

Getting Acquainted with Virtual Reality

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ABSTRACT

The overall purpose of the paper is to find out the effectiveness of using internet as a mode of operation in our daily lives since the lockdown. It discusses the possible factors that can have an impact on the effectiveness of this process of using internet as a platform for work; how are we going to adapt to the new normalcy and the way forward. It includes a qualitative and quantitative analysis of how productive people feel using internet for work/studies. The analysis is confined to a sample size of 144 respondents who are a representative to a larger population falling under a wide age group starting from school going students to people in their late 50s who had to take a lot of pain to adjust to the new normalcy. The analysis shows that apart from the obvious reasons affecting people's productivity, working for longer hours and information overload are the two most significant factors that hampers the effectiveness of internet as a mode of operation in Work from home and Online Classes respectively. The analysis reaches to a conclusion where students/working people have to find out possible ways in which they adjust to the situation, now that going back to the traditional way of living lives and working seems challenging. The desirable solution going forward is the existence and adaptation of a world which is a perfect amalgamation of both physical and virtual spaces.

Keywords: Productivity, Information Overload, Longer Working Hours, Online Classes, Work from Home.

Introduction

The lockdown in India which was declared on 25th of March has severely affected not only economic sectors but lives as well. From people getting into self-isolation to markets crashing; there are many challenges in the road ahead and this paper will focus on the effectiveness of using internet as a mode of operation in our daily life. The research done in this perspective has been designed to study the effectiveness of using the internet for online classes as well as for work from home. The sample size for the survey is 140 and will discuss factors like if the medium of operation via internet has been effective compared to the pre-lockdown times and if not what are the challenges and what is the way forward.

How are times going to look ahead is the question that needs to be answered? The only way to be able to pull off this pandemic and still support lives of billions of people in this country is to shift the way business work and keep up with our mental health. Since, the pandemic won't allow business and industries to work the usual way, there is great potential for business in the digital medium. The only good that the pandemic has done is shoot up the shares of the telecommunications industry. Now the main aim of all the economic sectors should be use this opportunity to keep their business alive. Business must go back to old era now- Producing local. Since the pandemic has hit the world and disrupted the global supply chain, businesses must not wait to withdraw themselves to depend on it and rather

find a way to build supply chains domestically. It will not only revive business but also bring up job opportunities for millions of people in the informal economic sector. The digital sector which is now on the fast-forward mode can give birth to potential job opportunities in fields of cloud computing, cyber securities and data analytics. Business that see less opportunities going digital must now conserve cash to self-sustain. Networking and co-operating will be key for businesses to grow collectively. Businesses that work online can help small business to grow by delivering their products to the customers. This is not only keep the network of businesses alive but also employ people bringing ample amount of Job Opportunities. The real challenge that this pandemic has brought in is to do business differently that will sustain lives and livelihoods. India has a great potential to be the next hub for global supply chain after China. This opportunity if used properly will surely recover all the losses that the pandemic has caused.

Literature review

With the offset of COVID-19 Pandemic a lot has changed around us. Keeping aside the gloomy facts of the pandemic, it is important to dig deep and takes benefits of the situation. Statistics of Bloomberg says that Indian's consumption of internet has increased by 13 % since the lock down and the average daily consumption of data rose to 308 Petabytes (308000 Terabytes). Out of 60 crores internet users, around 29 crores are in rural India. According to a report by Common Services Centre, the Internet consumption of rural India has seen a jump of nearly 100 percent during the lockdown with an average daily consumption of 4.7 Terabytes of data. Besides that, there has been a high demand of Fiber to Home Service in rural homes. These data clearly indicate the high appetite for internet services in India. [1]

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Digital India campaign back in 2015, with a vision to improve the online infrastructure of India aiming to cater to its citizen for various digital services and to also connect the rural India with high speed internet services and support digital literacy.

