

## ATTITUDE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION STUDENTS TOWARDS ONLINE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

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### ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to measure the attitude of distance education students towards online assessment and to present the relationship of attitude with gender, age and locale. In this study, the sample includes 365 students from Annamalai University Distance Education. T-test results for attitude towards online assessment according to the gender, age and locale have been presented. As a result, it indicates that the level of attitude of distance education students towards the online assessment system is favourable. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of Male and Female Students, Students below 30 years old and above 30 years old and Students from rural and urban areas with respect to attitude towards online assessment systems.

**Keyword:** Attitude, online assessment, distance education, distance education students.

### INTRODUCTION

Educational assessment is the systematic process of documenting and using empirical data on the knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs. By taking the assessment, teachers try to improve student learning. Assessment can be focused on the individual learner or all individuals together, like the whole class, an institution or specific program. Formative assessment will give you an overview of your students in the beginning of your instruction. It gives you the opportunity to still have the chance to improve your instruction. Summative will give you the outcome of the whole instruction.

According to Keegan (2002), the definition of distance education can be summarized as "teaching and learning in which learning normally occurs in a different place from teaching". He further states that in distance education, materials and support structures are planned and prepared by an educational organization which uses technical media to unite teacher, learner, and content. Keegan's description of the distance education environment highlights various interacting components of distance education such as instructor, students, and content. Information and communication technology makes interaction in this environment possible where every component plays a significant role in producing the desired outcome. Online Assessment is the use of digital technologies to create, distribute, assess and provide feedback for formative, summative, diagnostic or self-assessment. Technological developments have afforded new ways of assessing student learning and providing feedback. Online assessment is the process used to measure certain aspects of information for a set purpose where the assessment is delivered via a computer connected to a network. Most often the assessment is some type of educational test. Different types of online assessments contain elements of one or more of the following components, depending on the assessment's purpose: formative, diagnostic, or summative.

An attitude is a hypothetical construct that represents an individual's degree of like or dislike for an item. Attitudes are generally positive or negative views of a person, place, thing or event. Attitudes of people, their behavioural tendencies, formed in social conditions during an individual's life, seem to be an important indicator of behaviour and experience. So far there has not been a unified definition of the attitude term. Measuring attitudes has an important role in analyzing students behaviour because it is known the fact that there is a strong connection

between attitude and behaviour. Talking about Online Assessment, a favourable attitude of students shows a greater probability that they will accept the new evaluation system.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Assessment is an integral part of the learning process. The traditional practice of assessment has changed to meet the needs of the contemporary society. Credibility and reliability of assessment procedures is a question of serious debate in the Distance Education system. There are three types of assessment qualities, which are essential for effective assessment. They are validity, reliability and fairness (Makamane, 2011). For an assessment system to be valid, care should be taken to verify whether the purpose of assessment has been achieved or not. Reliability entails the extent to which assessment is free from errors of measurement. An error free assessment system is treated as a reliable system. Fairness in assessment speaks about the objectivity of assessment and making assessment free of subjective judgment (UNESCO, 2006). So, Online assessments can give you instant feedback, unlike paper examinations in a traditional classroom learning session. Automated online assessments give you the option of taking practice tests whenever you want. Students don't always have to be in a classroom setting to take assessments. Some assessments are Internet-based, which allows the student to take the test at home or anywhere else he likes. Electronic assessments allow teachers to quickly evaluate the performance for the group against the individual. Report-generating capabilities help teachers identify learning problem areas for the group and individual students. Online assessments take up less storage space in respect to keeping records than paper. All data can be stored on a single server. Teachers can mix and match the question styles on exams, including graphics and make them more interactive than paper exams. Eliminates human error in grading. This cuts down on cheating. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the attitude of distance education students towards the online assessment system.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To find out the level of attitude of distance education students towards online assessment.
2. To find out whether there is a significant difference between male and female students with respect to attitude towards online assessment.
3. To find out whether there is significant difference between the students below 30 years old and above 30 years old with respect to attitude towards online assessment.
4. To find out whether there is significant difference between the students from rural areas and urban areas with respect to attitude towards online assessment.

## **HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY**

1. The level of attitude of distance education students towards online assessment is unfavourable.
2. There is no significant difference between male and female students with respect to attitude towards online assessment.
3. There is no significant difference between the students below 30 years old and above 30 years old with respect to attitude towards online assessment.
4. There is no significant difference between the students from rural and urban areas with respect to attitude towards online assessment.

