

Students' Precedence of Attributes Related Online Management Education – A RIDIT Approach

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Abstract

This paper sheds light in understanding the effectiveness of online management education by ranking the priority, perception and preference shown by students while they are considering online management education. The students' precedence of attributes which are in favor and also against the online management education was considered. The ranking of student's preference and priority of attributes related to online management education was measured and analyzed by RIDIT approach and was inferred that major advantages of online management education includes convenience in performing group assignments, assessments and group projects. Respondents also felt that the quality of courses and pedagogy in online management courses is superior and the Collaborative and interactive learning and teaching were also considered a benefit of performing online management education. However the major limitations related to online management education were found to be No proper accreditation and certification, No recognition by university or education board and also the credibility of exams, assessments and evaluation system was also skeptical. This paper helps in understanding the areas in which the online management education can enhance its favorable features and thereby overcoming its restrictions and increasing the quality of course delivery by using an innovative digital platform.

Keywords: Accreditation, Certification, Collaborative learning, Digital platform, Group Assignments, Online Management education, Pedagogy, RIDIT Analysis.

Introduction

This study is primarily aimed at understanding the effectiveness of online management education by ranking the priority, perception and preference shown by students while they are considering online management education. It can be noted that online management education is growing rapidly. Online education in India 2021: A study by KPMG in India and Google May 2017 indicates that online education will be a \$2 Billion industry in India by 2021. The report by Global Online Education Market - Forecasts from 2018 to 2023 states that global online education market by attributes of technology, vendor, type and user type to accomplish \$286.62 Billion, growing by 10.26% compound annual growth rate – it can be understood that there is a greater importance in understanding the potential and existing student's perception regarding the usage of online management education. With growth in technology, there is a growth in usage of online management education for both corporate and academic purpose. With the advancement of technology like e learning through smart phones, LMS (learning management System), Podcasting, Digital and virtual class rooms and by use of MOOCS (Massive Open Online Courses) which are powered by advancement in Information and communication technology, the usage of online management education plays an important role.

This study explores the priority and perception of potential and existing students regarding various aspects of online management education, which were not much studied earlier like opinion regarding quality of pedagogy of online management education, faculty profile, collaboration and interactive learning like group assignments, case studies, and simulations etc and it also highlights the limitations of online management education like credibility of faculty, examinations, certification and accreditation, coordination of learning activities, control and discipline etc.

To understand the precedence, perception and opinion of potential and existing students of online management education, an online survey was done with a sample size of 185 respondents. By using RIDIT (relative to an identified distribution) Analysis scoring method, ranking of importance and preferences regarding advantages and also limitations of online management education was done in order to understand which attributes of online management education are important and also tries to fix the problems related to online management education.

RIDIT" elaborated as "Relative to an Identified Distribution", was first proposed by I. Bross in the year of 1958. RIDIT analysis is a "distribution free" in the sense that it makes no assumption about the distribution of the population under study. It is a mathematical analysis for items related ratings on a three or more point scale.

Literature Review

(Shanan G. Gibson, 2008) have studied the degree to which technology acceptance model was able to sufficiently articulate the faculty acceptance of online education. (Cohen and Lippert, 1999) argued that online based learning may be essential for skill based learning but may not be suitable for creativity based concepts or general management education.

The learning experience is directly related contentment (Churchill & Surprenant, 1982; Oliver & DeSarbo, 1988; Tse & Wilton, 1988). The study to understand students' perception and satisfaction is to study students' evaluation of the programs and their opinion towards the programs (Ellram & Easton, 1999).

Expediency and flexibility often are much-admired as the unique and most priceless feature of web based courses and programs (Arbaugh & Duray, 2001; Hiltz & Wellman, 1997; Hislop, 1999; Shapley, 2000; Sullivan, 2001). Interactivity in distance education is superior than, the traditional classroom, and current research suggests that it is a highly remarkable forecaster of online course outcomes (Arbaugh, in press; Swan, 2003; Wagner, 1997).

Learner-content communication refers to pedagogical gear and assignments, including presentations, streaming audio and video presentations, group assignments, individual projects, and web links in Web courses. These tools and activities represent pedagogies from a social constructivist view that scholars themselves are creators of knowledge with others (Benbunan-Fich, 2002; Jonassen et al., 1995).

Involvement in students interactions in session conversation has been displayed to be greater (Arbaugh, 2000b; Arbaugh & Rau, 2002; Benbunan-Fich, Hiltz,&Turoff, 2001), more consistently spread (Card, 2000;Strauss, 1996), a basis of powerful bonding (Whipp & Schweizer, 2000), and more beneficial (Wolfe, 2000) in Web-based course activities than in traditional classrooms. However, this interaction can be appreciably more tricky to carry out (Arbaugh, 2000b; Hightower & Sayeed, 1996; Yoo,Kanawattanachai, & Citurs, 2002) and less pleasing (Ocker & Yaverbaum,1999; Piccoli, Ahmad, & Ives, 2001; Warkentin et al., 1997).

