



## Students' Perception on the Mode of University Examination Pattern: Online Vs Offline

<sup>1</sup>V.Bindu\*, <sup>2</sup>Ravula Bharathi

<sup>1</sup> Associate Professor, Department of Home Science, Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam, Tirupati, AP, India.

<sup>2</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Home Science, Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam, Tirupati, AP, India.

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### ABSTRACT:

The education system is changing dynamically since the last decade from the offline to online mode in the competitive examinations. The major factors behind the specific shift are commonly associated with easiness, convenience, accuracy results, less cheating and overcoming paper leakage problems. However, majority of the university examinations including the technical courses follow and continued with evaluation on offline mode. The present study was intended to observe the students perceptions of writing university regular end examinations. Structured questionnaire method was adopted to gather the information from the university students. The results revealed mixed interest as they already adjusted to the traditional offline system. The probable reasons would be the flexibility in answering questions through descriptive scores. The results well demonstrated that in spite of their opinions expressed many advantages with the online mode, they hardly willing to adapt to the newer method of online examination pattern. There is bare need to enlighten the staff, parents and students to understand the essential advantageous features of online examination in view of sustainability of natural resources by reducing paper usage. The Government must be more responsible towards undertaking measures for employing computer skilled persons to install the appropriate software tools.

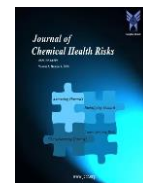
### 1. Introduction

The traditional assessment system consists of paper and pencil testing and creates certain human errors during evaluation process. The fairness in the evaluation process can be improved through e-assessment by applying the necessary rules and regulations. The new online assessment technique evaluates the results electronically and eliminates the human errors [1]. The usage of online examinations require in depth research to examine the success as well as existing gaps. Apart from finding students preferences on online versus on-campus exams, student wellbeing has to be analysed [2].

Online examinations commonly referred to as electronic examinations (e-examinations) are gradually raising popularity and importance. Online exams perceived considerable benefits over traditional paper based offline examination patterns in terms of time, money and effort. Conversely, the students are also facing several challenges such as security, fairness issues and validity.

Mostly the success of the online exam depends on the designing valid, secure and flexible module [3].

The modern 21<sup>st</sup> century have been envisaging newer interests in the Government, industry and education field to meet the challenges of the digital learning process especially in the higher education. India is the second largest populous country and found to be the youngest nation with an average age of about 30 years. During the crucial periods of COVID-19 pandemic and at times of lockdown situation, the education system seems to be drastically affected from primary level to the university education. Digital learning pathways become an effective pathway in the learning process and still even after the closing of lockdown, the mode of online education hold its stand through continue with the blended mode. Gradually, the online mode is being extended to the assessment and evaluation pattern by adopting partially to adopt online examination system [4].



Consequently the rapid changing digital technologies and globalisation lead to fundamental changes in the assessment process through gradual changing scenario towards e-assessment evaluation techniques. But, the in depth research on the student perceptions and the consequences on the mode of conducting examinations especially among university students is a big lacuna and unexplored [5]. Based on this background, the present investigation is carried out to study the university students' perceptions on the mode of conducting university examinations.

## 2. Materials And Methods

The study was planned to understand the students' perceptions on the mode of university examinations patterns viz., online and offline examinations. The research was carried out through structured questionnaire. The investigation was conducted from the students of two universities viz., Sri Padmavati Mahila Visvavidyalayam and Sri Venkateswara University located in Tiruapti of Chittoor district, Andhra Pradesh. The sample comprised of 160 students randomly selected from the respective two universities.

The questionnaire comprised of collecting basic information on age and income levels. The income levels were categorized into three groups based on monthly income as low (<Rs 10,000/-, middle (Rs 10,000 – 50,000/-) and high (>Rs 50,000/-). Students perceptions on examination pattern were obtained using five point hedonic scale as 5-Strongly agree, 4-Agree, 3-Neither agree nor disagree, 2-Disagree and 1-Strongly Disagree. The results on the students' perceptions on online vs offline were evaluated for the statistical differences using paired t-test.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. GENERAL INFORMATION AND EXAMINATION PREFERENCE

The general information was gathered on age and income and also collected their preference on writing university examination either as online or offline. The data obtained was presented in table 1.

**Table 1:** Students preferences on online Vs. offline examination pattern

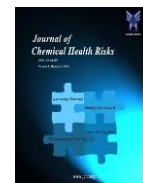
S.No.	Parameter	Values
1	Mean Age (Years)	20.39±3.27
2	<b>Income (Percentage)</b> i)Low (<Rs10,000/-) ii)Middle (<Rs10,000/-to 50,000/-) iii)High	18 61 21
3	<b>Online Preference (Percentage)</b> i)Frequency ii)Percentage	36 27
4	<b>Offline Preference (Percentage)</b> i)Frequency ii)Percentage	124 73

The observations from the table revealed that the mean age of the participants was 20.39±3.27. The distribution of the respondents based on income levels denoted that majority of them belong to middle class family (61%) followed by high income (21%) and minimum of 18 per cent belong to low income group.

