

# Online Learning at Tertiary Institution During Pandemic of Covid-19: A Conceptual Review of Students' Motivational Issues and Educators' Challenges

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## Abstract

This article review works to specifically define the motivational determinants for students engaged in online learning as well as the difficulties of educators as a primary source for disseminating learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Ironically, the pandemic has contributed to some improvement in the global education system where online learning is increasingly growing in terms of use. Despite the online learning adoption trend, there is a problem with learners determined to participate in online learning. When addressing students' desire to engage in online learning, the motivation elements of the student itself should be calculated. Students' acceptance of technology, self-efficacy, and self-determination are among the elements that should be examined. In addition, educators must consider the complexities of integrating online teaching and learning. While most educators are not completely prepared for the rapid transition, they need to face challenges. In view of the challenges, the development of conducive online communication, the adequacy of online teaching technology skills, the positive attitude towards technology, the need for training, self-motivation boost and the support of student participation in online learning are appropriate. To build a resilient education system, a lot would have to be tackled in the future and additional study should be done.

**Keywords:** Challenges, COVID-19, Motivation, Online Learning, Students

## Introduction

Online learning has emerged two decades ago in tertiary education (Rapanta et al., 2020). Even though this platform is not considered new in education system, obviously it is possible to state that learning through online platform is a first choice of student (Allen et al. 2016). The COVID-19 pandemic has led to changes for worldwide education system where almost all schools, universities and colleges are closed (Adam, 2020). The government of most countries in the world enforces lockdown and Movement Control Order to curb the vast spread of the

virus. Schools and educational institutions are closed to ensure that society lives are not in risk. Apparently, the halt of face-to-face learning due to pandemic of COVID-19 enable online learning to be fully applied. This situation totally gives a massive transition for education system especially for higher learning institution.

University need to resume their education system by using online learning platform. New norms of life lead to challenges for educators' task whereby they need to equip themselves with knowledge, skills and ability to function effectively as a main source for students in virtual classroom. In addition, online learning skills is one of the key skills in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These skills require educators to be acquainted with digital platform, content, and deliverables. This to ensure that knowledge can convey effectively and continuously promote lifelong learning even in this resistance situation. Challenges began for educators when their experiences are scarce related to practice using various medium and tools associate with online learning including Microsoft Teams, Facebook Live, Google Classroom, Webex Zoom and other chat application like WhatsApp and Telegram. The interaction between students and educators is mediated by technology, and the design of learning environment (eg. space where learning occurs) can have significant influence on learning outcome (Bower, 2019; Gonzalez et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2013). Therefore, challenges of educator to conduct online learning need to further review to assist them leveraging their skills in this digital era.

Online learning acceptance is highly depending on user acceptance (Tarhini et al., 2016). High interactivity and flexibility also enable online learning to be use at any time in different devices and location (Chen et al., 2000). Further mention by Gedera and Williams (2013), online learning provide learners with some flexibility in terms of time, place, and pace. Educators will provide numerous online teaching materials for students to repeatedly watch and refer, directly will enrich learning experience with better understanding of lesson (Chen and Wu, 2015; Brecht and Ogilby, 2008). Nevertheless, unanticipated nature of online learning environment can lead to demotivation and disengagement or even withdrawal. Unlike face-to-face learning whereby educators constantly can monitor feedback from students, engagement of students in online learning is quite difficult to observed. Moreover, students depend on their individual drive factors to participate in online learning. Apart from that, online learning requires self-regulated learning strategies to keep them motivated. Hence, this paper scrutinized various predictors in motivation with the aim to maintain student's engagement in online learning.

## **Literature Review**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the main contribution of this paper would identify the subject of online learning, as well as addressing motivating drivers for online learning and educators' challenges as a primary source for teaching and learning implementation.

