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Challenges faced by homoeopathic teaching faculty in delivering online classes during COVID-19 time: A pilot study

Dr. Premalata B. Rotti and Dr. Kiran N Patil

Abstract

Background: The year 2020 remarks a paradigm shift in the education world, exposing us to newer possibilities in connectivity and development. Along with feasibility virtual delivery of lectures generated challenges. These challenges faced by the teachers were sensed and this short research question was conceived. The inception of Idea was connected with adaptability of different generations of teachers (baby boomers (BB), X and Y generation) and the continuity of this adaptability was analysed through valid questionnaire.

Materials & Methods:

1. Cross-sectional observational survey (online).
2. Study duration-1month.
3. Teaching faculty of 17homeopathic colleges in Karnataka were included.
4. Data were collected using online (Google form) questionnaire (self constructed, and validated by face validity) via a link through Whatsapp.
5. Results were assessed by simple percentage distribution and item response theory.

Results: 156 participants (17 homoeopathic colleges) responded on the following items-
 Generation wise assessment-

1. Adaptability issue-BB (66.6%), X-gen (61.4%), Y-gen (60.2%)
2. Connectivity-BB (66.6%), X-gen (45.7%), Y-gen (32.5%)
3. Access to study material-BB (100%), X-gen (78.5%), Y-gen (80.7%)
4. Tools-mobile-BB (66.6%), X-gen (72.8%), Y-gen (66.2%)
5. Tool-desk top/personal computer-BB (33.3%), X-gen (38.5%), Y-gen (30.1%)
6. Tool-laptop-BB (66.6%), X-gen (58.5%), Y-gen (72.2%)
7. Satisfaction/ Success rate-BB (100%), X-gen (68.5%), Y-gen (56.6%)
8. Delivery of the content-BB (66.6%), X-gen (28.5%), Y-gen (21.6%)
9. Improvement in subject knowledge-BB (66.6%), X-gen (18.5%), Y-gen (15.6%)
10. Response to Assessment –BB (66.6%), X-gen (55.7%), Y-gen (46.9%)
11. Learners enthusiasm-BB (33.3%), X-gen (22.8%), Y-gen (21.6%)
12. Learners Feedback –BB (66.6%), X-gen (34.2%), Y-gen (38.5%)
13. Comparison Online Vs Offline-BB (33.3%), X-gen (11.4%), Y-gen (14.4%)
14. Transformatory adaptation-BB (66.6%), X-gen (47.1%), Y-gen (33.7%)
15. Continuity of new experiences-BB (33.3%), X-gen (21.4%), Y-gen (20.4%)

Conclusions: The study revealed faculty adapted to this innovative way of teaching to keep continuity in curriculum, the survey put in a nutshell -all 3 generations adapted to this method, (66%,61%,60%), they feel that learners enthusiasm was not satisfactory (33%, 23%, 22%), there is mixed opinion regarding-improvement in subject knowledge (67%,19%,16%),content delivery(67%,29%,22%)& learners feedback (67%,34%,39%). None of the generation is in favor of acclaiming the method in future (33%, 21%, 20%).

Keywords: Baby boomers, X&Y generation, online teaching

Introduction

The year 2020 remarks a radical change in various fields by virtue of covid-19 global pandemic, so also the education field has a diagonal variant swing in teaching learning accords. The virtual world is helping us to connect with people& gain skills. The challenge was to develop online learning platforms and be ready for virtual teaching-learning process, accordingly curriculums and timetables were attuned in an effort to provide quality education and keep the process going.

It has been a challenging period of time for all teachers, all around the world. We cannot deny that fact. All of a sudden, and because of something that is totally out of our control, students were learning remotely and both educators and administrators are in the permanent search of new tools and paths to face challenges they haven't faced before [1].

Due to Covid-19 pandemic, classes had been suspended to enforce social distancing and educational institutions, from schools to universities, have shifted to online methods of teaching and evaluation. Still, there is no certainty about when normalcy will be restored. This has encouraged some sort of a permanent tilt, if not a complete shift, to online education [2].

The online survey conducted by Learning Spiral, an ed-tech platform, showed that while children face issues in accessing education digitally, teachers face issues in delivering education through digital mediums.

A staggering 84% of teachers reported facing challenges in delivering education digitally [3].

