period with better outputs	%	57.1	33.3	4.8	0.0	4.8	100
	Made aware on technology more than normal times	F	12	2	1	1	1	17
		%	70.6	11.8	5.9	5.9	5.9	100
	Started accepting the crisis and focused on learning	F	10	3	4	0	0	17
		%	58.8	17.6	23.5	0.0	0.0	100
X2= 12.809 P= 0.03579 N=100								

c. Exposed to multilevel areas of webinars gave a broad vision to track the respective specialisation of learning Fig:4.3(c)

Respondents after a time period of 60 days from lockdown the respondents said that they concentrated only on their specialisation and attended few webinars which really matters to their development.88% of post graduate respondents were highest in numbers regarding agreeing the statement

Fig4.3(c)

Independent variable			Response					Total
			SA	A	N	D	SA	
Education	Graduate	F	4	1	0	1	0	6
		%	66.7	16.7	0.0	16.7	0.0	100
	Post Graduate	F	28	10	3	3	1	45
		%	62.2	22.2	6.7	6.7	2.2	100
	MPhil	F	9	3	0	2	0	14
		%	64.3	21.4	0.0	14.3	0.0	100
PhD	F	10	4	8	7	6	35	
	%	28.6	11.4	22.9	20.0	17.1	100	
X2= 24.960 P value=0.0150			N=100					

d. Webinars helped in building a strong contact and interaction with fellow teachers of different other colleges. Fig:4.3(d)

The main advantage of webinars was told by respondents is the building of contact with the faculty members of other college during pandemic which will really contribute for better awareness among teachers. More than 59% male and 64% women agreed to the statement.

Fig. 4.3(d)

Independent variable			Response					Total
			SA	A	N	D	SA	
Male	High level of interaction between faculties	F	3	4	2	2	1	12
		%	25	33.33	16.66	16.66	8.33	100
	Created a common platform for information sharing	F	6	3	2	2	2	15
		%	40	20	13.34	13.34	13.34	100
	F	6	4	2	3	3	18	

	Led to sustainable friendship useful for knowledge sharing	%	33.33	22.22	11.11	16.67	16.67	100
Female	High level of interaction between faculties	F	12	6	4	4	2	28
		%	42.85	21.42	14.28	14.28	7.14	100
	Created a common platform for information sharing	F	5	6	0	1	1	13
		%	38.46	46.15	0	7.692	7.692	100
	Led to sustainable friendship useful for knowledge sharing	F	4	4	2	2	2	14
%		28.57	28.57	14.28	14.28	14.28	100	
X2= 7.658 P= 0.9939 N=100								

5. CONCLUSIONS :

- It provided a platform to excel in technological advancement among teachers.
- Pandemic resulted in better awareness in online and offline teaching methods and subjects
- Initial phase of pandemic made bewilderment in the selection of proper webinars for teachers resulting less productive.
- Webinars made the teachers to divert their thoughts for productive purposes
- This period was actually fruitful and self development time for teachers than usual
- Webinars really made the teachers benefitted with technological lessons to start online lectures(need of the hour)
- Webinars made the teachers to be more organised in personal and academic life
- Interaction through anonymity was also considered as an advantage by teachers during pandemic
- Webinars are really cost effective tool for learning for teachers
- Webinars helped to be in contact with knowledgeable experts of ones on area of expertise
- It really helped to experience the real competition of various fields of knowledge.
- Interacting with potential fellow beings in webinar platforms really made it an elaborate and collaborative platform.
- Virtual environment contributed for the comfortable interaction with resource persons than offline seminars.

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