A study on the availability and usage of new media platforms for competitive exams among college students

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Millennials are looking for technology as an aid in accomplishing their dreams and fulfilling their needs. In the recent years' internet has become an invaluable source of knowledge for academicians and students. As it is said often the world is out there on online platform. The preparation demands knowledge of everything under the sun and is not confine to few books. Technology has the potential to enable students to convert hurdles of their life into opportunities and unleash their true potential. Cost effective, updated information and a goldmine of resource material with flexible timings provides an ideal ground for especially the working professionals to gear up for the exam. But are these online platforms equipped with quality data that suits various competitive exams from local level to the higher level needs to be analyzed. Hence the present study try to examine the availability of resources and the effectiveness of such platforms among the college students.

Keywords: *Millennial, competitive exams, new media, civil services , online portal.*

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INTRODUCTION

India is in the way of rapid development and so is our education system which encountered a sea change. From classroom setting to online education which simply means attending classes through the internet. That also signifies a shift from chalk and blackboard to whiteboards. Media can be credited for this progressive change. Owning to its gaining popularity and trendiness the conventional methods of teaching are being replaced by new -age technology often termed as digital education.

Nowadays it is seen that students are more inclined towards online coaching rather than offline classes to excel in exams such as GATE, SSC, BANKING, CAT and UPSC. The classes are engaging and interactive and also entails the comfort of preparing from home. These classes are comparatively more structured and planned in comparison to offline classes.

SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Ambitious students with financial or social constraints are using various apps and websites for preparation and are breaking the barrios. Often it is seen that students all over the country travel to Delhi to crack one of the toughest exams in the world such as UPSC. But now students can depend solely on online resources.

This is especially beneficial for women who are often discouraged to leave their houses at an early age. Above that, there are areas where there are no good coaching institutes specifically IAS coaching institutes.

The success tales of the online portal like Unacademy founded by Roman Saini who cleared IAS. Offer around 2,500 videos on IAS preparation. The peculiarity of the website is that the videos are prepared by professionals or those who have cleared the IAS exam themselves. This means one can easily count on such websites to deliver results. The others in line are BYJU's, Mrunal, IASBaba, INSIGHTS, Civils Daily are also quite popular.

Also, in recent times, we can see that most of the contents on these online portals are free. The myth of online coaching having a low success rate is also shattered. Many IAS toppers agree that internet served as an essential platform for the rigorous preparation.

Indeed, it can be said that when productive use of the internet is made, it can surely bear fruits. A girl named Namrata Jain cleared UPSC AIR (12), belonged to Dantewada district in Chhattisgarh which is a Naxal hit area. The success knocked her doorstep at her third attempt and this time by taking the help of online education portal.

Also, previous IAS and IPS officers frequently post blogs online that give details about the booklist to refer and offer constant guidance which can give a new direction to the preparation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Dr. Thanukodi and Kalyani K S had conducted a 'study on utilization of information resources among civil service exam aspirants at Chennai'. Evolution of internet has changed history. Plenty of resources reaches a large number of users but what requires for an individual is the information skill to locate and utilize the best information sources.

Ramja Patelkhana has written an article on how to choose between online preparation or coaching classes for UPSC has mentioned some following details. In this digital age, where information about almost everything is available on the internet, any dedicated aspirant can crack the UPSC exam without taking coaching classes.

If an aspirant is a full -time employee or a college student preparing for UPSC exam, online coaching is the best. They can study/revise at their own pace, whenever they get time. For such aspirants, managing work/college and attending coaching classes could be hectic.

Online platforms offer good quality study material and other resources including video lectures, question papers, current affairs etc.

OBJECTIVES

i.   To study how college students are making use of online platform to prepare for competitive exams.

ii. To understand why the inclination towards online portals has increased vis-à-vis offline portals.

iii. To comprehend what is the scope of online coaching classes in India.

iv. To determine how successful is the online platform as a mode of preparation for students.

METHODOLOGY

- Data collection

Various methods were applied for the collection of the data. These methods include observation, survey and telephonic interview method.

- Data source

The students of Kristu Jayanti college and IAS aspirants were the main source of collection of all the information.

- Selection of the area

The area is chosen by great consideration which is Kristu Jayanti college, K Narayanpura, Kothanur, Bangaluru. This area was chosen particularly due to its cultural ethnicity.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

In accordance with the survey conducted by taking the sample size 25, around 65% of students are using online medium for exam preparation to gather vast information and knowledge. Other 24% believe that it is a time saver. Also 20% of them say it helps in saving travel expense. Only 4% agree that it helps in saving living expense.

