

Peer Review File

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Reviewer A

Abstract

1. Objectives: "Nowadays, most institutions and universities have translated from traditional learning to online learning methods" Do you mean transited from?

ANS: Modified as suggested in the following sentence.

“Nowadays, most institutions and universities have transited from traditional learning to online learning methods, and this has become more expanded due to the Corona Virus Disease 19 (COVID-19)”.

Page No: 2

Line no: 26

2. Methods: "They were and the data" This seems like an incomplete sentence. They were .. ?

ANS: all students were registered into the institutional repository iMac server and the data shared into this server can be accessed by the students through file explorer application only with the intranet facility.

Page No: 2

Line no: 31-33

Introduction

1. "technology is changing continuously faster" Suggest to drop the word faster.

ANS: Modified as suggested

As we all know, technology is advancing continuously, and this technology help professionals cope with pandemic situations like Covid-19

Page No: 4

Line no: 65-66

2. "Dental professionals need to cope with this advanced technology during pandemic situations like Covid-19". Do dental professionals need to cope with the technology or does the technology help professionals cope with such situations?

ANS: As we all know, technology is advancing continuously, and this technology help professionals cope with pandemic situations like Covid-19 by shifting the traditional education system to advanced e-learning techniques.

Page No: 4

Line no: 65-67

3. "Academics, Patient Care, and Community" Suggest to stick to sentence case and convert these to small caps. Similarly, for "E-learning".

ANS: The institutions and universities should implement a system that can upscale our academics, patient care, and community outreach services.

Page No: 4

Line no: 73-74

Modified for "E-learning" all over the manuscript.

4. "Blended Learning and Flipped class learning methodology." Do you mean flipped classroom? Suggest to elaborate more on these methodologies, and how they relate to online learning.

ANS: This worldwide crisis had increased at-home learning settings and tools, working towards a safer manner to interact with learners in many professions. To better engage learners in their individual industries around the world, people are now attempting to build a blended learning method or flipped classroom scenario.

Blended learning combines traditional classroom instruction with online learning and other course elements. Flipped classrooms, on the other hand, involve the creation of courses, books, or lectures by the instructors that students can view or read at their own pace, with in-class instruction assisting in the practice of the concepts covered in the videos or other course materials. During the pandemic the concepts of both blended learning and the flipped class room learning were used in online education.

Page No: 5

Line no: 78-86

5. "The study's main aim is to implement effective and affordable dental education strategies in dental institutes during the covid-19 lockdown." This does not quite seem like a research aim, is the trying to evaluate the online learning strategy, or to compare the effectiveness of different education strategies? Alternatively, if the study wishes to describe the

ANS: The study's main aim is to evaluate the online learning strategies in dental education during the covid-19 lockdown and to instill knowledge among dental students during covid-19 lockdown through e-learning methodology.

Page No: 5

Line No: 95-97

Material and Methods:

1. Why were students who were not willing to learn through advanced e-learning methodology excluded? Would it not be important to assess and gather their feedback on why they were not interested in adopting e-learning?

ANS: Those not willing to learn through advanced e-learning methodology during Covid-19 lockdown due to health issues.

Those not able to use electronic databases or due to the lack of network connection in rural and semi-urban areas.

Page No: 10

Line No: 192-195

2. What was included in the questionnaire? Was the questionnaire validated?

ANS: The questionnaire included about the demographics information of the students, about their health status and their willingness of students to continue dental education during pandemic and to know the availability of electronic databases usage in their region or location. We have conducted a pilot survey with the validation of questions from all the subject experts.

Page no: 10

Line no: 196-199

3. Was a survey carried out before the study to assess changes in scores (pre-post survey)?

ANS: We have conducted a pilot survey with the validation of questions from all the subject experts, in the feedback both the students and parents were happy with the online education system,

Page no: 10

Line no: 198-199

Evaluation of students was done in this study by conducting online tests or assignments or by conducting formative assessments to check the knowledge of students they have gained during the learning process by digitalized dental education.

Page no: 14

Line no: 275-277

Apart from all these, regular online meetings with the parents who are primary stakeholders of our institute appreciated the efforts put forth by the e-learning team during the Crisis time.

Page no: 17

Line no: 348-349

4. What was the hypothesis when comparing scores across students from different years? What was the basis for the hypothesis?

ANS: Online teaching and learning methods were assessed by conducting online tests/assignments/ multiple-choice questions and debates between small groups before starting lecture for about 15 minutes. Immediate feedback forms assessed the performance of the students after online class through activities on each topic for about 15 minutes after lecture.

Page no: 12

Line no: 232-235

Results

1. How much time was given to students to complete online tests or assignment?
This was not mentioned in the methodology.

ANS: Online teaching and learning methods were assessed by conducting online tests/assignments/ multiple-choice questions and debates between small groups before starting lecture for about 15 minutes. Immediate feedback forms assessed the performance of the students after online class through activities on each topic for about 15 minutes after lecture.

Page no: 12

Line no: 232-235

2. "The communication between the students and faculty for conducting online classes is essential, and it consists of providing timetables and teaching schedules before the lessons. 40.8% of students rated excellent, 55.6% ranked good, 3.6% of students rated fair on student's and teachers' communication skills." These two sentences seem to suggest that the communication between the students and faculty is just through providing timetables and teaching schedules before the lessons, which is not the case.

ANS: In this context, we mean the communication between students and faculty was whether the schedules were posted well in advance of the lectures know the

teaching schedules. Not only that even the communication between faculty and students was there in clarifying the doubts post lecture.

Page no: 12

Line no: 241-242

Discussion

1. Given that there are many components of the online learning, which aspect was most important and which aspect were they most satisfied with?

