

LIBRARY HERALD

Vol 60 No 2

June 2022

# Online Examination and Students Travail During Covid 19: A Study of Department of Library and Information Science, University of Delhi

MANISH KUMAR\*

MEERA\*\*

The study is being conducted to check and know the observation, first time experience and impediments faced by the students about the online examination conducted by University of Delhi. COVID-19 created an unprecedented situation, affected the academic activities which proved disastrous for mental and physical health of students. The syllabi covered through online mode and no previous experience of online examination pose great challenge in terms of suitable gadget, Internet connectivity, understanding of rules and regulations of online examination and stress of uploading answer scripts in stipulated time, etc. were many issues faced by the students. To read the mind and know about the students experience, a structured questionnaire was designed, the researchers tried to elicit maximum responses from the students of Department of Library and Information Science, University of Delhi and after sincere persuasion and efforts, out of 100 students only received 75 students response and after analyzing those the results are being presented in the paper covering students thinking and insight in terms of online examination experience and expectations. Hence the total population stands N-75 is 100%.

**Keywords:** *Online Examination, Open Book Examination, OBE, COVID-19, Corona Virus, Library Science, Students Online Examination, University of Delhi.*

---

\* Associate Professor, DLIS, DU

\*\* Professor, DLIS, DU

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The word examination create ripples in the mind of students community as it is time to test the preparation and knowledge and ascend for new beginning. The students of Department of Library and Information Science, University of Delhi have had experience of physical examination mode but for the first time they were told and instructed to appear for online examination through open book system. This pandemic proved disastrous for students community as their reading, learning was badly affected and discontinuation along-with isolation from college and university, friends, libraries and most important from that learning environment hit hard the academic growth and development. It is the first time students were instructed to appear for online open book examination and there were many apprehensions and impediments in the minds regarding a compatible gadget (Desktop/ Laptop/ Smartphone), high band Internet connection, information and knowledge to download, scan and upload the question paper and answer scripts, time management, nervousness and fear of electricity and Internet failure problems, etc. On one side students faced personal, family health and other problems and on other keeping themselves ready with preparation for online examination with many thoughts and hunches in mind. Thus to read the mind of students, to know the first time experience of online examination and check the challenges and problems faced by them was the prime objective of the study.

## 2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

(i) To know the students opinion, observation and experience about online examination during COVID 19 period. (ii) To check the ground realities regarding attending the online examination in terms of suitable gadget(s), Internet connectivity, understanding of OBE rules and regulations. (iii) To study the constrains/problems faced by students regarding online examination. (iv) To analyse and understand the viability of online examination during COVID 19 period.

## 3 OPEN BOOK EXAMINATION

Open book examination is a new assessment mode which allows the students to refer the class notes, textbooks and could use them during the examination. Here the students have to thoroughly well aware of the syllabi, imbibe the answers and attempt well structured questions in stipulated time with more emphasis on understanding and explaining appropriately with proper justification. Here the application is largely on well read and understanding of facts, theories and concepts, assimilation and application of knowledge. The OBE emphasized on advanced level learning and well understanding of the topics and not just recalling information, the students need to be well prepared

with clarity and suitable examples to explain and justify their statements and answers as paradigm of well preparation. Well in western countries OBE is a well accepted practice but in Indian scenario due to COVID19 it was an compulsion for many of the academic institutes to accept and adapt this new model for assessment and evaluation of the students subject knowledge. In this regard University of Delhi issued guidelines/policies<sup>1</sup> which comprehensively explained A to Z step to step instructions of OBE with essential instructions to be followed by the students from downloading the question paper to uploading the answer scripts to the designated examination portal. [https://www.andcollege.du.ac.in/uploads/others/Notification% 20 Guidelines% 20\(OBE\)% 20MODE% 20UG% 20\(.pdf](https://www.andcollege.du.ac.in/uploads/others/Notification%20Guidelines%20(OBE)%20MODE%20UG%20(.pdf)

