



**Research Paper**

**Online Communication System During Corona Crisis: A Case Study on Individual's Communication Confidence level**

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**Abstract:** *Educational institutions, such as schools, colleges & universities have been totally dependent on the traditional methods of learning i.e, chalk & board methods and face-to-face communication within a classroom. The sudden outbreak of Covid -19 pandemic has brought a transformation in classroom teaching. This situation created a challenge for the education system in India where the government, teachers, and students strived hard to fulfill their requirements. Many academic institutions brought a sudden change or made a paradigm shift in their pedagogical approach, i.e. from traditional learning to online teaching & learning. There were many positive changes that happened during this pandemic, the students and teachers tried to equip themselves with ICT-based learning and teaching mode. The students who were having a fear of public speaking gained the confidence to express their views and started raising questions. The initial hesitation has now changed to confidence while communicating through online mode. This paper tries to study the importance of online learning and analyze the confidence level of learners or speakers during online communication. This research is descriptive in nature. The data has been collected from students and academicians from various institutes through e-snowball sampling techniques (Google forms).*

**Keywords:** Online learning, technology, interpersonal skills, online communications, Covid-19.

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## **Introduction:**

As the Covid- 19 started prevailing, many governments started precautionary measures to limit people's congregations in public places. Such orders hampered the smooth functioning of schools and universities as the direction of government measures are long and may likely be continued for more time until we have a vaccine. Although in between, technology really played a vital role fully or partially in narrowing the gap and helping the academicians and students to have their teaching and learning go on uninterruptedly (Dhawan, 2020). There are several arguments associated with e-learning. Accessibility, affordability, learning pedagogy, and communication modes are some of the factors which are a matter of criticism (Littlefield, 2018). Apart from this, the factors which facilitate e-learning or e- communication are lower cost of transportation, flexibility; ICT enabled blended learning, new skills development of students, lifelong learning and an increase in confidence level while communicating.

E-communication or online communication refers to how a person and a computer communicate with each other through the internet. There are various types of online communication like

- i. E-mails
- ii. SMS.
- iii. Chats.
- iv. Forums: - These are the online sessions that have multiple users. This platform is popular for discussions and debates on any topic by posting messages on the same platform
- v. VoIP– Voice over Internet Protocol is used for audio or video transmissions that happen between two or more users in real-time. This is used for organizing meetings, conference calls, and e-seminars.

Many researchers suggest that face-to-face or one-to-many physical interactions are more effective than CMC (Computer-Mediated Communication).

Various studies have been conducted on the factors of internet communication revealing different communication models and the frequency of use of CMC (Compton, Lily Ko-Li, 2002).

This study tries to reveal the significance of online communication on the learners and speakers, who are willing to communicate and express through online mode. It also analyses the shift of language experience i.e., from written mode to spoken mode and the impact of online communication in a public meeting. The fear of public speaking is always associated with students or to some extent with academicians. This research study tries to understand the level of confidence of the speaker or learner while communicating through offline or online mode and to understand in which communication mode they are more comfortable and feel confident. The study suggests that the respondents feel that they are more relaxed while communicating through online mode as they are at their comfortable place and the environment around them makes them feel relaxed and so they could freely deliberate their thoughts. The deliberation of thought through online mode facilitates them as they feel a sense of easiness in their mind which does not create any anxiety and the result is more effective communication. While in offline mode the people around the speaker create an unconscious mental pressure and a fear that everyone is watching which results in anxiety that hampers proper communication.

### **Review of Literature:**

If we look back into history, many diseases had an impact on the human race; sometimes through a small epidemic or sometimes taking the shape of a pandemic. When any disease spreads in a smaller region it is termed as an epidemic and as it grows and crosses the border of origin and prevails in several countries it becomes a pandemic. On March 11, 2020 WHO confirmed the

Covid-19 virus as a communicable disease and announced the Corona Virus disease as a pandemic that spread to 190 countries in just a few months infecting billions and billions of people and still devastating the scenario.