To name few challenges

1. Main challenge is of teaching remotely
2. Keeping your students engaged and motivated is not an easy task.
3. Keeping track of their progress [4]
4. Lack of interaction [5]

To maintain this tempo to go on, teachers of different generations had to struggle a lot, like the older generations who are not digital friendly had to put a lot of effort to carry out the task, like getting trained in using gadgets and continuing education.

What makes each generation different?

The other fact to remember is that new technology is typically first adopted by the youngest generation and then is gradually adopted by the older generations [6].

A generation refers to a cohort of people born within a similar span of time (15 years at the upper end) who share a comparable age and life stage and who were shaped by a particular span of time (events, trends and developments) [7].

- Generations –Baby boomers (>57yrs.),
- X (41-56yrs.) &
- Y (28-40yrs.) generation.(2)

The breakdown by age looks like this

- Baby Boomers: Baby boomers were born between 1946 and 1964. They're currently between 57-75 years old (71.6 million in the U.S.)
- Gen X: Gen X was born between 1965 and 1979/80 and is currently between 41-56 years old (65.2 million people in the U.S.)
- Gen Y: Gen Y, or Millennials, were born between 1981 and 1994/6. They are currently between 25 and 40 years old (72.1 million in the U.S.)
- Gen Y.1 = 25-29 years old (around 31 million people in

the U.S.)

- Gen Y.2 = 29-39 (around 42 million people in the U.S.)
- Gen Z: Gen Z is the newest generation, born between 1997 and 2012/15. They are currently between 6 and 24 years old (nearly 68 million in the U.S.) [6].

This study is an attempt in trying to find the difficulties faced by different generations to carry out online teaching by homeopathic teaching faculty.

Methodology

- **Study period:** January 25th - March 4th, 2021
- **Setting and location:** Teaching faculty of 17 homeopathic colleges in Karnataka
- **Study design:** A cross sectional observational survey (online).
- **Data collection:** Data were collected using online questionnaire (Google form) via a link through WhatsApp and E-mail. 156faculty responded positively.
- **Tool used-** Closed ended Questionnaire (Google forms) - self constructed, and validated by face validity.
- **Methods of analysis:** The simple percentage distribution and item response theory was used to assess the results.

Results

Response rate: 156/510=31%

General responses of participant

1. Adaptability issue-Yes-60.9%, No-29.5%, Can't say-9.6%
2. Connectivity-Yes-39.1%, No-49.4%, Can't say-11.5%
3. Access to study material-Yes-80.1%, No-17.9%, Can't say-1.9%
4. Tools-mobile-Yes-69.2%, No-28.8%, Can't say-2%
5. Tool-desk top/personal computer-Yes-34%, No-65.4%, Can't say-0.6%
6. Tool-laptop-Yes-66%, No-33.3%, Can't say-0.7%
7. Satisfaction/Success rate-Yes-62.8%, No-12.2%, Can't say-25%
8. Delivery of the content-Yes-25.6%, No-23.7%, Can't say-50.6%
9. Improvement in subject knowledge-Yes-17.9%, No-34.6%, Can't say-47.4%
10. Response to Assessment –Yes-51.3%, No-30.8%, Can't say-17.9%
11. Learners enthusiasm-Yes-22.4%, No-44.9%, Can't say-32.7%
12. Learners Feedback –Yes-37.2%, No-41%, Can't say-21.8%
13. Comparison Online Vs Offline-Yes-13.5%, No-67.3%, Can't say-19.2%
14. Transformatory adaptation-Yes-40.4%, No-42.9%, Can't say-16.7%
15. Continuity of new experiences-Yes-21.2%, No-58.3%, Can't say-20.5%