#### 4 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Al-Hakeem, Mazin and Abdulrahman<sup>2</sup> discussed e-exam platform, its application in terms of hardware and software, its challenges and problems and students perspective. Ardid<sup>3</sup> et al...investigated and presented the use of online exams as part of the evaluation process in the context of blended assessment viz. three different situations as (i) an evaluation-proctored exam (ii) an evaluation -unproctored exam and (iii) training homework task. Butler-Henderson and Crawford<sup>4</sup> in their work emphasized upon online examination, online invigilation and lack of clarity and guidelines in this regard. The study investigated the concept of online examinations, its related aspects of challenges and opportunities through evaluation of thirty six pertinent papers with nine key themes student perceptions, student performance, anxiety, cheating, staff perceptions, authentication and security, interface design, and technology issues. Brightwell and others<sup>5</sup> conducted a study with regard to introductory University Anatomy and Physiology unit in which the first assessment round was through online multiple-choice examination with 50 questions attempted by 196 students and in second round repeat the same test with help of their textbooks and the results showed no significant difference between the means of the scores. The study concluded that a suitably constructed set of questions could be used to discriminate student abilities in either an open or closed book environment. Eilertsen, T. V. and Valdermo, O.<sup>6</sup> in their work explained the first time new reform(Reform-94) for Open Book in the upper secondary schools in Norway<sup>7</sup> was conducted where the objective was to provide an opportunity to students to answer the some sections of question paper from memory and some sections with use of textbooks and notes. The reform placed a new emphasis on school-based evaluation, students' learning habits, interdisciplinary project work, and student collaboration and responsibility in connection, with decisions regarding both content and teaching methods. Gehringer, Edward F. and Peddycord III<sup>8</sup> explained the format of online examination, its merits and demerits and lack of clarity about ethics and fair practice form students' perspective. Loi, Loi

Soh and Wu Yuan<sup>9</sup> conducted a study through survey method with structured questionnaire in first year course, Business Statistics to implement the open-book examination in the School of Accountancy and Business, Nanyang Technological University for implementation of Open book examination. Out of 583 respondents, 60% students prefer open-book examination than closed-book examination. (<https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.201.8344&rep=rep1&type=pdf>)

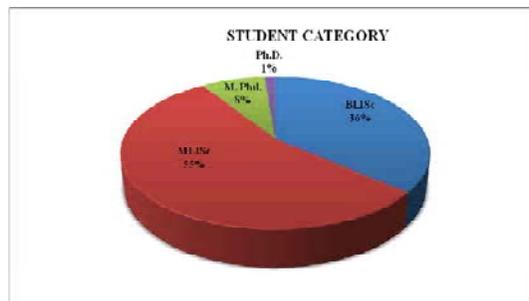
The study comprehensively dealt with the Open Book Examination, challenges to OBE, ethical values as protecting the academic integrity, essentials steps for preparation and success viz. understanding expectations, reviewing course objectives and themes, preparation of study notes, well read and understanding of course material as taught and discussed with time management. ([www.trentu.ca/academicskills/how-guides/](http://www.trentu.ca/academicskills/how-guides/)). Theophilides, C. and Dionysiou, O.<sup>10</sup> explored that assessment and evaluation of students performance through examinations is essential for bringing improvement and suggesting the correct methods for preparation. Examination is the best way for checking the students subject understanding and knowledge and open book examination is best mean provides freedom of referencing and consultation during the exam with onus on proper understanding of the concepts and theories and explain and justify with prudence and well clear approach in examination.

## 5 FINDINGS

The study presents insights, observation, mindset and experience of 75 students of Department of Library and Information Science, University of Delhi regarding online examination and the impediments faced by them to cope with their studies on one side and the physical and mental pressure during this pandemic tenure.

## 6 DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

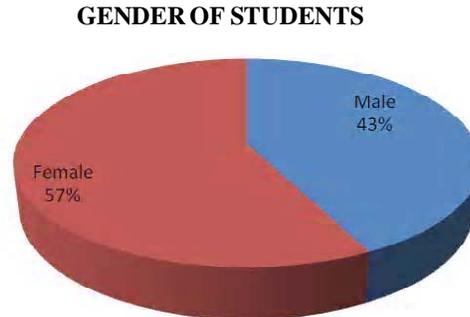
**Fig. 1: STUDENT CATEGORY**



The data of Fig. 1 tangibly shows that maximum MLISc students (55%)

responded to the questionnaire seconded by BLISc (36%), M.Phil (8%) and least only 1% belongs to PhD category.

**Fig. 2: GENDER OF STUDENTS**



The data shows that 32(43%) male and 43(57%) female students responded to the questionnaire administered to them.