### ***Online Learning***

Online learning is a form of teaching and learning delivered using digital technology. It implies that students are physically distant from the instructors and require a delivery method (Wang et al., 2013; Wilde and Hsu, 2019). In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, online learning skills, should be prioritized through leveraging online education technologies and applications (Christopher and Weng, 2020). These skills require learners to determine what to learn, searching material/information to learn, self-directed learning skills and should possess high motivation (Wan Hassan et al., 2020). Author further claim that teaching and learning materials presented using this medium have visual, word, animation, video, or audio visuals.

In addition, it also provides facilities such as classroom learning and assisted by educators in specific field. The use of technology in teaching and learning process can broaden the scope of teaching, increase quality of teaching and reduce cost and provide opportunities for students to master their learning and encourage interaction and feedback from students (Hwang et al., 2015). Gray and Tobin (2010) further depict that online learning supports the teaching methods which cannot be attained through text books and it can reach a large number of students, thereby overcoming the limitation of space and time without the increase of any resources. Apparently, many studies have been conducted to explore the various challenges of teaching online and how, in future, our online practice will shape our developing pedagogies of teacher education (Fletcher and Bullock 2015). However, according to Castle and McGuire (2010), online learning is deemed effective from the student's perspective. Learning on the Web, is highly autonomous learning environment and possess challenges for students who lack of motivation, self-confidence and self-regulated learning skills (Artino, 2008)

### ***Motivation***

In discussing about motivation of students to engage in online learning, it is importance to remember that the significant features of online learning are technology-based tools. The effective use of online learning dependent on the perspective of user, as well as their knowledge and competencies with respect to both computer and mobile usage. If they have a strong acceptance of technology that functions as a key element in online learning, student motivation would likely increase. Meanwhile the motivation was not just from the acceptance of technology, the desire to perform action in each situation and the success actions will decide the motivation of individuals.

### ***Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)***

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) has been proposed by Davis in 1989. The TAM defines the attitude; people's feeling, positive or negative regarding the behavioural intention performance towards adopting a system is predicted by their perceived usefulness and perceived ease of uses (Davis, 1989). In the original theory of TAM, perceived ease of use is also reported to predict perceived usefulness. Besides, behavioral intention (the degree to which people perform or not perform for specific future behavior) to adopt a system is predicted by the attitude and perceived usefulness. Finally, the actual use that is described as the use of a system is predicted by behavioral intention (Davis, 1989). Higher education transformation is depending on technology as a key factor for ensuring relevancy and necessary changes (Bates and Sangra, 2011). Past researchers have studied the impact of technology in terms of the construct of TAM in various organization including education. Some consensus believes that experience of users can explain the perceived of the use e-learning (De Smet et al., 2012; Purnomo and Lee, 2013), and perceived usefulness (Lee et al. 2014; Martin, 2012; Purnomo and Lee, 2013; Rezaei et al. 2008). The students who have more experience using the internet and computer tend to feel comfortable instead of students with inadequate experience or new learners (Lee et al., 2014; Purnomo and Lee, 2013). Another study found that experience in utilizing online learning can influence the intention of using online learning in the future to support their learning activities (Premchaiswadi et al., 2012; De Smet et al., 2012; Paechter and Maier, 2010).

***Self-Efficacy Theory***

The concept of self-efficacy refers to the individual's belief in his own capability to perform an action in any given situation (Bandura, 1997). This theory develops from social cognitive theory and also known as social learning theory. Further define by Ormrod (2011), self-efficacy is a "belief that one is capable of executing certain behaviors or achieving certain goals" and found that self-efficacy and course relevance and support (i.e., family, faculty, and organizations) emerged as the most important themes affecting student retention in online courses. Meanwhile, Park and Choi (2009) sought to find the factors that encourage students to remain in online courses. They focused on internal factors (i.e., satisfaction and motivation) and external factors (i.e., organizational and family support). The result of the analysis shows a significant difference regarding internal and external factors. The researchers concluded that internal and external factors have a significant impact in online student retention. Furthermore, Armeakis et al (1993) claim that, self-efficacy not only essential factor that impact readiness to manage change, but student's self-efficacy is also vital in terms of how they instill beliefs about their abilities to manage online learning to reach targeted aims. Supported by Hung, Chou et al (2010), students reporting with higher self-efficacy with computers and the internet have been found to perform better in online learning task and performance.