Atanu Biswas (Biswas, 2020) stated that due to Covid-19 the education sector has been hit worst and 87% of the world's students are affected because of the shutdown of schools, colleges & universities. He also stated that there will be an impact on society due to the shrinkage of jobs.

Shikha Goyal (Goyal, 2020) in her study explored digital learning platforms and e-tech as a solution for uninterrupted learning & teaching communication mode.

Richa Choudhary (Choudhary, 2020) in her study reveals that there is a need to reconsider the current pedagogical method in school and higher education institutes by integration of e-learning.

Kamlesh Misra (Mishra, 2020) analyzed the impact and opportunities that rose due to covid-19. He highlighted four major consequences of Covid-19 like sluggish cross-border movement of students, passive learning, an unprepared teacher for online education, and changing the format of student requirements. He also pointed out four positive changes in education due to Covid-19 such as a rise in blended learning, a learning management system being the new norm, improvement in learning material, and a rise in collaborative work (Kim & Bonk, 2006).

(Cojocariu et al., 2004) say that computer-assisted learning offers learning from anywhere, anytime and in any rhythm under any means.

(Mc Brein et al., 2009) revealed that improvement and development in technology have made distance education & communication easier.

Online communication can be termed as more learning oriented, innovative & flexible. Online communication is no more an option; it is a demand of time and of the future. Most of the human beings of this world are at their residence due to the global pandemic Covid-19 and its effects could be seen in schools & colleges. In between, online communication is the best option during this crisis. The pandemic has made organizations move from offline to online modes of communication. This crisis made the institutions accept modern technology. With the help of this online technology, we can connect with many people in any part of the world. Many organizations (Colleges & Universities) have undergone full digitalization of their operations or activities by understanding the need of the current situation. So, any resistance to change will hamper the future of not only an individual but an educational unit too, across the globe. The shift from traditional face-to-face communication to online communication is the possible and best solution. This online communication has given the confidence to interact with the whole world sitting right from your home. The communicator has no fear of speaking with anyone as they have mental relaxation that they are at their home in their room and so feel comfortable and less nervous as compared to the synchronous communication style (Martin, 2020).

Public speaking is the process of communicating with the viewers or audiences. It is carried out at any school, college, workplace or sometimes in personal life too. Research suggests that 3Ps of public speaking are: Prepare, Practice, and Present. These three P's depend upon the situation in which public speaking or interaction is going on i.e., online or offline. The situation or environment has a major impact on confidence while communication or public speaking. The nervousness of a speaker at a stage or in offline communication changes to excitement in online communication, which makes them feel more comfortable while speaking. The fear to be watched directly by the audience is fully or partially absent in online communication. So, the

speakers usually prefer to have online communication. In offline communication kinesics, body movement, and gesture have to be controlled by the speaker but in offline mode, facial expression and voice pitch are the factors that are mainly considered for the deliverance of speech or thoughts (Bavelas, 2000).

### **Objective of the Study:**

The objectives of the above research study are:

- i. To determine the awareness level for online communication mode.
- ii. To analyze which mode of communication is preferable by the respondents
- iii. To understand whether offline or online communication mode is more comfortable for public speaking or interaction.
- iv. To understand whether offline or online communication mode, brings confidence in deliberating thoughts while public speaking or interaction.

### **Hypothesis Formation:**

H0: There is a negative relationship between online communication platforms and the confidence level of the communicator.

H1: There is a positive relationship between online communication platforms and the confidence level of the communicator.

### **Hypothesis Testing Using Chi Square Test:**

HYPOTHESIS (H0): There is no significant relationship between online communication platforms and the confidence level of the communicator.

