

E-learning Platform : A backbone for Students learning

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Abstract: *E-learning plays an important role nowadays especially for students. The students who are going with e-learning; their behavior, satisfaction with available technology gives an important direction for determining future e-learning initiatives. This approach gives benefit for developing countries. It helps for the students to enrich their skill towards the use of advanced technology, knowledge, satisfaction, ease of use and positive attitude with the available resources. This paper focuses on the available platforms along with their features used by students as learners for online learning like Zoom, Google Meet, and Microsoft Teams etc. to enrich their knowledge.*

Key Words: *e-learning, behavior, positive attitude, resources.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

E-learning has started in many of fields which help to meet an increasing demand for education. Through this mode of learning, many students have tried to go with various new communication tools and learnt to operate it comfortably. Here the student from different age group, educational background comes. Through this, they can develop their communication skill, personal skill also they may go for different tools and technologies of nowadays.

For online learning they may go for tools like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet, Skype, WebEx or even WhatsApp also. While going for E-learning, students attitude is more important because it had a positive impact on their motivation. Mobile devices with net facility are playing an important role in e-learning and becoming more and more popular which improves user attitude towards e-learning.

Through online learning mode, it is critical to analyze student attitude towards e-learning. It includes various factors like age, knowledge regarding network related resources to access and facilities available through e-learning.

Generally it is observed that young age students are having more positive attitudes towards e-learning than old age students. There are different factors affecting while to go for online learning. An access towards the technology also shapes the attitude of learner towards e-learning. Secondly, the learning environment also matters a lot for providing motivation towards this learning. Along with it, performance expectations also affect student satisfaction which provides the greatest contribution towards the learning satisfaction.

Actually, the physical separation between the student as a learner and the teacher as an instructor creates a feeling of isolation which leads to negative attitudes for student. Whereas students not very much skilled in ICT became uncomfortable towards this educational technology and may not believe in the benefits of e-learning.

But it is the need of nowadays situation. So everyone should go with it for online learning. Various online platforms or tools like Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams and Skype etc. are the top popular apps/tools used nowadays for online learning.

These platforms are more popularly used for online meeting, learning. Each one of them priced differently and has different user interactivity. There is a tough competition among Microsoft Teams, Zoom and Google Meet along with Skype.

Generally, it has been observed that Microsoft teams has been more popularly used as a communication platform by

students because of its features such as creating teams, channels, conducting various sessions along with recording and features of audio and video facilities, downloading attendance list, adding members as well as screen sharing etc. options.

Whereas Zoom [4] is also one of official communication tool widely and popularly used to conduct various sessions, seminars, webinars, classes etc. It is very simple tool having generalized features, can be easily downloaded and used by anyone.

Similarly, WhatsApp has been also found as a very user friendly App which have different features like Video calling, conferencing, conference video calling etc. Anyone can easily use it due to its easy handling and is having mobile based software.

Google meet is also one of popularly used online platform for learning. Its many features are like Zoom Platform.

2. ONLINE LEARNING TOOLS:

There are various online platforms or tools available nowadays used by student as well as teacher like Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams, Skype etc. These are top popular apps/tools used for online learning.

➤ **Zoom:**

Zoom is cloud based communication app where one can communicate using online chat, video conferencing etc. It is easy to use tool where security can be provided for communication as well as for information sharing.

Features :

1. **Use** - It can be used by a single user or by a group of users in small offices, large enterprises.
2. **Cost** - It is free to use with basic plan.
3. **Call Limit** - In free plan of video call, maximum 100 participants are allowed but with a time limit of 40 minutes only. Whereas participants can be increased with other plans.
4. **Security** – It has introduced various security features to prevent intrusions like Zoom bombing.
5. **Features** – It provide features like whiteboard, screen sharing, file sharing, chat, recording, virtual background
6. **Platform Availability** – It is available for Windows, Mac, Android, IOS like platforms.

Zoom provides us various options like New Meeting, Schedule, Join, Share Screen with various tab like Home, Chat, Private, Meetings, Contact etc.

➤ **Skype:**

Skype is a telecommunication app owned by Microsoft. It connects users with their team members through text message, voice call, video calls etc. It has been available in the market for more than 15 years. With Meet Now feature, Skype has become one of the strongest competitors for Zoom.