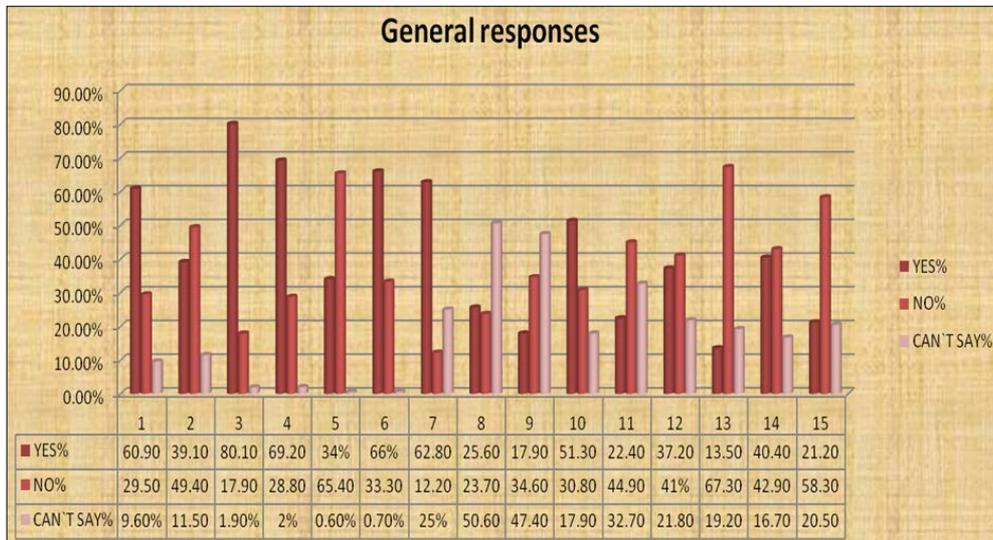
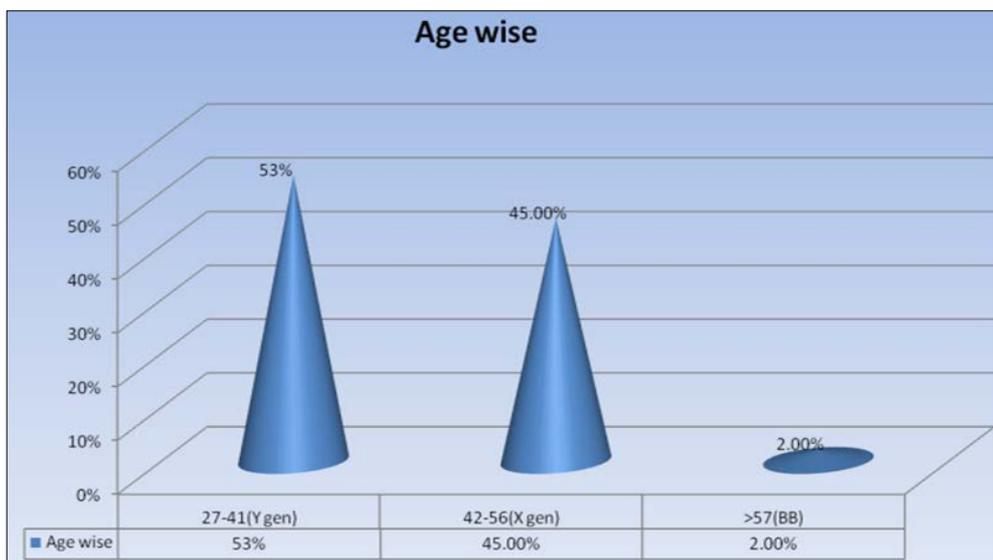


Fig 1: General responses



Baby boomer (BB)- >57 years-2%
 X generation-42-56 years-45%
 Y generation-27-41 years-53% (2)

Fig 2: Age wise



Professors-37%
 Associate Professor-25%
 Assistant Professor-38%

Fig 3: Designation

Table 1: Overall generation wise % response to items

Q. No	Issues	BB	X	Y
1	Adapatibility issue	67% Y	61% Y	60% Y
2	Connectivity	67% Y	45% Y	55% N
3	Access to study material	100% Y	79% Y	81% Y
4	Tools-mobile	67% Y	73% Y	66% Y
5	Tools-desk top/PC	67% N	60% N	72% Y
6	Tools-Lap top	67% Y	59% Y	72% Y
7	Satisfaction/ Success rate	100% Y	69% Y	57% Y
8	Delivery of the content	67% Y	49% CS	54% CS
9	Improvement in subject knowledge	67% Y	51% CS	46% CS
10	Response to Assessment	67% Y	56% Y	47% Y
11	Learners enthusiasm	33% Y, N, CS	39% N, CS	51% N
12	Learners Feedback	67% Y	39% N	43% N
13	Comparision Online Vs Offline	33% Y, N, CS	64% N	71% N
14	Transformatory adaptation	67% Y	47% Y	51% N
15	Continuity of new experiences	67% N	53% N	63% N