RANK	PARTICULARS	O <sub>i</sub>	E <sub>i</sub>	(O <sub>i</sub> -E <sub>i</sub> ) <sup>2</sup>	(O <sub>i</sub> -E <sub>i</sub> ) <sup>2</sup> /E <sub>i</sub>
1	EASY TO EXPRESS	24	25	1	1
3	COMFORTABLE	6	25	361	14.44
4	LESS FEAR OF PUBLIC SPEAKING	16	25	81	3.24
5	CONFIDENT	9	25	256	10.24
TOTAL					27.96

Calculated Chi Square = 27.96 Tabulated value of Chi-square at (n-1) degree of freedom i.e., 3 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance= 7.81

Since the Calculated value of the Chi-Square test is > the Tabulated value of the Chi-Square test.

So, our H0 (null hypothesis) is not accepted. Hence the H1 (alternative hypothesis) is accepted.

So, we can say that there is a significant relationship between online communication platforms and the confidence level of communicators.

**Research Methodology:**

The study is descriptive in nature. Both the methods of secondary and primary data collection have been used. The secondary data was collected from various books, reference journals, seminar papers, and articles. The respondents were selected through the snowball sampling

method and the data was collected through Google online form with the help of a structured questionnaire.

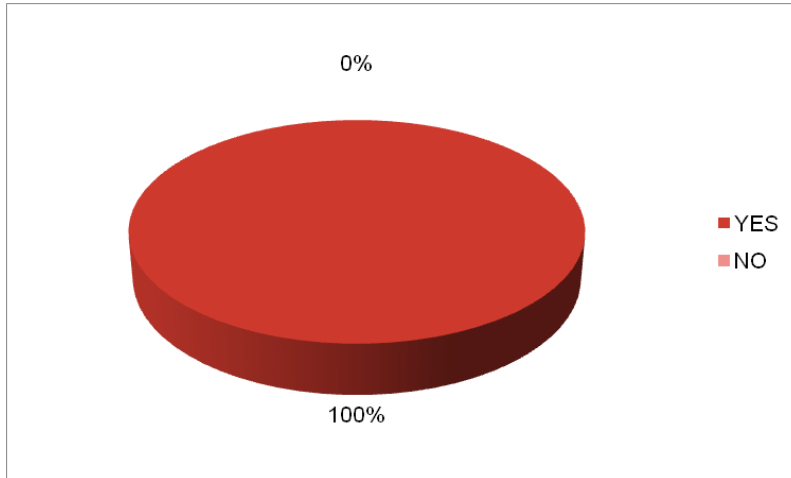
**Data Analysis: Findings:**

**DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS OF THE RESPONDENTS**

	<b>DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS</b>	<b>LABEL</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>1.</b>	TOTAL RESPONDENTS	55	
<b>2.</b>	GENDER	MALE	40
		FEMALE	60
	AVERAGE AGE	26 YEARS	
<b>3.</b>	QUALIFICATION	GRADUATE	6
		ACADEMICIANS	58
		POST GRADUATE	30
		Ph. D/ M. PHIL	6

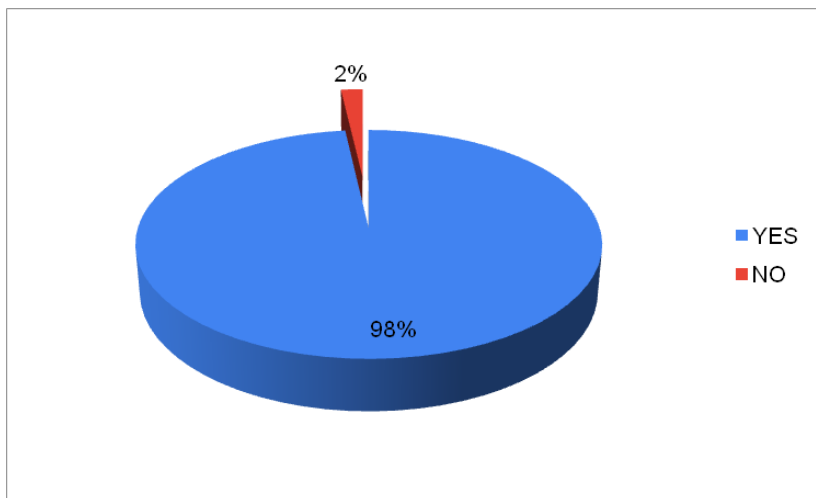
4. Do you have an access to internet service?