(Mason 1991) studied interactivity in a distance education class at the Open University in Great Britain and establish that instructors played a key role in directing the online discussions. Instructors influenced the discussion process by buoyant innovative matters, sharing contemporary material, and redirecting the discussion models.

(Ronald, Stanley, 2005) states that there are three critical interactions which needs to be considered while understanding online education; they are Instructor- Student, Student- Student and Student- Content. (Judy, Jessica, Anne, 2010) have considered two essential uniqueness of student's approval regarding online learning; they are having a favorable perception of usage of technology leading to ease of access and usage of online flexible learning materials and also self controlled innovative learning modules.

Collection of data and sample size

An online survey was conducted by using a questionnaire, the sample size is 185 respondents of diverse education and work experience backgrounds, the survey targeted undergraduate students who are having no prior work experience, students of online management program, traditional MBA program students, Alumni of MBA colleges who are presently working in various organizations.

62% of the respondents are of the age group 18 to 24 years, only 0.5 % of the respondents were less than 18 years, 23% of the respondents were 25 to 35 Years and the rest of them were above 36 years. 60% of the respondents are males and rest females. Nearly 76% of the respondents were management students and the rest belong to Arts, Engineering Commerce and science streams.

37.5% of the respondents are having less than 1 year or no work experience, 15% of the respondents are having at least 1 to 3 years of work experience and 9% of the respondents have 3 to 5 years of experience as an employee, the rest have more than 5 years of work experience.

45% of the respondents were students (with or without work experience) 55% of the respondents were working professionals (currently not pursuing any education but were students of professional educational programs). 49% of the respondent showed interested in pursuing online management education, 51% had expressed negative opinion regarding it.

79% of the respondents believe that online Management education program/course is better than Distance MBA program offered by traditional universities.

Research Methodology and Analysis

RIDIT analysis is used to understand the students' precedence, perception and opinion regarding online management education. The ranking of priorities of opinions regarding the benefits of online management education and also the limitations of it are done by using the RIDIT (Relative to an identified distribution) Analysis scoring method.

For ranking purpose the five point likert scale for used, to measure the following parameters which were in favor as well as limitations of online management education:

Table 1: Parameters which were in favor as well as limitations of online management education:

Sn o	In favor of Online Management education	Limitations of Management education
1	Quality of Course and Pedagogy	Lack of seriousness of students
2	Quality of faculty	Lack of discipline and control
3	Collaborations with various foreign universities	Lack of personal attention and feedback
4	Group Assignments	Lack of coordination of group activities
5	Collaborative and interactive learning and teaching	Computer and internet is mandatory
6	Flexibility, ease of study and convenience	No proper accreditation and certification
7	Contemporary and innovative method of learning and teaching	No recognition by university or education board
8	self reflective assignments	Credibility of exams, assessments and evaluation system
9	Cheaper than regular MBA	No Internship, industry interface and corporate exposure
10	Certification and Accreditation	No Job placement assistance

Table 2. a : RIDIT ANALYSIS: Advantages of Online Management Education:

S n o	Parameters	Strongly Disagree	Disag ree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Sum of rows
1	Quality of Course and Pedagogy	5	18	49	78	35	185
2	Quality of faculty	7	23	38	66	51	185
3	Collaborations with various foreign universities	6	10	40	91	38	185
4	Group Assignments	7	32	61	64	21	185
5	Collaborative and interactive learning and teaching	9	23	28	87	38	185
6	Flexibility, ease of study and convenience	5	6	24	75	75	185
7	Contemporary and innovative method of learning and teaching	4	16	21	81	63	185
8	self reflective assignments	5	17	40	82	41	185
9	Cheaper than regular MBA	10	13	37	74	51	185
10	Certification and Accreditation	9	14	41	79	42	185
	Fj	67	172	379	777	455	1850
	fj/2	33.5	86	189.5	388.5	227.5	
	FJ	33.5	153	428.5	1006.5	1622.5	
	RJ	0.01810810 8	0.082 7027	0.23162 1622	0.5440 5405	0.877027 027	

Table 2.b : Ranking of favorable parameters by using RIDIT Analysis

					Row Sum	Rank
0.000489408	0.0080467	0.06134843	0.22938495	0.165924032	0.465193572	2
0.000685172	0.010282	0.047576333	0.19409496	0.241775018	0.49441344	6
0.00058729	0.0044704	0.050080351	0.26761578	0.180146092	0.502899927	7
0.000685172	0.0143053	0.076372535	0.18821329	0.099554419	0.379130752	1
0.000880935	0.010282	0.035056245	0.25585245	0.180146092	0.482217677	3
0.000489408	0.0026822	0.03004821	0.22056245	0.355551497	0.60933382	10
0.000391527	0.0071527	0.026292184	0.23820745	0.298663258	0.570707085	9
0.000489408	0.0075997	0.050080351	0.24114828	0.194368152	0.493685902	5
0.000978817	0.0058115	0.046324324	0.21762162	0.241775018	0.512511322	8
0.000880935	0.0062586	0.051332359	0.23232579	0.199108839	0.489906501	4