**Table 1: ONLINE EXAMINATION ISSUES**

Sr. No.	Question	Response Yes with (%)	Response No with (%)
1	Are you aware about the Online Open Book Examination	75 (100%)	-
2	Do you find it right to conduct online examination during COVID 19?	73 (97.3%)	2 (2.7%)
3	Do you think it is right to hold examination when course was completed through Online Classes?	58 (77.3%)	17 (22.7%)
4	Do you got any Orientation/ Training for Open Book Examination?	49 (65.3%)	26 (34.7%)
5	Have you appeared for the Mock Examination?	48 (64%)	27 (36%)
6	Are you physically and mentally ready for the final examination?	55 (73.3%)	20 (26.7%)
7	Do you think that authority has robust infrastructure for hassle free examination?	45 (60%)	30 (40%)

It is evident from the data that all 75(100%) students were well aware about online open book examination. Further, regarding conduction of online examination during COVID19 pandemic 73(97.3%) considered it right and acceptable but 2(2.7%) didn't. With regard to another question that is it right to hold examination when the syllabi was covered through online classes

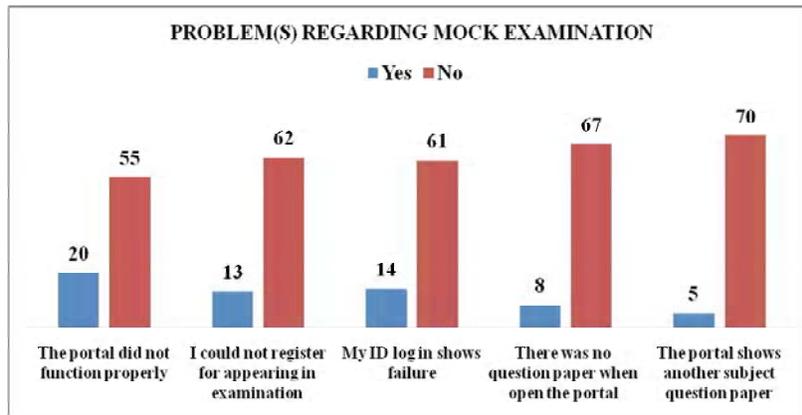
58(77.3%) students agreed to it but 17(22.7%) did not. 49(65.3%) students responded that they got Orientation/ Training for Open Book Examination whereas 26(34.7%) did not received any such facility. 48 (64%) respondents responded affirmative that they appeared for the Mock Examination but 27(36%) did not. 55 (73.3%) responded affirmative that they were physically and mentally ready for the final examination but 20(26.7%) opined in negative. 45(60%) respondents consented that authority has robust infrastructure for hassle free examination but 30(40%) did not think so.

**Table 2: ICT RELATED CONSTRAINTS/ PROBLEMS**

S.No.	Question	Response Yes with (%)	Response No with (%)
1	I am not having a PC/ Laptop/Tablet at home	19 (25.3%)	56 (74.6%)
2	I am not having a Smartphone	5 (6.6%)	70 (93.3%)
3	I am not having Internet connection at home	12 (16%)	63 (84%)
4	Poor Internet connectivity at my place	36 (48%)	39 (52%)

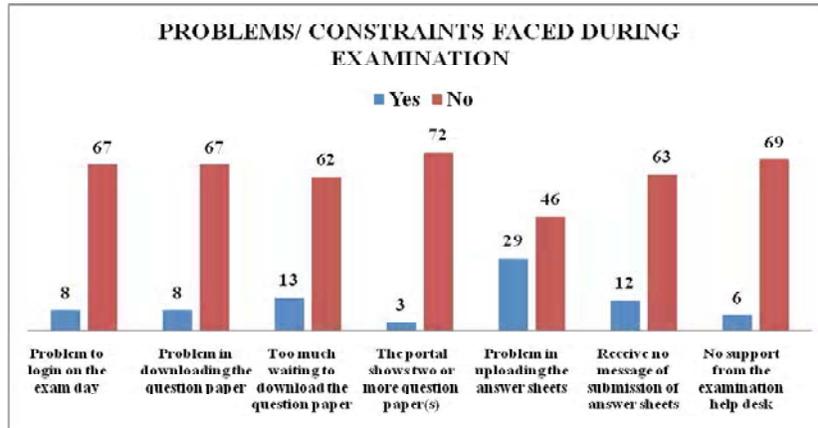
It is evident from data that regarding question of not having a PC/ Laptop/ Tablet at home 56(74%) responded of having such gadget whereas 19(25.3%) opined of non availability. With regard to having a Smartphone only 5(6.6%) responded affirmative of not having and majority 70(93.3%) responded in negative of having such one. For another question of not having Internet connection at home 12(16%) responded yes of not having and 63(84%) responded of having it. With regard to Internet poor Internet connectivity at their place 36(48%) responded yes and 39(52%) opined negative.