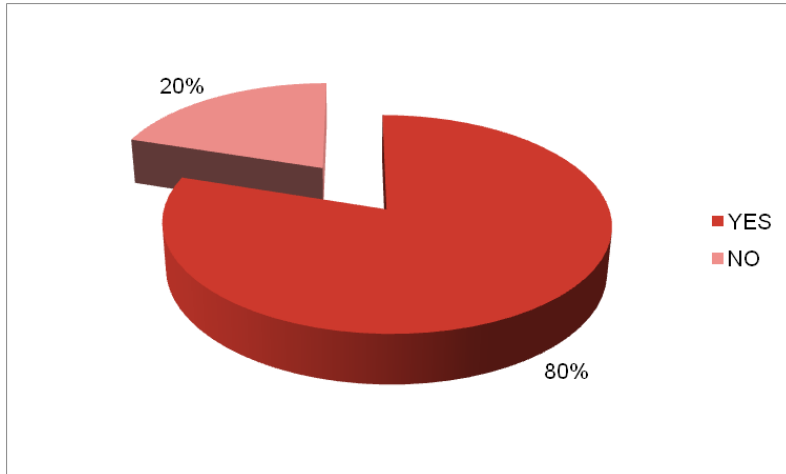
All the respondents answered that they have proper access to the internet facility.

5. Have you ever been a part of any online event (like webinars, online classes, or e-workshop)?



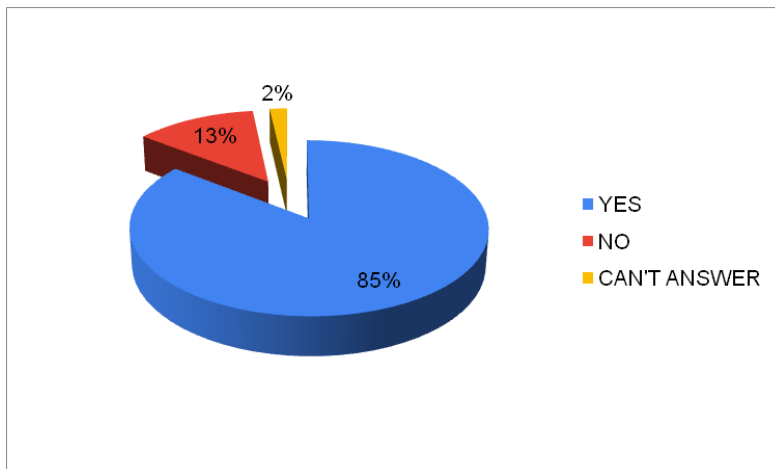
The respondents expressed that during the pandemic they mostly communicated through online mode and their academic activities were mostly dependent on the online communication system.

6. Do you have a fear of expressing your thoughts on a public platform?



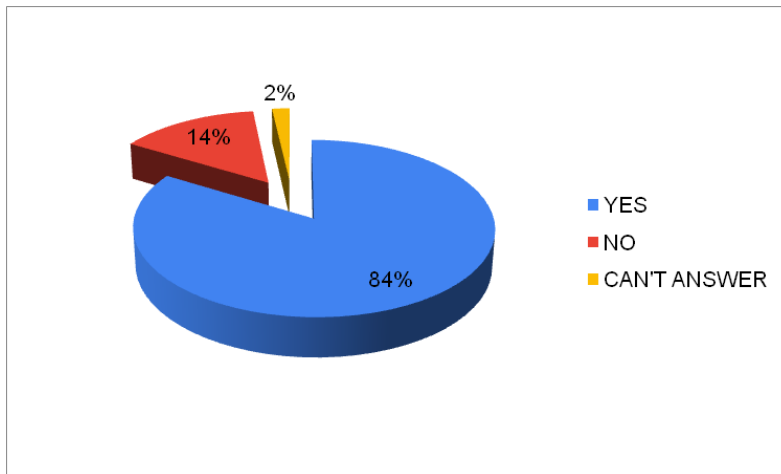
80% of respondents expressed that they have a fear of public speaking, especially in offline mode. They added that because of the online communication system they are now feeling more comfortable and confident in offline speaking too.