***Self-Determination Theory***

The psychologist Deci and Ryan (1985) propose theory to study motivation in terms of performance behaviour across several domains including physical activity. The self-determination theory is a macro theory that is concerned with the motivation of humans and the importance of social contexts for motivation and personal growth. With this, self-determination theory addresses the two global forms of motivation, namely intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation promotes activities in which the individual experiences inherent satisfaction; he or she finds this activity interesting and enjoyable (Ryan and Deci, 2017). To be clear, what activates intrinsically motivated students is pleasure, competency, and autonomy (Lee et al., 2012). The factors, which hinder the realization of the needs of competence and autonomy, hinder intrinsic motivation (Lee et al., 2012). Thus, intrinsic motivation arises from self-awareness and from the pleasure which is felt during a particular activity (Morillo et al., 2018). The concept of extrinsic motivation is the opposite of intrinsic motivation. It is related to instrumental motivation – it is the motivation related to external incentives and rewards to engage in activities. Extrinsic motivation is understood as a kind of potential reward (Morillo et al., 2018). "Students who are extrinsically motivated undertake activities for reasons separate from the activity itself (Ryan and Deci 2000), for example gaining good grades, avoiding negative consequences, or because the task has utility value, such as passing a course in order to earn a degree" (Hartnett and St. George, 2011).

***Educator's Challenges******Conducive Online Communication Environment***

Educators is a main source of transferring knowledge to students. An educator's presence in learning activities and as part of community in online learning environment is motivational (McIntyre, 2011). Establishing a conducive environment to communicate via online learning will be one of the educator's challenges. In order for students to be engage, they should feel a sense of belonging to the learning community. So, the presence of educators to unite all students to be part of forum or discussion as well as to direct them,

guide them and provoke them to think further will lead to boost their motivation (Gedera et al., 2015). Supported by Mclsaac et al (2006) on their findings of qualitative study, found that student's interaction and positive learning experiences could be promoted by the educators through providing immediate feedback, participating in discussion and encouraging social interactions. As further mentioned by Chang and Han (2020), the efforts of educators to get to know individual students, the non-judgmental attitude towards the lack of awareness of the students, and the vulnerability to share their own learning needs can help build and promote an online learning environment.

### ***Inadequate Skills of Educators***

Research has showed that individuals are able to monitor, control and regulate their behaviors in learning contexts, but all depends on the resources and the pedagogical approach used by the educators (Agina et al., 2011). The hit of Covid-19 outbreak awakens all educators to have adequate skills of technology base tools as currently online learning is an alternative mode of teaching. Therefore, educators also need to be acquainted with technologies such as blogs, discussion forums, virtual meetings, etc., so as to ensure that they successfully deliver their roles in disseminating knowledge (Hadad, 2007). At the same time, it is a matter of great concern for educators whether they would be successfully utilizing the online learning technology to perform their functions. One of the reasons for this apprehension could be the feeling among most of the educators about their capability to utilize the technology most of them were taking technological assistance in teaching for the first time in their professional life. These apprehensions would not only affect their performance but also result in low motivation and job satisfaction among educators.

### ***Attitude towards Technology***

According to Schechter (2000), educators with proficiency in technology will positively influence the usage and frequency of used within their classroom. The attitude of teachers does influence the infusion of technology into the classroom environment (Demetriadis et al., 2003). As clarified by (Jimoyiannis and Komis, 2007), variables such as experience in teaching, gender and subject taught (ChanLin, 2005) contribute to the attitude of educators towards technology. Educators with imagination are more likely to absorb technology for education and have been affected by factors such as the learning environment and difficulties relevant to the curriculum. It was found that the attitude of educators towards the adoption of technology would also be affected by their experience of the application of technology (Teo et al., 2008).