**Fig. 3: PROBLEM(S) REGARDING MOCK EXAMINATION**



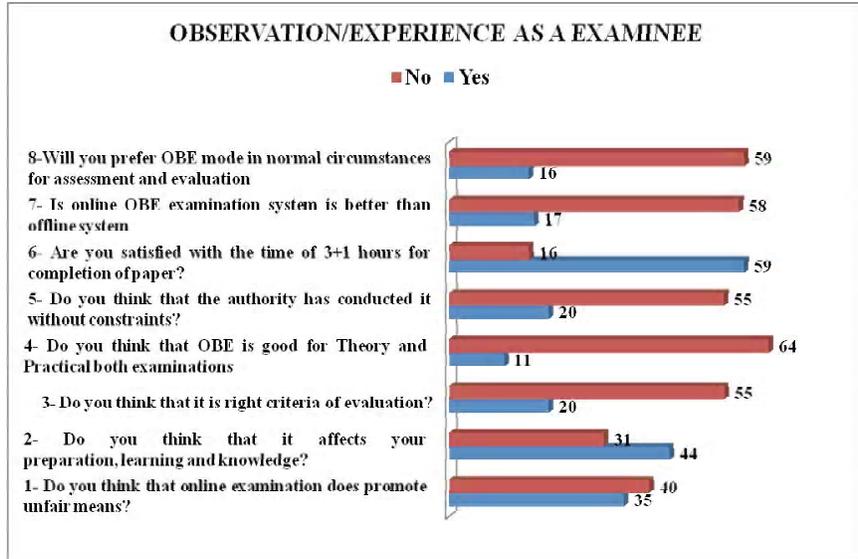
The data overtly presents that only 20(26.6%) respondents found the mock examination portal not function properly and 55(73.3%) did not found any such problem. 13(17.3%) responded in affirmation for not registering for appearance in mock examination and 62(82.6%) did not face any such problem. 61(81.3%) found no problem in log in ID but 14(18.6%) faced such problem. 67(89.3%) found no problem regarding access of question paper in comparison to only 8(10.6%) and only 5(6.6%) found another subject question paper in comparison to 70(93.3%) respondents who did not faced such problem.

**Fig. 4: PROBLEMS/ CONSTRAINTS FACED DURING EXAMINATION**



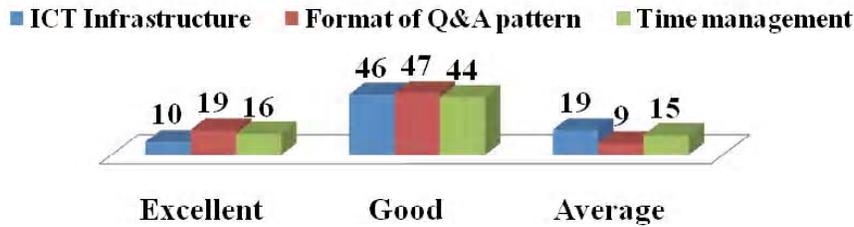
It is evident from the data that only 8(10.6%) students faced login problem on the exam day and also downloading the question paper issue whereas 67(89.3%) did not. Further, 13(17.3%) respondents waited too much for downloading the question paper but 62(82.6%) did not faced such problem. Only 3(4%) found two or more question paper(s) on the portal whereas 72(96%) did not observe any such problem. 29(38.6%) students faced problem in uploading the answer sheets but 46(61.3%) did not. Only 12(16%) students opined that they received no message of submission of answer sheets whereas 63(84%) did not. It is clear that only 6(8%) students opined that they did not received any support from the examination help desk whereas 69(92%) did not raised any such issue.

**Fig. 5: OBSERVATION/EXPERIENCE AS A EXAMINEE**



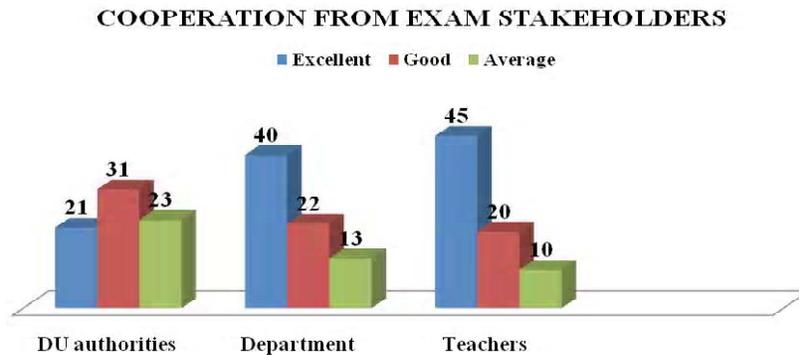
It is evident from the data 35(45.6%) students believed that online examination does promote unfair means but 40(53.3%) did not think so. Further, 44(58.66%) respondents think that it affects their preparation, learning and knowledge whereas 31(41.33%) did not. Only 20(26.66%) respondents affirm and admit open book examination is the right criteria of evaluation whereas 55(73.33%) denied it. Only 11(14.66%) students agreed for that open book examination is good for Theory and Practical both examinations whereas majority i.e. 64(85.33%) opined against it. Only 20(26.66%) respondents admitted that the authority has conducted open book examination without constraints but majority 55(73.33%) were not convinced and did not admitted this point. Only 16(21.33%) students were not satisfied with the time of 3+1 hours for completion of paper but majority 59(78.66%) were satisfied. Only 17(22.66%) respondents agreed that online OBE examination system is better than offline system but majority 58(77.33%) disagreed to it. For the question that will you prefer OBE mode in normal circumstances for assessment and evaluation only 16(21.33%) agreed for it but majority of respondents 59(78.66%) opined against it.