ANS: Designing an e-learning course is the important aspect of e-learning, whereas creating interactive content and evaluating the learning activities were the most satisfied components by students.

Page no: 15

Line no: 304-306

2. Were there changes in satisfaction with e-learning before and after the pandemic?

ANS: It seemed that students followed online education system very easily after pandemic due to the continuous online education during pandemic.

Page no: 15

Line no: 303-304

Tables

1. Suggest to include number of students as well i.e. n (%)

ANS: Included as suggested in Table 1

Page no: 23

Line no: 470

Overall

1. Suggest for grammar checks (e.g. is and was were used interchangeably in the manuscript - suggest to standardize to past tense)

ANS: Grammarly check done

Reviewer B

Consider rewriting line 68 as ..., they were and the data can... seems a bit confusing. There is a trend thorough the manuscript of strangely constructed sentences. Consider a professional English reviewer before submission.

ANS: Grammarly check done and professional English reviewer before submission.

all students were registered into the institutional repository iMac server and the data shared into this server can be accessed by the students through file explorer application only with the intranet facility.

Page No: 2

Line no: 31-33

In your introduction there is no differentiation between cognitive and skill-based learning: the pandemic had a profound effect in skill-based learning.

ANS:

The course and course material are selected for cognitive-based learning curricula based on the subject matter to be taught. The knowledge connected to the specific topic to be taught to the pupils will then be the main focus, as well as how this knowledge is taught. The course and course material are selected in skill-based learning curricula based on the abilities to be developed. Professional expertise is one of the primary considerations when picking content in daily life. The competencies that need to be developed are the main focus. During a pandemic, skill-based learning will have a significant impact on the educational system.

Page No: 3

Line no: 54-55

Page No: 4

Line no: 56-60

You acknowledge limitations of the communication skills but there are no comments regarding pre-clinical and clinical skills.

ANS: In this context, we mean the communication between students and faculty was whether the schedules were posted well in advance of the lectures know the teaching schedules. Not only that even the communication between faculty and students was there in clarifying the doubts post lecture.

Explanation: Pre-clinical and clinical exercises were demonstrated through online education system and we achieved good results with pre-clinical exercises, whereas, the clinical methods were demonstrated from the institute to all students but the clinical skills of all the students were not affected due to the constant touch in seeing the educational videos.

Page no: 12

Line no: 241-242

Be consistent with capitalisation of e-learning.

ANS: As suggested by the reviewer 1, we have modified and given small caps to the word e-learning. We request you to consider the same.

Modified All over the manuscript

You use VDC abbreviation without spelling it out (I assume this is Vishnu Education Centre).

ANS: VDC- Vishnu Dental College

Modified All over the manuscript

The software used should also be in the reference with acknowledgement of the version used. It seems the e-learning tools were introduced in 2017, hence before the pandemic. Any initial thoughts of this and the changes made during pandemic?

ANS: We started with basic e-learning components like design of the e-learning methodology and saving the content of lectures and exploring the ways of transferring the e-learning lectures to students. During the pandemic the more sophisticated e-learning methods had come into existence, where we needed to conduct not only online classes, assessment methods like conducting tests and also demonstrating both pre-clinical and some clinical methods to students from the institute to all the students through e-learning system.

Consider a hyphen on suffixes for clarity (line 165 year-wise).

ANS: I BDS -(93), II BDS- (89), III BDS -(93), and IV BDS -(88) students.

Page: 9

Line no: 185-186

Parent feedback in some countries can be considered breach of data from students. It might be clearer if there is an explanation on the reasons for that approach (we only have a small proportion of individuals under-age).

ANS:Regular online meetings with the parents who are primary stakeholders of our institute appreciated the efforts put forth by the e-learning team during the crisis time. We just wanted to know whether the parents were happy with their wards online

Page: 17

Line no: 348-349

It seems to be a misspell of the student's year in line 212 and 213 as the second BDS year is shown twice and the third year is not listed.

ANS: I BDS -(93), II BDS- (89), III BDS -(93), and IV BDS -(88) students.

Page: 9

Line no: 185-186

The inclusion and exclusion criteria lack clarity. Where these students all registered? How they demonstrated lack of willingness? Why were they not able to use electronic databases? How the iPads were used to improve online teaching (line 244)?

The questionnaire included about the demographics information of the students, about their health status and their willingness of students to continue dental education during pandemic and to know the availability of electronic databases usage in their region or location. We have conducted a pilot survey with the validation of questions from all the subject experts.

1. All the students willing for online education were registered in Institutional repository-iMac mini server, so that Data Sharing can be done through File Explorer app.
2. Those not willing to learn through advanced e-learning methodology during Covid-19 lockdown due to health issues.
3. Those not able to use electronic databases or due to the lack of network connection in rural and semi-urban areas.
4. Both the faculty and students used iPads as main devices for online education during pandemic.

Page no: 10

Line no: 192-199

During discussion, many educational techniques are listed without a clear definition of why they are used. For example, peer-assisted learning, problem-based reasoning or blended learning (flipped classroom is also listed elsewhere). These methods are used with objectives in mind and the explanation about being "leading-edge" does not justify its use. Each introduced method should have a justification on its introduction demonstrating reasoning.

ANS: Just to talk about all the educational techniques we have written the above teaching methods. to avoid confusion, we are deleting the above paragraph.

Thank you for the advice.

There is no attempt to discuss some important issues regarding online access and digital inclusion. Did all students have easy access to internet? Did they have full access in rural and semi-urban areas? Was the data compared between satisfaction and online access?

ANS: In the pilot survey done by us, we have asked for those not able to use electronic databases or due to the lack of network connection in rural and semi-urban areas.

Page no: 10

Line no: 198-199