Features:

1. **Use:** Skype is available for video calls and small office meetings due to its limited support.
2. **Cost:** Skype Meet Now is free to use. To make an international long-distance phone call, user has to pay.
3. **Video Call Limit:** Skype Meet Now allows maximum of 50 participants with a limit of four hours per individual video call.
4. **Security:** It uses AES key mechanism for security.
5. **Features:** It offers chat, file sharing and recording like features. Also it has built-in voice translator to translate voice into different languages in real-time.
6. **Platform Availability:** It is available on Windows, Mac, Linux, Android, iOS like platforms.

➤ **Microsoft Teams:**

It is Microsoft's collaboration plus unified communications platform combining meetings, chats, calls as well as file sharing with the Office 365 application. It is the replacement for Skype for Business. It is somewhat difficult to use and is not suitable for the general audience.

Features:

1. **Use:** Teams is primarily proposed for business communication in schools and offices.

2. **Cost:** It comes in both free as well as paid plans.
3. **Video Call Limit:** It currently allows 250 members in traditional virtual meetings and 10,000 for live streaming like events.
4. **Security:** It provides team-wide and organization-wide two-factor authentication.
5. **Features:** It is equipped with features like chat, video calls, channel meetings as well as screen sharing.
6. **Platform Availability:** It is available for Windows, iOS, Android as well as Linux like platforms.

➤ **Google Meet:**

Google Meet is an advanced version of Hangouts intended for businesses and organizations with a G-Suite subscription.

Features:

1. **Use:** It is appropriate for business communication through webinars, video conferencing.
2. **Cost:** It has charges for basic plan.
3. **Video Call Limit:** With basic plan, maximum 100 participants can be connected in a meeting. Other plans allow maximum participants.
4. **Security:** It provides security for video meetings.
5. **Features:** Google Meet comes with features like screen-sharing, messaging, call recording as well as free phone dial-in facility.
6. **Platform Availability:** It does not have a dedicated app for desktop and is available through web browser. It is available for Android, iOS like platforms.

➤ **Google Duo:**

Google Duo is a video calling app similar to WhatsApp.

Features:

1. **Use:** It can be used only for friends, family and for informal video chats.
2. **Cost:** It is free to use application.
3. **Video Call Limit:** It allows only up to twelve participants at a time.
4. **Security:** It supports end-to-end encryption.
5. **Features:** It comes with several features like new AV1 video codec technology, use of AI like facilities.
6. **Platform Availability:** It is available for Android, iOS like platforms along with web browsers on Windows, Mac as well as Chrome.

➤ **Messenger Room:**

Messenger Room is Face book’s latest addition in messaging platform. One can create a room to have a group chat with our friends and family members.

Features:

1. **Use:** It is primarily our Facebook friends. Others can also join in through links.
2. **Cost:** It is free to use like Facebook.
3. **Video Call Limit:** It allows you to hang out with maximum of 50 people at a time.
4. **Security:** It is secured by encryption and privacy controls.
5. **Platform Availability:** It is available on Android, iOS like platforms.

Analysis of Online Learning Tools:

For analyzing these tools, data has collected based on following questionnaire:

Table I : Questionnaire

Que. No.	Question
1	What student has learnt during Lockdown Period?
2	Did you learn any communication Tool during Lockdown?
3	Did you feel any problem while using those tools?
4	Which Communication Tool You Used/preferred more for Online Learning?
5	Which feature did you use most of that communication tool?
6	Did it create interest to go for online learning?
7	Choose proper option for Satisfaction with Technology. Justify it by choosing proper option.

8	Choose proper option for Adding Value in your knowledge. Justify it by choosing proper option.
9	Justify your answer with key advantages of used communication tool over other technologies (e.g. If you like Zoom, then explain its features like audio quality, video quality, user friendliness, Security, bandwidth, no. of participant limit etc. Mention those points neatly.)

The following Fig.1 shows that among New Technology and Tools, Digital Payments, Online Learning, Programming Language and Communication Skills, nowadays almost all the students are going for online learning as well as towards the new technologies. To go for it, their interest, mindset is more important. The analysis shows that almost many of the students are interested towards online learning.