Y-Yes
 N-No
 CS-Can't say

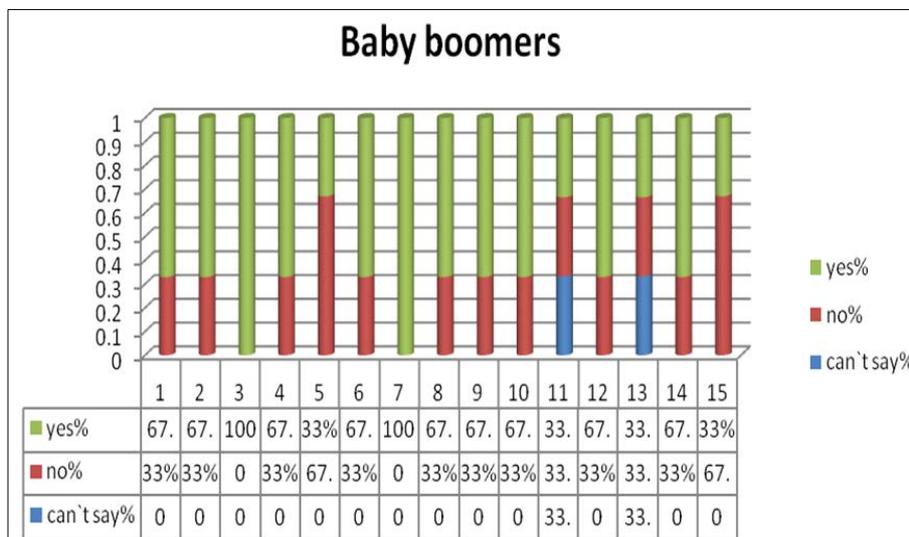


Fig 4: Baby boomers

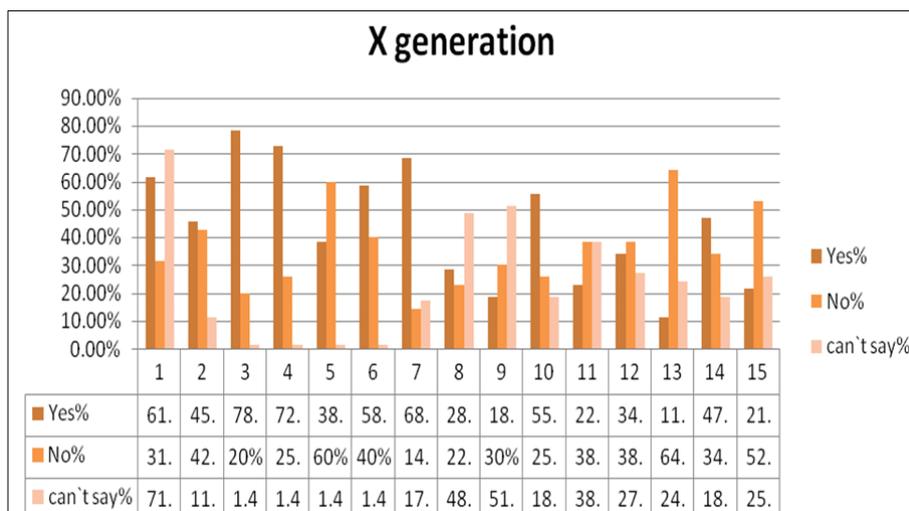


Fig 5: X generation

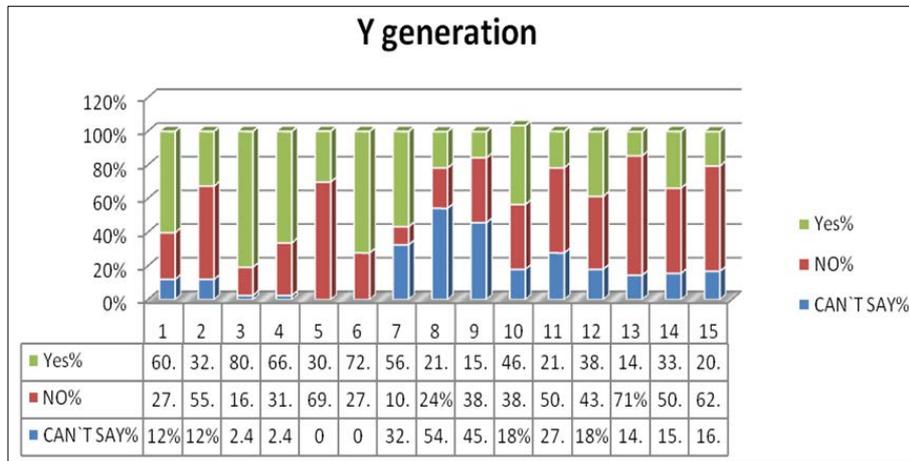


Fig 6: Y generation

Table 2: Generation wise responses to individual questions

Q. No	Generation	Reply
1,3,4,6,7,10	BB,X,Y	Yes
5	BB & X	No
	Y	Yes
8,9	BB	Yes
	X & Y	Can't say
11	BB	Yes, No, Can't say
	X	No, Can't say
	Y	NO
12	BB	Yes
	X & Y	No
13	BB	Yes, No, Can't say
	X & Y	No
2,14	BB & X	Yes
	Y	No
15	BB,X,Y	No

Problems/challenges faced during survey

- Voluntary participation- up to the faculty to respond after informing and reminding.
- Initially there was hesitation on first time information.
- transition from classroom teaching to online
- Gadgets and various platforms
- Monotonous classes

Overcoming the problems/challenges

- Contact the HOI's of each institution with the request letter and contact the faculty individually and reminder calls.
- Taking help from others and you tube tutorials

What went well

- Online Survey via Google forms
- Questionnaire was sent to 510 faculty via WhatsApp and email, 156 filled voluntarily i.e.31%responded.
- Adapted well with new mode of teaching mode.

Discussion

As the lockdown was imposed in many countries including India, due the pandemic to maintain social distancing and further spread of virus, online classes were no more option but are compulsion.

Online learning faces many challenges ranging from learners' issues, educators' issues, and content issues. The usage of online learning will test both the educator and learners. Teachers can develop innovative pedagogical

approaches in this panicky situation, now also termed as Panicogy. It is a challenge for teachers to move from offline mode to online mode, changing their teaching methodologies, and managing their time. It is challenging to develop content

which not only covers the curriculum but also engage the students. Teachers have become habitual to traditional methods of teaching in the form of face-to-face lectures, and therefore, they hesitate in accepting any change. Butamidst this crisis, we have no other alternative left other than adapting to the dynamic situation and accepting the change.⁸