72% of students believe that classroom coaching helps you to comprehend a subject better than YouTube videos whose share is just 28%.

When asked while preparing for online exam which option will one find more convenient 64% of them felt downloaded videos are more convenient. Only 36% of them opted for live screening.

On interrogating whether students are able to take lectures on online platform seriously, a majority of them that is 66.7% said yes. And other 33.3% choose 'no' option.

Students were questioned about what are their views on 'learning via online medium is a time saving affair, predominantly everyone agreed to it except a few.

Another question which was posed to them was while studying ' current affairs' topic online one gets multiple views on a single issue which helps one form one's own perspective on that issue. whereas often it is seen that in offline mode of preparation teacher's view becomes student view. 87% consented with the view but 13% refuted it.

They were enquired whether they are habituated to have people around them like in a classroom setting for better learning, 65.2% said yes. 17.4% said 'no'. Also, other 17.4% went with 'maybe' option.

On inquiring what is the most frequently searched thing online in regard with exam preparation, 62.5 % went with sample question papers, mock tests, test series and last year question papers.

16.7% choose resource and study material, 12.5% picked current affairs and general knowledge, 8.3% selected current affairs and general knowledge.

In the course of survey, they were asked about on whom they dwell upon for the constant source of motivation 41.7% preferred friends and family. the least favoured were professionals and teachers with 8.3%.

Being quizzed on the feedback to the queries posed by a student is much quicker on online platform than offline, 79.2 % agreed to the statement.

The last quested they were asked was which mode of study helped them to identify their strength and weakness better that is online vis-a- vis offline 79.2% opted for classroom coaching and 20.8% choose online preparation.

SUGGESTIONS

Classroom teaching encourages social interaction, it helps individuals to be more organized and promotes collaborative learning. It strengthens student – teacher relationship which gives them emotional support, assistance and guidance. It leads them to the path of self- realization about their talents, skill sets, interests, likes and dislikes. Coping up with stress, peer pressure and anxiety is an issue with the classroom learning. Misuse of the authority by teachers can have detrimental effect over students' career. Lack of individual attention creates barrios to learning and communication with the teacher. In classroom teaching, teacher is the only source of information. Whereas on online platform multiple sources of information are readily available.

Online classes save living expenses, time and money. It is an effective and efficient way of learning because it involves one to one learning. Flexibility of time is the most significant aspect of the program. The classes are engaging in nature and aids visual learning. It is a platform which enables one to connect with the experts and professionals in the field. The information is updated and quicker to access.

Reliable content is hard to find. Long time spent online can have detoriating effects on your health. social interaction is curtailed that can have impact social behavior and mental wellbeing.

CONCLUSION

Online and offline classes both have their own pros and cons. It solely depends on individual needs and personality. It is an amalgamation of hard work and smart work. Personalized and adaptive practice also makes all the difference in the success in competitive exam as they capture timing, accuracy, attempt, doubts and gaps in learning. Advances in technology reduces the stress that teachers go through and it improves the student's problem-solving abilities to crack competitive exams. There is immense scope for online education system in near future.

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ANNEXURE

1. Why do you think students are using online medium for exam preparation?

   Tick the most appropriate option.
   i. Saves travel expense
   ii. Saves living expense
   iii. Saves time
   iv. Vast updated information and knowledge

2. What helps you comprehend a subject better?
   i. YouTube videos
   ii. Classroom coaching

3. While preparing for online exam which option will you find more convenient?
   i. Downloaded videos
   ii. Live screening

4. Can you take lectures on online platform seriously?
   i.   Yes   ii. No

5. 'Learning via online medium is a time saving affair'.
   What are your views on it?
   I.   Yes
           (if yes, please do specify your reason below)

   II.   NO
           (if no, please do specify your reason below)

6. While studying current affairs topic online you get multiple views on a single issue which
   helps in forming your own viewpoint. Whereas it is often seen that in offline mode of
   preparation teacher's view becomes the student view.
   How far do you agree with it?
   i.   Yes
   ii.   No

7. Are you habituated to have people around you like in a classroom setting for better
   learning?
   i.   Yes
   ii.   No

8. What is the most frequently searched thing online in regard with exam preparation?

   i.   Current affairs and general knowledge
   ii.   Sample question papers, mock tests, test series and last year question
           papers
   iii.   Resource and study material
   iv.   Tips by experts and students who have cleared the exam

9. On whom you dwell upon for the constant source of motivation?
   i.   Self-motivation   iii. Friends and Family

   ii.   Motivational videos   iv. Professionals and Teachers

10. The feedback to the queries posed by a student is much quicker on online platform than
    offline. what is your standpoint on this?

i.   Yes
ii.   No