



## Original Research Article

# First year medical students feedback on online evaluation during Covid 2019: A study

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Due to the COVID pandemic, all the educational institutions, including medical colleges, are closed for students, and teaching methodology shifted from traditional offline teaching to online teaching. After the shift of teaching to the online mode from April 2020, the Narayana Medical College, like other Medical colleges, started online teaching and evaluation. Not much evidence is available about the student's perception of online evaluation.

**Objective:** An online survey was conducted to study first-year medical student's perceptions about the online evaluation through a structured questionnaire.

**Materials and Methods:** The study is conducted using a closed structured questionnaire containing ten questions with multiple responses and Yes or No responses. The study subjects included first-year MBBS students.

**Results:** The majority of the students are more comfortable with offline examination though they feel that it can be combined occasionally with an online examination in the post-COVID situation.

**Conclusion:** Students prefer offline examination to online examination, methods to combine offline, and online examinations need further study.

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## 1. Introduction

The invention of computer technology converted traditional classrooms with blackboards to computer-assisted classrooms. The widespread usage of the Internet further added to teaching and learning methods, the additional features like interactive teaching, smart classes as well online teaching and learning techniques. There is also a shift in competitive examination patterns from traditional paper-based to computer-assisted online examinations. National eligibility tests for Engineering students like JEE were completely made online. The medical common entrance test NEET is under consideration to be made online.

The Novel corona virus disease (COVID-19) outbreak has lead to a Health emergency and was declared as a public health emergency of international concern on January 30, 2020.<sup>1</sup> It was later proclaimed as Pandemic by WHO on March 11, 2020.<sup>2</sup> The Indian Government announced a Nationwide lockdown on March 25, 2020,<sup>3</sup> onwards and various health universities of South India like Dr. NTRUHS, RGUHS, Dr. MGRUHS, KUHS advised medical colleges under them to conduct online classes from April 2020 onwards.

As the duration of lockdown progressed further, and further the Medical Colleges noticed the need to evaluate the students online as there was no scope of the offline evaluation. Due to the lack of standardized protocols and also due to the lack of knowledge of both students and teachers about online evaluation, there were some difficulties.

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**Table 1:** Statistical data

		Count	Column N %
1. Are you satisfied with the online examination system?	No	56	62.2%
	Yes	34	37.8%
2. Is the time sufficient for you to understand the Questions online?	No	30	33.3%
	Yes	60	66.7%
3. Do you feel that you are physically isolated from your classmates during examination?	No	37	41.1%
	Yes	53	58.9%
4. Do you like online examinations to be carried out in post COVID situation also?	No	66	73.3%
	Yes	24	26.7%
5. Did you experience any technical difficulties, if so, how often and from which end	No technical difficulties	22	24.4%
	Yes from College end	13	14.4%
	Yes from my end	12	13.3%
	Yes but I cannot say from which end	43	47.8%
6. Is online examination is better than offline	No	60	66.7%
	Yes	15	16.7%
	Both are equally good	12	13.3%
	I cannot Say	3	3.3%
7. Have you ever copied in online examination	Never	46	51.1%
	Occasionally	28	31.1%
	Often	12	13.3%
	Regularly	4	4.4%
8. Do you feel the need for online examination to be combined with the offline examination in the future, if so how often (Online in Post COVID)	Never	31	34.4%
	Occasionally	37	41.1%
	Often	1	1.1%
	Regularly	21	23.3%
9. What combination of objective (MCQ) and Descriptive (Essay and Short answer question) you want in online examination	100% MCQ	19	21.1%
	75% MCQ	7	7.8%
	50% MCQ	35	38.9%
	25% MCQ	29	32.2%
10. What do you feel about the Standard of questioning in online examinations	Bad	3	3.3%
	Average	21	23.3%
	Good	55	61.1%
	Excellent	11	12.2%

Like online teaching, the online evaluation is also costlier as it requires Laptops, Smart Phones, and Internet facility; apart from these financial issues and technical issues related to the Internet, students mindset also to be shifted from traditional classroom-based examination to home-based online examination, which plays a vital role.

Studies were conducted both in India and abroad, more so during the COVID pandemic about student's perception of online teaching.<sup>4-9</sup> Few also focused on online evaluation.<sup>10,11</sup>

## 2. Materials and Methods

A study was conducted about online evaluation among first-year Medical students of Narayana Medical College Nellore.

The participants included first-year Medical students of the 2019 batch. The students were given a structured questionnaire consists of 10 questions; the questions were closed type with four questions having Yes or No response

and six questions with multiple choice answers. All the students who were willing to participate were included. This study has the permission of the Institutional Ethical Committee.

Ninety students both boys and girls participated in the study and their response was collected through the mail. The response was statistically analyzed, and results were represented in percentage.(Table 1)

### 2.1. Inclusion criteria

First year students voluntarily participated in the study with consent.

## 3. Analysis and Discussion

Majority students were not satisfied with online examination (62.2%). Only 16.7% felt that the online examination is better than offline examination and 13.3% are of opinion that both are equally good. The students feel isolated from the classmates in home based examination (58.9%).

The majority are not interested in taking online examination in post COVID scenario (73.3%) and regarding combination of both online and offline examinations 34.4% felt that they should not be combined and only about 4.4% favored regular combination 51.1% of the students said they never copied in the examination, and the rest of them copied at least occasionally. Most of the students said they had faced technical difficulties during the examination (75.6%), and they are not sure from which end (47.8%).

The majority of students are under the opinion that MCQs should not be more than 50% of total marks (71.1%). Most of the students are of the opinion that the standards of online examination questioning are good (61.1%) 23.3% felt it is average, 12.2% felt excellent, and only 3.3% opined it as bad, and the majority felt that there is sufficient time to understand the questions (66.7%).

#### 4. Conclusion

Students are still not accustomed to online examinations; they are ready to accept it with the traditional examination pattern. Students and teaching staff must be trained properly for online examinations. Facilities like the availability of computers/smart phones and fast Internet must be made affordable before online examinations are made more common.

#### 5. Limitations and Recommendations

The study was conducted in a private medical college in South India involving first-year students, and the sample size is small. A large sample size involving more medical colleges, both private and Government, across India will give more accurate results.

#### 6. Source of Funding

None.

#### 7. Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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