When the preference of the students towards writing university semester end examination was gathered, they strongly expressed their opinion positively for offline examination pattern. This was clearly evident that nearly three fourth of them showed interest in attempting through the traditional examination pattern of offline (73%). The well-known was fact that each type of the examination pattern had its own advantages and disadvantages. In this context, the investigator decided to study the student perceptions towards online and offline examination pattern for appearing into the semester final examinations. The student perceptions were illustrated for each mode of examination differently and illustrated further.

### 3.2. STUDENTS PERCEPTIONS ON ONLINE EXAMINATION PATTERN

The researcher focused on gathering students' perception from the university students towards attempting examination through online examination and presented in table 2.

**Table 2:** Students perceptions on online examination pattern

S.No.	Parameter	Frequency (Percentage) n(%)				
		Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neither Agree Nor Disagree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
1	Easiness to Pass	7(4)	12(8)	21(13)	29(18)	91(57)
2	Convenience	27(17)	48(30)	19(12)	42(26)	24(15)
3	Time Saving	41(26)	53(33)	29(18)	23(14)	14(9)
4	Less Tiring	12(8)	24(15)	87(54)	21(13)	16(10)
5	Reduce/Eliminate Cheating	89(56)	40(25)	15(9)	11(7)	5(3)
6	More Accuracy	95(61)	40(25)	11(7)	5(3)	2(1)
7	Fast Results	101(63)	45(28)	12(8)	2(1)	0(0)
8	Less Paper Usage	98(61)	44(28)	11(7)	5(3)	2(1)

**Note:** Values within parenthesis indicate per cent values

The data from the table clearly indicated that majority of the students had the notion that there was a little bit difficult associated in passing the examination through online. Three fourth of the students either disagree (18%) or strongly disagree (57%) on the easiness to pass online examination. This might be due to the fact that maximum of online exams were of objective type and no flexibility allowed in extending the students to get passed and higher marks unless they attempted the correct marks. Mixed opinion aroused on the convenience level as 47 per cent of positive opinion, 41 per cent of negative opinion and remaining 12 per cent as neutral. But interestingly majority of them felt either strongly agree (26%) or agree (33%) that online examination pattern was time saving.

Regarding the tiredness, maximum of them were neutral towards expressing their opinion on the characteristic feature of tiredness and not much clear which mode of

examination was of less tiring. The highlighting point to be stressed in this particular study was that though majority of them preferred to write examination through offline examination, they had very good opinion on online examination. This was particular with the unique features such as online exams had certain added advantages like reducing/ eliminating cheating, more accuracy in writing exams and obtaining results accurately and fast. Strikingly nearly 90 per cent of the students expressed either strongly (61%) or agree (28%) that online examination was much beneficial in minimizing the paper usage.

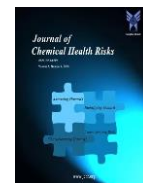
### 3.3. Students perceptions on offline examination pattern

The observations on the students' perceptions on offline examination were tabulated just like online examination pattern and denoted in table 3.

**Table 3:** Students perceptions on offline examination pattern

S.No.	Parameter	Strongly Agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neither Agree Nor Disagree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (1)
1	Easiness to Pass	90(50)	33(21)	19(12)	10(6)	8(5)
2	Convenience	28(18)	39(24)	27(17)	42(25)	24(15)
3	Time Saving	8(5)	19(12)	91(57)	27(17)	15(9)
4	Less Tiring	12(8)	24(15)	87(54)	19(12)	18(11)
5	Reduce/Eliminate Cheating	5(3)	11(7)	26(16)	53(33)	65(41)
6	More Accuracy	19(12)	56(35)	46(29)	24(15)	15(9)
7	Fast Results	3(2)	16(10)	32(20)	66(41)	43(27)
8	Less Paper Usage	0(0)	9(6)	14(9)	47(29)	90(56)

**Note:** Values within parenthesis indicate per cent values



The results from the table well indicated that majority of them had confidence in passing the exams easily through offline line either strongly (50%) or agree (22%). The mixed opinion on rating the scale was on offline examination similar to that of online examination pattern. Maximum of them had neutral opinion on the concepts of time saving and less tiring while attempting examination. Though, their score was mainly towards offline, they were not in agreement with the possibility of reduce/eliminating, yielding more accurate and fast results. The students strongly believe that there was

much paper usage required when the examination was done through offline mode.