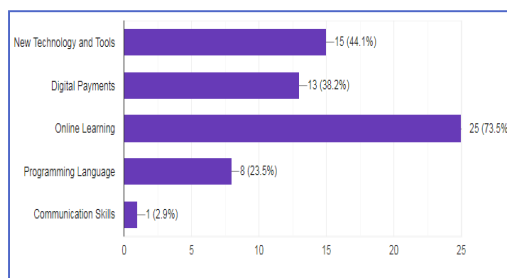


Fig.1: Techniques learned by students

Fig.2 shows that all students have to go through online learning platforms or tools for online learning. About 76.5% of students are going for online learning tools. The rest of the students may not go for it due to their family background, income of family to invest in it, network issues, convenience like factors.

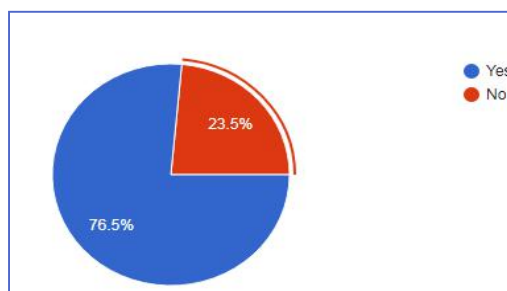


Fig.2: Use of Platform

For online learning, they may go for various platforms like Microsoft Team, Zoom, Google Meet, WebEx[4], Skype and WhatsApp. Figure 3 shows that most of the educational institutes prefer Google Meet for online meeting, learning like activities. It becomes more popular among the students. Below that there is demand for Zoom platform. All these tools have their own basic free plans along with paid version. We may go for anyone as per our requirement.

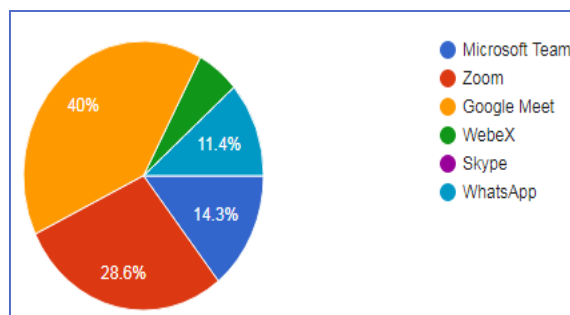


Fig.3: Preferred Platforms by Students

Figure 4 shows that with online learning platform, most of the students go for video conferencing, screen sharing facility, virtual interaction, audio conferencing like features of this platform.

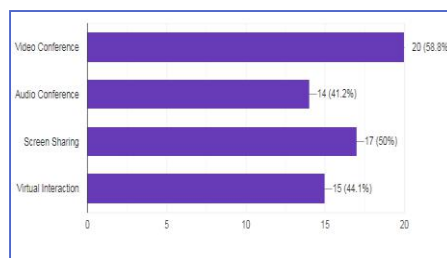


Fig.4: Feature of Platform used by Students

It creates an interest among the students for moving towards online learning. Figure 5 shows that most of the students are preferring online platforms.

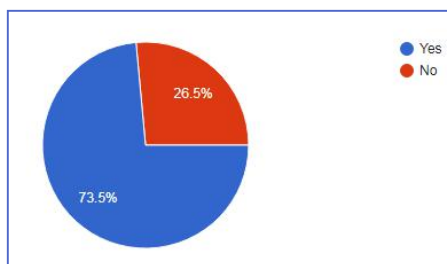


Fig.5: Percentage of students preferring online learning

Above analysis shows that students who had better access to the technology and the Internet generated the stronger positive attitude among them. The positive attitudes and the willingness of students to engage in e-learning suggest that there is a great prospective for e-learning initiatives.

3. CONCLUSION:

The result of the study shows that to learn new skills, knowledge; student has to go for different domains of life. To learn new skills, techniques; they have to go for learning new tools or technologies and their various applications. Updating knowledge or skills by student will be definitely seen as positive impact towards learning. A relationship between tool selection for learning and learners response shows dependencies on communication or learning tool. It shows that online learning affects our lives in a positive way by changing our daily basic activities into digitization.

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