7. Have you ever felt that you have stage fear?



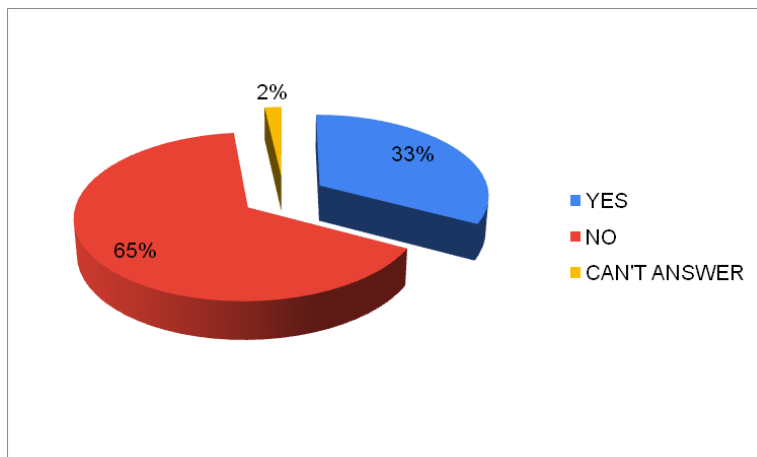
As public communication is mostly done in a large number, so the respondents expressed that they have a stage fear while communicating offline but now it is lessening as they have interacted online which gave them confidence due to regular online interaction, so they can now interact offline too with less anxiety and hesitation.

8. Deliberating your thoughts in front of the crowd, brings uneasiness or fear in you?



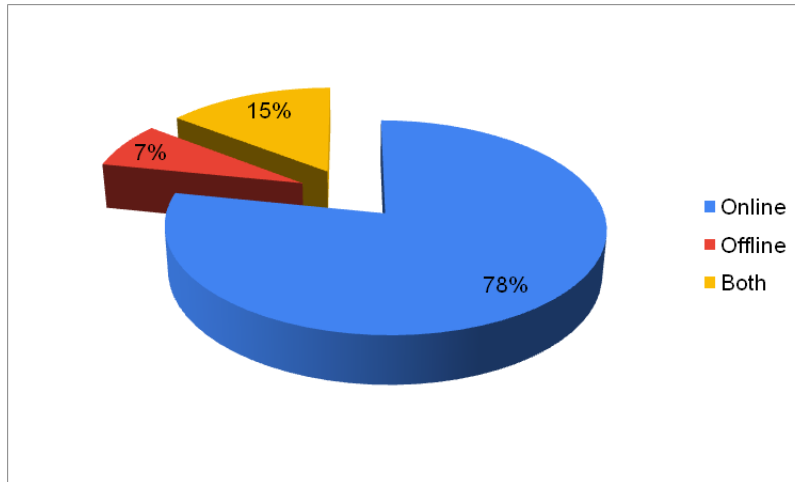
Most of the students who were respondents to this study revealed that they were having hesitation to raise their queries in the classroom, but due to online communication they are feeling free in raising their doubts and questions.

9. If you are communicating through online mode from your own place, do you have the same feeling of fear as in offline communication mode?



