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Madzimore, Jeremiah

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INVESTIGATION OF YOUTUBE AS AN ONLINE PLATFORM USED DURING REMOTE LEARNING FORCED BY COVID-19

Jeremiah Madzimure

Department of Education

Vaal University of Technology

Potgieter blvd., Vanderbijlpark, South Africa, 1900

jeremiahm@vut.ac.za

Abstract

The main aim of this study was to investigate online platforms, specifically YouTube, suitable for remote learning, forced by COVID-19 from traditional face-to-face to online learning. To achieve the study's objectives, which are to investigate the effectiveness of remote learning, general students' feelings have about online education, lecturer's efficiency in using online tools to teach, and student's ability to adapt to online learning, the study employed a qualitative method where three videos with content relevant for a post-graduate diploma in higher education were made and uploaded to YouTube to investigate the efficiency of the online tool. Advantages of YouTube as an educational platform were discussed, which include flexibility and cost, among others. The challenges related to internet connections; resources, used to conduct YouTube lessons, were discussed. Recommendations to address some of these challenges using YouTube as an educational platform were explored. These recommendations include, amongst others, workshops and seminars should be held by administrators to teach lecturers and teachers how to use technology in their classes, universities need to adopt this new learning system as a part of the curriculum because to save time, money.

Keywords: YouTube; COVID-19 Pandemic; e-learning; online activities, traditional learning, online learning, students, remote learning, educational platform, South Africa.

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1. Introduction

Since the start of higher education, from the time of colonization to the era of decolonization, nearly all South African universities have been looking at face-to-face learning [1]. [2] did not agree that contact classes are believed to be old and reject students' knowledge, because it happens while a lecturer is delivering information for scholars in a class while using textbooks and chalkboards to teach students.

However, the method of lecturing students in class is not effective during the spike of the COVID-19 pandemic, contact learning delivers real-time contact with resources and others, can be delivered at a specific time, and offers quick response to scholars [3]. The e-learning system, offered by the department of education to all universities, affected students who were to do practical in their courses [4].

[5] states that e-learning is can able to make course content accessible online for future use, due to the extensive use of current technologies, such as hardware resources (computers, laptops, mobile phones, and others), and software resources (learning management system, software applications, social media sites, and others). This means students can able to have access to educational information through the internet anywhere and anytime of their choice, irrespective of challenges, such as the pandemic outbreak – provided they have access to hardware and software resources [3].

This article investigates the use of YouTube in assisting students to learn during the coronavirus pandemic since the Department of Higher Education introduced online teaching and learning as a source of communicating or delivering education to protect lecturers and students from the pandemic. There are disadvantages and advantages of using YouTube as a source of information to students, which were found and discussed in this article. Some universities find it difficult to use online learning more special for those students who are doing courses that need practical and the resources are only found at the campus, and they were forced to allow those students in the campus to complete their practical.

This research intends to conduct a systematic or formal investigation of the facts around how active and distinctive YouTube may be as a learning and teaching platform.

YouTube's role in the educational process and how it might help students improve their skills through lectures.

This research will enable students to study using modern technology and provide them with access to a big library of online teaching videos on YouTube.

To determine different measures, taken to overcome the crisis during the period of emergency remote learning.

To ensure the e-learning facility has a quality factor, the design and content, supported to use the e-learning system, are straightforward and adaptable.

The goal of this research is to get fresh insights into the teaching-learning situation to improve educational practice using YouTube as a learning and teaching platform [6].

2. Materials and methods

Literature review: use of selected online platform for teaching and learning

The rapid advancement of Internet technology has aided in the growth of a 'making and doing' culture for creativity [7]. While traditional face-to-face classes are avoided to reduce human touch, shifting learning and teaching activities to online platforms has sparked a lot of interest [8]. Technology has also aided the field of education in terms of creating instructional messages and disseminating them via the internet for self-directed learning [9].

YouTube has the potential to be a place where students and educators can make a difference, share knowledge, and cooperate [10]. Researchers and teachers have recently focused their attention on YouTube as an instructional tool [11]. The purpose of this paper is to provide context for the YouTube platform as a learning and teaching tool. Benefits of YouTube videos as a learning and teaching platform, YouTube as an Educational platform, advantages, and disadvantages of YouTube as a learning and teaching platform, this is how this chapter will be outlined.

3. 1. Benefits of YouTube videos as a learning and teaching platform.

Using YouTube as a learning and teaching platform has the potential to enable users to communicate and collaborate to develop material [8, 12–15]. Teachers can create their channels, record class lessons, and upload them online for students to view to better grasp what they have learned [16]. YouTube could be utilized to form a learning community and as a virtual library to help students with their classes by supplying video snippets [11, 17]. Students benefit from using the YouTube platform for studying and teaching since it is simple to incorporate, encourages online debates, and is quick to access [18]. YouTube's features encourage educational videos because it is simple to upload and share new content [10].