**Fig. 6: RATE THE WHOLE PROCESS OF OBE**



The data overtly shows that with regard to the question about the ICT infrastructure 10(13.33%) responded excellent, 46(61.33%) good and 19(25.33%) average. Further, about format of question and answer pattern 19(25.33%) responded excellent, 47(62.66%) good and only 9(12%) as average. For question about time management 16(21.33%) responded excellent, 44(58.66%) good and 15(20%) as average.

**Fig. 7: COOPERATION FROM EXAM STAKEHOLDERS**



It is evident from the data that with regard to cooperation from the examination stakeholders i.e. Delhi University Authority 21(28%) respondents opined excellent, 31(41.33%) as good and 23(30.66%) average. For another question about cooperation from Department 40(53.33%) responded excellent, 22(29.33%) as good and 13(17.33%) as average. With regard to cooperation from the teachers 45(60%) responded as excellent, 20(26.66%) as good and only 10(13.33%) as average.

## 7 CONCLUSION

The study overtly presents first time experience of authority and the students regarding open book examination in terms of DU authority massive preparation, ICT infrastructure arrangements and convincing students to participate for their career development on one side and real time observation, experience of students community to prepare mentally, physically with proper technological gadgets and Internet connectivity for appearing and making this whole ordeal a success story.

## REFERENCES

1. UNIVERSITY OF DELHI GUIDELINES FOR OPEN BOOK EXAMINATIONS(OBE)NOTIFICATION.(2020).[https://www.andcollege.du.ac.in/uploads/others/Notification% 20Guidelines %20\(OBE\)%20MODE%20UG%20\(.pdf](https://www.andcollege.du.ac.in/uploads/others/Notification%20Guidelines%20(OBE)%20MODE%20UG%20(.pdf) Accessed on 1 October 2020

2. AL-HAKEEM (Mazin S.), ABDULRAHMAN (Mohammad Salim) (2017). Developing a New e-Exam Platform to Enhance the University Academic Examinations: The Case of Lebanese French University. *International Journal of Modern Education and Computer Science (IJMECS)*. 9(5): 9-16.DOI:10.5815/ijmeecs.2017.05.02
3. ARDID (Miguel) *et al.*, (2015). Online exams for blended assessment. Study of different application methodologies. *Computers & Education*. 81: 296 – 303.<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2014.10.010>
4. BUTLER-HENDERSON (Kerryn) and CRAWFORD (Joseph) (2020). A systematic review of online examinations: A pedagogical innovation for scalable authentication and integrity. Elsevier Public Health Emergency Collection. *Computers & Education*.159.doi: 10.1016/j.compedu.2020.104024
5. BRIGHTWELL (Richard), DANIEL (JH) and STEWART (A) (2004). Evaluation: Is an open book examination easier? *Bioscience Education*, 3(1): pp.1–10. <https://doi.org/10.3108/beej.2004.03000004>
6. EILERTSEN (Tor Vidar) and VALDERMO (Odd) (2000). Open-book assessment: A contribution to improved learning? *Studies in Educational Evaluation*. 26(2): 91–103. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-491X\(00\)00010-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-491X(00)00010-9)
7. Preparing for an online, Open Book Exam. <https://www.trentu.ca/academicskills/how-guides/how-study/prepare-and-write-exams/preparing-online-open-book-exam#challenges> Accessed on 2 October 2020
8. GEHRINGER (Edward F) and PEDDYCORD III (Barry W) (2013). Experience with Online and Open- Web Exams. *Journal of Instructional Research*. 2: 10 -18. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1127649.pdf>
9. LOI (LoiSoh) and WU (Yuan). Open Book Examinations. <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.201.8344&rep=rep1&type=pdf> Accessed on 1 October 2020
10. THEOPHILIDES (Christopher) and DIONYSIOU (Omiros) (1996). The major functions of the open-book examination at the university level: A factor analytic study. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*. 22(2): 157–170. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0191-491X\(96\)00009-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/0191-491X(96)00009-0)