The above study was intended to know the challenges faced by the different generation homoeopathic faculty in online conducting of classes, and how they overcame. This analysis supports the theory that- Learners enthusiasm was not satisfactory (BB-33%, X-23%, Y-22%)

Sometimes student finds online teaching to be boring and unengaging^[9].

In this study the observation on adapting to new methods the response is Yes-60.9%, and generation was BB-67%, X-generation-60% and Y generation-62%.

And an online survey conducted by Learning Spiral, an ed-tech platform showed, a staggering 84% of teachers reported facing challenges in delivering education digitally^[3].

The issues addressed here suggest otherwise that adapting to new technology was comparatively easy in all 3 generations.

Also the connecting with students was satisfactory in baby boomers and y generations (67%, 55%), tools like mobile, laptop and desktops were used as per convenience of different generation teachers. When generally we assess the response for improvement in subject knowledge they are not certain (47%), in this majority belong to Y generation.

When we evaluate whether the online mode has served the same purpose as of offline teaching X and Y generation teachers totally disagree with the fact. Majority of all the 3 generations faculty unanimously disagree for the online mode of teaching.

Conclusion

The study affirmed faculty adapted to this innovative way of teaching to keep continuity in curriculum, the survey put in a nutshell –

- X & Y generations-sense that learners enthusiasm was not satisfactory.

In contrary to Baby boomers, X & Y generations subjective feeling about-

- Observations on Improvement in subject knowledge of learners & conveying concepts/idea to learners is inconclusive.
- Learners feedback was not satisfactory
- Online cannot serve purpose of offline teaching
- Y generation is specially not happy with online teaching.

Majority of the 3 generation are not in favor of acclaiming the method in future.

Acknowledgement

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HOI's and Teaching faculty of all 17 homoeopathic colleges of Karnataka.

7. Limitations

- Age (generation) distribution was not normal distribution. It can be a confounding factor.
- Various platforms used for online classes were not explored.
- Asynchronous teaching methods.

8. Conflict of interest: None

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