YouTube as an educational platform.

YouTube is one of the many new e-resources that can be employed in tertiary education pedagogy nowadays [19]. YouTube videos can be a great way to supplement existing case teaching materials in health policy and management [20]. More pupils are engaged by YouTube videos, which provide a greater comprehension and satisfaction for the sensitivity of learning ability of students [21]. YouTube clips are only a simple technique to make the instructional content-related and specified, according to [22].

Advantages of YouTube as a learning and teaching platform.

YouTube is a completely free platform, so students can take advantage of it for their studies without incurring any costs [21, 23]. It also allows students and lecturers to publish, view, review, share, report, and comment on educational and instructional videos, as well as subscribe to other users [24]. It may be utilized from anywhere, making it an effective tool for courses that are built for distance learning [5]. In the field of education, YouTube may assist students by offering videos of teaching and learning, so that they can learn from instructors in various parts of the world [12, 25].

Disadvantages of Youtube as a learning and teaching platform.

YouTube video is not well-vetted, especially in terms of educational accuracy [12]. Advertisements are plentiful because YouTube is a free-to-use platform [26]. On YouTube, several laws and regulations must be followed, which can interrupt learning and teaching [27]. Although some

authors are concerned about the security and legitimacy of online films, they can be used in educational settings [28].

The researcher employed qualitative research design, a group of six students in Post Graduate Diploma in Higher Education, made three online videos, after research a decision to use YouTube as an online platform for the presentation was made, one of the many reasons is that uploading and watching of videos on YouTube for someone who's having data is completely free, unlike other online application where you must pay a monthly subscription to have access. This gives a researcher an allowance to explore and see if it is favorable or not.

The task given was to choose any subject of PGDHE and make online presentations about any three topics on the subject, and after discussion, a decision to use the subject called History of Transformation was made, on the following will get a discussion on the topics and links of the uploaded videos on the online platforms.

4. Results

Investigation of Funding of higher education in South Africa

Video link, uploaded on YouTube on the topic, mentioned above, which is the funding of higher education in South Africa, is attached below, please click on the link for reference: <https://youtu.be/Z5Wg2xL--EQ>

They activate on the link is a PowerPoint Presentation based on an investigation of Funding for Higher Education in South Africa. The topic emanated from the subject called History of Transformation for PGDHE students. On the introduction of the topic, the concept was defined as the money, which a government, individuals, or organization provides for a purpose of education. A key objective of funding higher education is to enable institutions in the tertiary education sector to fulfill their legal obligations and established educational objectives. The evolution of funding, challenges of funding, NSFAS were briefly explained. Evolution of funding from 1951 to New Funding Framework, adopted in 2003, which is separated into two sections, one being block grants where the funding is based on the number of student enrolments, graduates, and research units for an institution. While the second one, earmarked grants assist in specific institutional areas, namely "the National Student Funding Aid Scheme", teaching and community development outside of Block grant. One of the challenges discussed is that the government invests billions in higher education and expects such investment will increase the country's GDP. Nevertheless, with the high level of unemployment of graduates and the level of dropout, the ideal goal of increased GDP has not been achieved, thus straining the country's economy [11, 13]. National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) is a government fund in South Africa, designed to assist students with parents who earn less than R350 000 per annum [29]. The NSFAS concept's advantages and disadvantages are explained. Lastly few recommendations to the current challenges in the system were mentioned, one being an encouragement for universities to strengthen their internal systems that intersect with NSFAS.

Decolonization of Education in South Africa

The topic Decolonization of Education in South Africa was briefly discussed, and a video was done using a phone as a resource and the video was uploaded on YouTube, a link is attached below for reference: <https://youtu.be/wfKYBZUFgYY>

They activate on the link that is a PowerPoint Presentation based on the Decolonization of Education in South Africa. Decolonization is the eradication of colonialist epistemologies and social practices to centralize Africa's own. The decolonization of schools and universities involves people who were previously marginalized under apartheid, choosing to embrace and recognize their own cultures, tell their histories, study from books, written by Africans, and run institutions based on values that are reflective of African culture, as opposed to Eurocentric models. Challenges of decolonization of education, discussed in the presentation, are based on Africa's reluctance to change the curriculum, no knowledge of decolonization, no connection with realities of students, the problem with white perspective, and lack of dialogue. The last part of the presentation discussed the recommendations and explained the need to fundamentally rethink of curriculum to move South Africa to the center of teaching and learning.