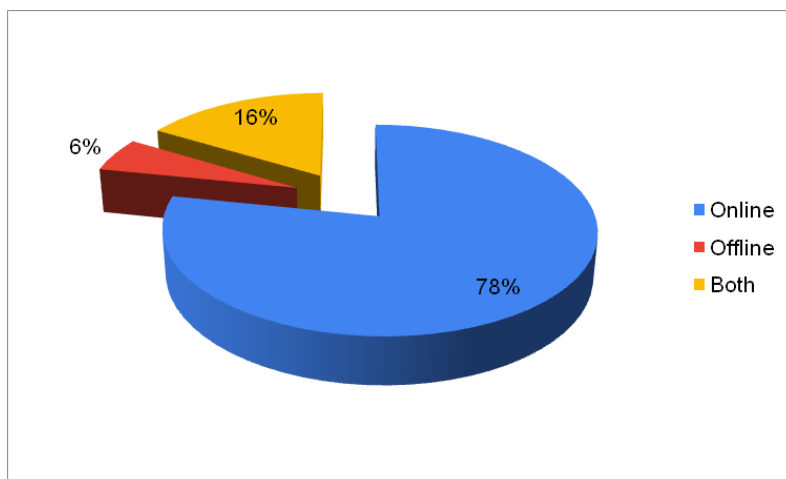
Most of the respondents conveyed that while communicating through online mode they feel more comfortable and less anxious in comparison to offline communication. The reason they suggested was the environmental factors around them.

10. Which mode of communication is comfortable for you to communicate?



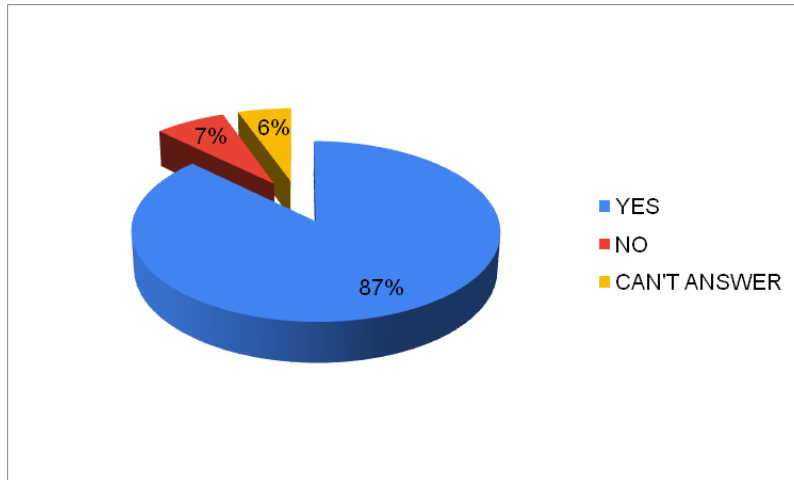
Whether it is because of the pandemic or other factors the respondents conveyed that they are more comfortable in online mode. The reason may be health or safety for oneself.

11. In which communication mode do you feel more confident?



The respondents feel more confident while communicating through online mode. The reasons are fewer chances of being watched, the sense of easiness at their residence and the excitement of using new communication technology.

12. Does an online communication platform reduce your fear of public speaking?



Most of the respondents conveyed that the online communication platform has reduced their fear of public speaking the reasons suggested are no face-to-face interaction, absence of mistake identification and a sense of comfort from their own place.

#### **Limitations of the Study:**

As this research study has been done to understand the opinion of respondents towards the online communication system, so the results are mostly a case study which is mainly done in a few educational institutions so it cannot be generalized to the complete population. The responses submitted by the respondents are their own personal experiences during online communication.

### **Conclusion:**

Technology has helped in overcoming the hindrances of communication ability. The Covid- 19 pandemic has partially or fully changed the way many people interact with each other or impart education. The speakers or the students have accepted online communication as a possible way to communicate. This technology acceptance has given life-long learning experiences to students and academicians. Online communication is cost-effective and increases efficiency and social interactions. Those who were earlier hesitating in communicating or expressing their thoughts are now feeling more confident, comfortable and less fearful or less nervous during the interaction. If this healthy practice continues to be in regular mode, then it will become a habit and the speaker may get habituated and then they will be confident in any mode of communication i.e., online or offline.

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