### 3.4. Online examination vs offline examination pattern

The current research intended to draw the conclusions on the comparative inputs between online and offline examination patterns which were statistically compared using paired t-test. The findings thus obtained were interpreted and tabulated in table 4.

**Table 4:** Students perceptions on online Vs offline examination pattern

S.No.	Parameter	Online		Offline		t-Value	P-Value
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
1	Easiness to Pass	1.84	1.17	4.17	1.17	17.7692	<0.0001*
2	Convenience	3.08	1.36	3.03	1.35	0.2893	0.7726 <sup>NS</sup>
3	Time Saving	3.53	1.26	2.86	0.92	5.3723	<0.0001*
4	Less Tiring	3.69	1.15	2.96	1.01	6.0385	<0.0001*
5	Reduce/Eliminate Cheating	4.23	1.08	1.99	1.06	18.7470	<0.0001*
6	More Accuracy	4.32	1.04	3.25	1.14	8.7824	<0.0001*
7	Fast Results	4.53	0.69	2.19	1.00	24.3227	<0.0001*
8	Less Paper Usage	4.44	0.85	1.64	0.87	29.2309	<0.0001*

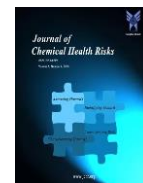
Note: NS= Not Significant; \*= Significant at 1% level

The statistical analytical data was used to arrive at the significance difference levels on the students' perceptions towards attempting university examinations in view of two modes of examination patterns viz., online vs offline exams. There was high significant level existed at one per cent level on the easiness of passing examinations. The university students usually adopted for the traditional offline pattern and had more confidence on passing the examination through offline examination rather than online and resulted in highly significant difference. In case of convenience, the students might be found comfortable and convenient in writing any either mode and hence implicated by non-significant difference.

The previous findings on frequency and percent distribution on hedonic scale showed mixed results on time saving and less tiring issue but when the mean values were compared relatively substantial number of students positively stated that online examination was time saving and less tiring. Though majority of the students preferred offline examination pattern, they

accepted the benefits associated with online examination and significantly agreed the facts of the possibility of reducing/ eliminating cheating, proceeding more accurately and at faster rate through online exams. They expressed strongly at highly significant level ( $p < 0.001$ ) that online examination pattern seemed to be the better mode in less paper usage.

The online examination, commonly known as take-home examination (THE), is utilized to conduct examinations utilizing innovative gadgets such as computers and mobile phones. THE can be carried out at anyplace: at domestic, in an office, or at examination middle. THE has distinctive forms and can incorporate paper-based evaluations. The Covid19 widespread and lockdowns compelled higher education institutions (HEI) to set out on the help of online examinations. The investigations explored with both positive and negative discernments of online examinations. Positive discernments that made online examination pleasurable were accounted on travel time, composing at one's possess pace and space, submitting reply sheets online, getting quick criticism,



and composing online and offline. On the other hand, negative discernments included troubles in utilizing the Invigilator App, contamination, organize network, and stack shedding [6, 7].

The move of higher learning to online classes has been progressing since high-speed web got to be broadly accessible. COVID-19, in any case, significantly quickened this move. Online classes make separate instruction reasonable and open to millions of understudies, but a key concern is whether scores from online exams are important. Victory and disappointment on exams can have a significant effect on a student's life. For illustration, failing a required course may delay graduation and confer problems. Grade-point normal is a vital determinant of graduate affirmation results, which can influence a student's career way. Given the stakes included, it isn't shocking that a few students would endeavour to attain superior exam scores by cheating, and since online exams are ordinarily taken unmonitored, they give sufficient openings for unscrupulous scholastic behaviours to happen. Cheating was either not widespread or ineffective at boosting scores, and the strong assessment value of online exams was observed regardless of the type of questions asked on the exam, the course level, academic discipline, or class size. Finally they conclude that online exams, even when unproctored, are a viable assessment tool [8, 9, 10].

#### 4. Conclusion

The overall findings of the current study well demonstrated that the university students were acquainted with the traditional pattern of offline examination, preferred to attempt on offline and hardly accepting to bring out the modern changes. However, they expressed their convenience in attempting through any mode of examinations. In fact, interestingly they were aware and expressed their positive opinion on the associated positive benefits with online examination such as time saving, less tiring, minimizes cheating with accuracy and possibility of obtaining fast results. The online examination pattern found to be eco-friendly as the paper usage was at very minimal level. The Government and concerned examination committee members might be undertaken necessary measures to enlighten the students as well the staff that the online examination question paper pattern was incorporated with varied questions including more easily questions,

easy questions and slightly harder questions. The students with minimum basic knowledge also would easily clear the end examinations and would be benefited with the associated beneficial features through accepting the online pattern of examinations.

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