While the campaign portrays itself to bring reforms, it seems to have fallen behind its schedule. Learning the potential internet usage of India, there is no better time than this, to accelerate the Digital India campaign. While there seems no effective way to boost the tumbling economy, the skyrocketing internet usage patterns of Indians

hold a great potential to push the economy up using Internet as a mode to work.[2]

The pandemic has mostly disrupted all the industries and internet can be the lifeblood to help them survive. India's economy is majorly categorized into industries like the Agricultural Industry, the manufacturing Industry and the Service Industry. While the service industry has an advantage of working on the internet, the other two are unlikely to be able to use it to profitable work. The manufacturing sector runs because for workers. Because there is a shortage of workers after they have migrated back to their homes, the manufacturing industry doesn't really seem to be taking off. The agricultural industry will be doing fine since the situation gives the farmers extra helping hands now that their relatives have returned home. But the scope of usage of internet for productivity in this sector is also unlikely. The only industry that can take the maximum benefits of Internet to work is the Service industry. Under the service sector, business activities, hospitality have surely slowed down because of dropping demand, but the sectors that have performed really well are the Telecomm sectors, the IT and the pharmaceutical sector. Out of these internet has definitely been the reason that has pushed the IT sector because of work from home advantage and telecomm nation sectors have also benefitted because of the increase internet usage.

Discussion

From the various issues that can fall under the discussion of the effectiveness of using internet as a mode of operation, the most valuable and convenient point of discussion in this particular paper is the effectiveness of using internet as a mode of operation for online classes and work from home situation.

The population for this particular research model would be wide from school going students to people at their late 50s who have taken a lot of pain to be able to cope up with the virtual work mode. But the sample is confined to 144 respondents in the same age group of the population who were convenient to approach.

The research model focuses on judging the effectiveness of using internet as a mode of operation for online classes and work from home. Effectiveness is mostly how productive one feels on these platforms compared to the pre-lockdown times. Hence, the model studies different potential factors that can affect the productivity of people on shifting to using internet as a mode of communication.

It is obvious that in the past three months we have felt numerous issues while studying or working. We have all struggled with keeping up with our work given there are notifications from social media handles, there have been comparatively longer hours of work due to easier accessibility; that also leads to too much information to store and analyses in our brains. The list of the issues just goes on.

Hence after analyzing all the issues these are some factors that are most potential to be affecting productivity on the internet as a mode of operation

- Social media distraction
- Poor internet connectivity
- Psychological isolation and monotonous life

- Salary cuts
- Distractions at home
- Longer working hours
- Procrastination
- Ineffective communication
- No clarity on subject matter

From the table we find that ‘Information Overload’ is a significant factor at 95 % Confidence level on why students are feeling less productive. It is true that during the lockdown, students are being constantly fed with tasks and there is just so many courses to grab on to add to their knowledge bag. When information keeps flowing in there definitely exists high chances of diverting focus onto many things and ending up doing nothing.

Heading straight on to people who took Online Classes

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value
Intercept	2.411063	0.511004	4.718282	2.64E-05
[Social Media distractions]	-0.078121	0.105411	-0.741113	0.462749
[Poor Internet connectivity]	0.163811	0.120699	1.357189	0.18197
[Psychological Isolation and monotonous life]	-0.098976	0.142583	-0.694166	0.4914
[Information Overload]	0.389752	0.149559	2.606004	0.012621
[Distractions at home/Improper working environment]	0.164792	0.196416	0.838992	0.406224
[Procrastination of assignments/projects because of improper supervision]	0.046023	0.113238	0.406432	0.686489
[Being unable to understand the subject matter taught]	-0.367158	0.183716	-1.998512	0.052162
[Irregular Class Timings]	-0.01392	0.155449	-0.089544	0.929075
[Ineffective Communication with classmates and teachers]	-0.133697	0.140302	-0.952923	0.346081