## **METHOD**

The purpose of this paper is to measure distance education students' attitude towards online assessment and to discover the influencing factors so as to have relevant results for the future initiatives of educational institutions that plan to adopt an online assessment system. Determining students' attitude towards online assessment represents an important stage in predicting the adoption of a certain behaviour. So, the normative survey method has been employed in the present study.

## **TOOL USED**

This research was conducted through a questionnaire developed through exploratory research. After overseeing the literature review and choosing the analysis models, the questionnaire was structured in three parts having objectives: analyzing technical abilities, measuring students' attitude towards online assessment. The variables selected by the investigator is the attitude of

distance education students towards online assessment. For this the investigator used an Attitude Towards Online Assessment System (ATOAS) constructed and standardized by Sivakumar, R. (2019). This tool is of likert type and it has 25 statements. Each statement in this attitude scale set against four point scale i.e. Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. A score of 4 is given to the response strongly agree, 3 for agree likewise 2 and 1 was given to disagree and strongly disagree. The maximum score for this attitude scale is 100. Therefore if one who gets a score above 60 indicates favourable attitude towards online assessment and a score below 60 indicates unfavourable attitude towards online assessment.

### SAMPLE FOR THE STUDY

Random sampling technique was adopted to select the sample for the present study. The present study consists of 365 students studying in Directorate of Distance Education, Annamalai University, Tamilnadu. The data were collected through Google Form. Google Forms is a web-based app used to create forms for data collection purposes. Students and teachers can use Google Forms to make surveys, quizzes, or event registration sheets. Use Google Forms to collect any amount of data for a wide variety of purposes.

### STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES APPLIED

Statistical Techniques serve the fundamental purpose of the descriptive and inferential analysis. The descriptive and differential analyses were used in the study.

### HYPOTHESES TESTING

The hypotheses formulated for the present study were tested by applying statistical techniques. Descriptive and Differential analyses were used.

#### Hypothesis 1.

The level of attitude of distance education students towards online assessment is unfavourable.

**Table 1. Mean Difference of the Distance Education Students with Respect to Attitude Towards Online Assessment System**

Variable	N	Mean	S.D
Attitude towards Online Assessment System	365	66.27	8.65

The above Table-1 reveals that there is a favourable attitude towards online assessment systems. This indicates that the level of attitude of distance education students towards online assessment is favourable.

#### Hypothesis 2.

There is no significant difference between male and female students with respect to attitude towards online assessment.

**Table 2. Mean Difference of Male and Female Students with Respect to Attitude towards Online Assessment System**

Variable	Sub Variable	N	Mean	S.D	t' Value	Significant Level
Gender Wise Attitude towards Online Assessment System	Male	155	65.59	7.56	1.3	Not Significant
	Female	210	66.78	9.36		

The above Table-2 reveals that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of Male and Female Students with respect to the attitude of distance education students towards

online assessment systems. So, the online assessment system never influences the Gender factor.

### Hypothesis 3.

There is no significant difference between the students below 30 years old and above 30 years old with respect to attitude towards online assessment.

**Table 3. Mean Difference of Students below 30 Years Old and Above 30 Years Old with Respect to Attitude towards Online Assessment System**

Variable	Sub Variable	N	Mean	S.D	t' Value	Significant Level
Age Wise Attitude towards Online Assessment System	Below 30 Years	135	66.11	7.94	0.27	Not Significant
	Above 30 Years	230	66.37	9.06		

The above Table-3 reveals that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of students below 30 years old and above 30 years old with respect to attitude towards online assessment systems. So, the online assessment system never influence the Age factor

### Hypothesis 4.

There is no significant difference between the students from rural and urban areas with respect to attitude towards online assessment.

**Table 4. Mean Difference of Rural and Urban Students with Respect to Attitude towards Online Assessment System**

Variable	Sub Variable	N	Mean	S.D	t' Value	Significant Level
Locale Wise Attitude towards Online Assessment System	Rural	116	66.61	8.34	0.5	Not Significant
	Urban	249	66.12	8.81		

The above Table-4 reveals that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of students from rural areas and urban areas with respect to attitude towards online assessment systems. So, the online assessment system never influences the Locality factor.

## CONCLUSION

The study was conducted to examine the level of attitude of distance education students towards the online assessment system. As a result, it indicates that the level of attitude of distance education students towards the online assessment system is favourable. There is no significant difference between the mean scores of Male and Female Students, Students below 30 years old and above 30 years old and Students from rural areas and urban areas with respect to attitude towards online assessment systems. Distance Education Institutions implement the Online Assessment System to accomplish reliability of the total system of assessment, it should be managed with lesser error and objectivity in scoring. It develops confidence in the distance learners, the assessment system may be transparent and as fair as possible.

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