Challenges faced by first-year students in South African Education Sector during COVID-19

The online activate in this section is based on Challenges, faced by first-year students in South African Education Sector during COVID-19. The Video link below is attached for reference: <https://youtu.be/MrnTxLfWHI8>

Background to the topic due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen almost all the institutions of higher learning resorting to online registration, teaching, and learning. This method of registering and admitting first-year learners from schools to high learning institutes had its limitations and challenges to affecting registration and admitting first-year students. The challenges identified include technical problems, socio-economic problems, Dropout due to insufficient funds, online application, lacking exposure to the use of a computer. One of the recommendations to flexibility challenges is to ensure that courses are divided into several parts and consist of brief lessons that can be completed in a short amount of time

5. Discussion

5. 1. Successes of your online activities

Global Connections for Teachers and Students

This eliminates limitations or boundaries to learning because of geographical factors, so students from different countries can enroll to whichever institution of their choice, it also readdresses the time factors whereby students and lecturers can only engage on the fixed time and after missing the class it is hard to catch up with the rest of the peers [22, 30].

Expanding Classroom Learning.

A tutorial presentation can be flexible and adjustable with the agreement of both parties. [31] conducting online presentations, the students can still watch the presentations, it is an unlimited way for students to have tutorials in groups and interact with one another beyond the scheduled online class.

Alleviate Isolation and Distance

Distance learning can have been explained as a form of teaching and learning whereby teachers and students are separated [32] and it communicates modules of education that are offered off-campus. Now, most of the institutions have integrated distance learning and remote learning.

Collaborative Problem Solving

Remote learning encourages students to work in groups and come up with solutions and eliminate individualism [22]. Teams help with coming up with the best solutions because every individual contributes with their skills to the group.

Online Cognitive Presence

Cognitive presence is an information hub for students. This attributes to the quality vs quantity of the knowledge or data that the student can gather from information hubs [32], therefore a tutor can prototype the information hubs and interact with students in discussions, assignment feedback, and other communications.

5. 2. Challenges faced in doing your online activities

Internet connection

The internet connection was extremely bad on our side, which had a great effect on the quality of our videos [5]. The internet connection can be caused by load shedding, sometimes is caused by poor home background. We did not check our internet connection and our bandwidth to make sure they are running smoothly.

Associated devices (Lack of smartphones, laptops, etc)

Another challenge on our side was the quality of our phones. We struggled to take clear videos because of our phones. Some of our videos are a blur, while others shaking, that is because we were using our phones with low quality to take those videos.

Slow or unstable network

The slow or unstable network was our top challenge when uploading our videos on YouTube causing them to fail. When facing this challenge, you need to be patient to wait longer for the uploading video to finish or you can install some network booster for help [33].

Duplicate channel video

This was caused by uploading the same video again and again. The solution to this is that you can delete the duplicate that was already uploaded or try to edit the video to make it different enough, not to be flagged by YouTube, then try to upload it again [34].

Browsers

One of the reasons why YouTube was freezing in the middle of a video upload was because our browser was outdated [32, 35]. Sometimes you might not be aware that your browsers and software are outdated. The solution to this challenge is to update your browsers before uploading your video on YouTube.

6. Conclusion

The blended learning makes things easy, and the support that the government brings in Higher Education Institution (HEIs) in South Africa overcomes the challenges that we face as students by making things possible for students, coming from the disadvantaged background, by providing them with study material and data to access and laptops for the ones that are in need. YouTube is a good learning platform for higher learning institutions regarding online education. Online learning becomes successful because of the good connectivity, communication that teachers and students have, and the goals that all students must reach at the end of the year. However, the training of teachers to have further instructions about the change of curriculum from traditional to online learning was very productive for both students and teachers, so that it can be easy to share information. Universities need to adopt this new learning system as a part of the curriculum because to save time, money. The South African government needs to update the educational system and resources that are needed that can increase the level of education results because it has a potential for university students. All the challenges that they come across in traditional learning can be minimized because of the e-learning method that is automatic and reliable and affordable and convenient to other people, not only students and teachers. E-learning policy showed the potential benefits and challenges when they implement the e-learning platform.

Teaching and learning can also use videos to do practical to demonstrate and explain to others than to go in class or to the field, such as engineering students and other faculty that need practical as part of the assessment. The limitations of this study are that all respondents in this study came from the same university, Vaal University of Technology students, which is a drawback. Furthermore, the effectiveness of YouTube can be investigated to establish its strengths and weaknesses in key educational areas [5, 13, 23]. Workshops and seminars should be held by administrators to teach lecturers and teachers how to use technology in their classes. The instruction system is the innovation that assists learners to embrace e-learning and create a flexible education that encourages them to do better and limits the cost of studies with good quality of education. Other areas of future research may include investigation of other online learning platforms, such as Facebook, Whats App, among others.

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