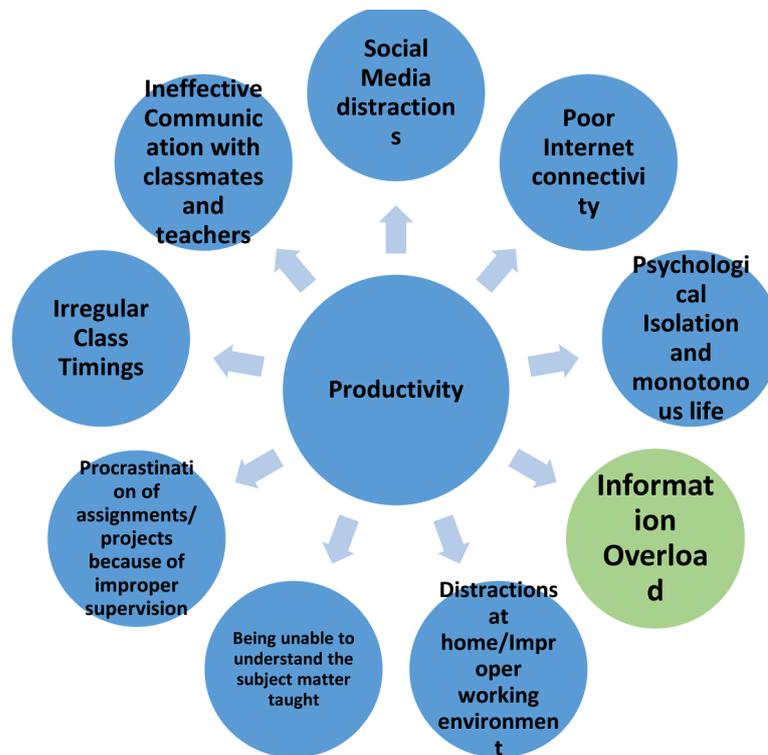


Figure 1: Representation of factors affecting productivity in Online Classes

From the Table we see that ‘Working for Longer hours’ makes people feel less productive. The work from home culture doesn’t have the limit to work in a confined time slot. And since the economy is tumbling there are many firms which are pushing their employ to the peak of performance which makes them work being occupied for almost the whole day. The human body needs change of environment and break to perform at its best and in situations like this, working for longer hours definitely is a significant factor to reduce productivity.

Conclusion

The analysis showed that there are significantly two factors that affect productivity for people during the lockdown. Since the sample size is confined to just 144 people there obviously are other factors that must be affecting

productivity of people during the lockdown. Social Media distractions and poor internet connectivity should not be ignored as well. There are many people who are still struggling to keep up with the online platforms because of poor internet connectivity and there are reports which show the usage of social media to have increased to 4 hours and 39 minutes per day during the lockdown. So, if on an average a person spends close to 5 hours on social media it definitely is one of the factors why he/she is not able to deliver the best for work/ studies. Other factors like poor Internet Connectivity also might be significant in such cases. There are still many who can’t afford a smart phone or a data pack. It is clear and obvious the research has no boundaries and the factors affecting productivity may vary. However, considering this model where maximum of the sample size is of Students and Professors and a handful of people into different service sectors, this particular model might hold true.

Coming on to people who experienced Work from Home

	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-value
Intercept	2.398145134	0.994943947	2.410331899	0.036662565
[Social Media distractions]	-0.210386111	0.398365819	-0.528122899	0.608933157
[Poor Internet connectivity]	0.155768502	0.228288255	0.682332528	0.510524281
[Psychological Isolation and monotonous life]	0.043337955	0.29344596	0.147686324	0.885525661
[Salary cuts]	-0.049340577	0.306438568	-0.161012946	0.875289587
[Distractions at home/Improper working environment]	-0.172666228	0.319629567	-0.54020731	0.600877083
[Longer Working Hours]	0.543732504	0.190954951	2.847438636	0.017326006
[Procrastination of work because of improper supervision]	-0.067214196	0.311279878	-0.215928498	0.833384259
[Ineffective Communication with Team members]	0.065960989	0.297298282	0.221868045	0.828881951



Figure 2: Representation of factors affecting productivity for Work From Home

Competing Interest Statement

The author has read and approved the manuscript and takes full responsibility for its contents. No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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Shraddha Mahapatra is a second-year MBA student at KIIT School of Management, KIIT deemed to be University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha. She received a bachelor's degree in Electronics and Telecommunications Engineering from the same University. Her current field of study is Marketing and Business Analytics.



She is an active learner and always has an enthusiasm to add up to her skills. Researching and knowing about new things is something that she believes is rewarding.

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Apart from academics, she takes a lot of interest in reading books by Leaders and Famous Personalities in her field of studies and taking inspiration from it.

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