### ***Training for Professional Growth***

Teaching through virtual classroom during Covid-19 outbreak is somewhat new to most of the educators. Technology is the utmost important tools to enable teaching and learning so educators should accommodate themselves with varieties of training to function effectively in new teaching experience. This is particularly challenging for an educator who has taught in the classroom in their entire career and has not employed any technological tools. The shift on how education is carried out these days enable educators to play a different role not only as educators, but also act as facilitators and technological expert. The need for educators to have professional development through training is an effective response towards the presence of Covid-19 dictating the online learning setting.

### ***Educator's Motivation***

The Covid-19 pandemic has changed not only the lifestyle, but also the passion of individuals for work-related activities. The outbreak of this virus has provided educators around the world a unique challenge to transform teaching modalities from the conventional method to the online format. Online learning has undergone ups and downs in teacher engagement associates with circumstances that shifted during the Covid-19 pandemic. For educators to have a high degree of motivation during online teaching because the challenge of teaching allows educators in the virtual classroom to silently solve the issue. Three variables have shape educator's motivation: the educator's spirit in carrying out online learning, the passion and the duties and responsibilities of educators. These three variables are linked and decide the success of learning with students.

### ***Growing and Maintaining Students' Engagement***

For educators' other difficulties, such as conditioning students to take part in online learning, are difficult. It is possible to break the factors that generate these obstacles into internal and external factors. Internal variables are issues resulting from the home atmosphere of the student, such as intervention from family members (young and older siblings). Such concerns allow students who are studying not to concentrate on learning. One consideration is a less favorable home learning environment in which student behaviors of family members cause disturbances that decrease the attention needed to understand the subject matter. The distractions of other learners when integrating learning using an online program in a virtual classroom are external factors that occur.

### **Conclusion**

Our findings show that, in addition to technological issues, students' motivation for online learning is influenced by personal factors such as learning style, acceptance of novel learning modalities, and level of participation in online classes, which all contribute to students' motivation.

For both students and educators, this type of online teaching and learning entails new difficulties and experiments. To ensure that the education system is applied, both parties and elements in education systems must be continuously enhanced in the face of online learning. Several issues faced by educators, such as those listed above, might be overcome by becoming more familiar with technology through various training programmed that served to alleviate emotions of being disconnected from students or underperforming during online learning. While online learning will be used in the post-COVID era, hybrid learning, which combines face-to-face instruction with online approaches, may be a much more successful and adaptable process for bringing about transformative changes in the field of education. (Hancock & Wong, 2012). The outcomes of this study will allow educational institutions to devise various techniques to reduce challenges, allowing educators to take education to the next level of technology-assisted teaching and learning. This study is also beneficial to the setting because it lends greater significance to educational institutions that are experimenting with online learning as a means of communicating with students.

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ONLINE LEARNING AT TERTIARY INSTITUTION DURING PANDEMIC OF COVID-19: A  
CONCEPTUAL REVIEW OF STUDENTS' MOTIVATIONAL ISSUES AND EDUCATORS'  
CHALLENGES

Reviewer: **Information Hidden**

**Grading:** Above 60 Publishable, **50-59** Minor Revision, below **50** Major revision

S.No.	Item	Total Weightage	Score Obtained
01	Based on known theory or on interesting issue	10	7
02	Material is up to date and sound	10	7
03	Methodology is applied properly	10	7
04	Discussion is based on analysis of the data	10	6
05	Implications and recommendations are appropriate	10	6
06	Breaks new grounds for furthering knowledge/Research	10	7
07	Makes significant contribution to knowledge	10	6
08	Has clarity of presentation	10	7
09	Free from grammatical or spelling errors	10	7
10	Meets academic standards	10	6
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>66</b>

### Overall expert opinion

Accept with minor revisions

### Minor Weaknesses and Suggestions

- Conclusion should be consisted of major findings of this study. Researchers need to conclude major findings first and then make appropriate suggestions. Suggestions should be relevant to the problem with the explanation that how this recommendation is appropriate in this particular context and what will be the benefits of this recommendation if implemented as per your findings.

### Major Weaknesses and Suggestions