Table 2. c: Ranking of advantages of online Management Education

Advantages of Online Management Education	
Rank	Parameters
1	Group Assignments
2	Quality of Course and Pedagogy
3	Collaborative and interactive learning and teaching
4	Certification and Accreditation
5	self reflective assignments
6	Quality of faculty
7	Collaborations with various foreign universities
8	Cheaper than regular MBA
9	Contemporary and innovative method of learning and teaching
10	Flexibility, ease of study and convenience

Table 3.a : RIDIT ANALYSIS: Limitations of online Management Education:

Sno	Parameters	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Sum of rows
1	Lack of seriousness of students	4	15	37	93	36	185
2	Lack of discipline and control	10	19	36	84	36	185
3	Lack of personal attention and feedback	6	21	42	82	34	185
4	Lack of coordination of group activities	3	21	46	83	32	185
5	Computer and internet is mandatory	5	15	41	55	69	185
6	No proper accreditation and certification	13	29	51	61	31	185
7	No recognition by university or education board	12	24	45	65	39	185
8	Credibility of exams, assessments and evaluation system	6	18	51	81	29	185
9	No Internship, industry interface and corporate exposure	4	19	38	70	54	185
10	No Job placement assistance	7	10	36	70	62	185
	Fj	70	191	423	744	422	1850
	fj/2	35	95.5	211.5	372	211	
	FJ	35	165.5	472.5	1056	1639	
	RJ	0.018918919	0.089459	0.25541	0.571	0.885945946	

Table 3.b : Ranking of unfavorable parameters by using RIDIT Analysis

					Row Sum	Rank
0.000409058	0.007253	0.05108	0.287	0.172400292	0.518092038	7
0.001022644	0.009188	0.0497	0.259	0.172400292	0.491490139	6
0.000613587	0.010155	0.05798	0.253	0.162822498	0.484582907	5
0.000306793	0.010155	0.06351	0.256	0.153244704	0.483306063	4
0.000511322	0.007253	0.0566	0.17	0.330433893	0.564502557	9
0.001329438	0.014023	0.07041	0.188	0.148455807	0.422430972	1
0.001227173	0.011606	0.06213	0.201	0.186766983	0.462280497	2
0.000613587	0.008704	0.07041	0.25	0.138878013	0.468527392	3
0.000409058	0.009188	0.05246	0.216	0.258600438	0.536641344	8
0.000715851	0.004836	0.0497	0.216	0.296911614	0.568146092	10

Table 3.c : Limitations of Online Management Education

Limitations of Online Management Education	
Rank	Parameters
1	No proper accreditation and certification
2	No recognition by university or education board
3	Credibility of exams, assessments and evaluation system
4	Lack of coordination of group activities
5	Lack of personal attention and feedback
6	Lack of discipline and control
7	Lack of seriousness of students
8	No Internship, industry interface and corporate exposure
9	Computer and internet is mandatory
10	No Job placement assistance

Implication and Discussion

By computing the fj, fj/2 and FJ, RJ values of Tables 2.a and 3.b and by ranking of both favorable and unfavorable parameters as shown in Table 2.c and Table 3.c by applying the RIDIT Analysis, it can be inferred

that the three most important advantages in online management education in terms of precedence are Group Assignments, Quality of Course and Pedagogy, Collaborative and interactive learning and teaching. Whereas the three crucial limitations of online management education are No proper accreditation and certification, No recognition by university or education board, Credibility of exams, assessments and evaluation system.

(Harasim 2000) clearly articulates the fact that there is a paradigm shift in learning due to advent of online learning platforms and it can be noted that (Harasim 2000) points out that group assignments, projects and group activities are becoming easier to perform in online learning due to advancement of communication and information technology.

With usage of new Apps like Padlet, Prezi, Black Board, Coursite etc on Smart phones, facilitated by social media like Whatsapp, IMO, Google chat, facebook, linkedin etc, and coordination of group activities over online courses have become easier, convenient and faster. It can be observed that online learning platforms like Coursera, Edx etc.; are increasingly using these Apps for coordinating student activities. Due to increasing quality of course and pedagogy by introducing unique amalgamation of subjects and contemporary courses, online management education is growing rapidly in both corporate and academic arenas.

However, there are certain limitations of online management education which needs to be urgently addressed like authenticity of the course, lack of proper accreditation and certification, no recognition by any professional body or university, the credibility of exams, assessments, and the evaluation system is also needs to be more systematic, and transparent as it is also an important parameter of limitation and concern.

Finally, there is a further scope to study the areas such as the methods to address the problems associated with online management education and also methods which can be adopted to enhance the quality of Management education in an online learning platform.

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