THE IMPACT OF VIDEO-MEDIATED TEACHING FOR THE BACHELOR OF EDUCATION HONOURS IN SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION DEGREE PROGRAMME OF THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA

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The Open University Learning Management System (OULMS) provides convenient and easy access to students for open and distance learning. It enables students to access course material and supplementary materials which will enhance their knowledge in a border area. Video-mediated learning is one of the distinct features of OULMS. The main aim of this study was to investigate the impact of video-mediated teaching on the students of Bachelor of Education Honours in Special Needs Education(BEd(Hons) SNE) who registered for the course SNU5338 in the academic year 2023/2024. Apart from this main aim, the other objectives were to identify the existing usage of video material in the learning of BEd(Hons) SNE undergraduate students , to assess strengths and weaknesses of the usage of video material in the learning of BEd(Hons) SNE and to propose suggestions for better utilisation of video material in the learning.A survey design was used for the study. Using the purposive sampling technique students and lecturers who have experience in the course, 'Introduction to Exceptionalities and Learning Needs' were selected as the sample. A questionnaire with open and close-ended questions was completed by hundred and five (n=105) students and semi-structured interviews were conducted with five (n=5) lecturers who teach the course. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented as percentages and frequencies. The qualitative data were analyzed using narrative analysis. The current usage of video for the learning process, the strengths of the uploaded videos and suggestions to improve the quality of videos are a few themes that were identified during this study. A percentage of 97.1 students stated that the video materials uploaded in OULMS are useful as supplementary material. It has enabled them to understand the complex course concepts through multisensory delivery. The theme "strengths of the uploaded videos" depicts that the video clips on different disabilities helped the students to get a realistic picture of a variety of disabilities. The high level of satisfaction with the usefulness of the videos ensures a positive impact on video-incorporated teaching strategies. Therefore, it is noticed that the teaching-learning process can be facilitated effectively via this approach.

Keywords: Video Mediated Teaching, Bachelor of Education Hons in Special Needs Education, The Open University Sri Lanka

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INTRODUCTION

The Open University of Sri Lanka has been the pioneer of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) for more than four decades of history in Sri Lanka. ODL is an approach to teaching and learning that offers open and flexible access to learning opportunities to anyone, transcending geographical limitations and age barriers, thereby providing opportunities for all learners to take part in education. Transitioning from traditional classroom methods to online distance learning is a contemporary shift. This prompts educators to implement novel approaches to mitigate the physical distance between the student and the teacher through various methods of interaction. Hence, maintaining student engagement and motivation necessitates the implementation of diverse strategies. In recent years, video-mediated teaching gained popularity as a powerful educational tool, particularly in the context of online distance learning, reshaping the traditional classroom experience. However, video-based learning has a long tradition as a learning method (Yousef et al.,2014). Unlike conventional teaching methods that heavily depend on lectures, textbooks, and written materials, video-mediated teaching offers a dynamic alternative. Educators can present concepts in a visually engaging format, utilizing videos to deliver instructional content directly to remote learners. Alqahtani (2019) has revealed that new technologies open the doors for better distance learning programmes, allowing those in disadvantaged areas to access the same education as the privileged. Understanding the effectiveness of video-mediated teaching is crucial for improving education in today's digital era. Accordingly, Instructions can be delivered in a systematic way to improve the quality of instruction during the teaching-learning process of ODL. The Learning Management System (LMS) largely supports traditional face-to-face teaching and is considered the backbone of e-learning (Washington, 2019). Educators use the LMS to organize their students' learning processes. It enables educators to share relevant course materials, maintain communication with students and evaluate student performances. To maintain high-quality interaction with students, educators must use appropriate features to offer a better learning environment. Moreover, with the rapid advancement of digital media technologies, the opportunities to produce, incorporate and share educational videos have increased at the university level (Kay & Kletskin, 2012). Many researchers already acknowledge the effectiveness of the use of videos in education, advocating its usefulness as an integral tool for training (Rajadell & Garriga-Garzón, 2017) and video-based learning is changing the world's education system (Ark, 2012). At OUSL, students use printed course material, participate in Day School sessions and tutorials, and are provided additional resources to understand the concepts. In their assessment of Take Home Assignments and final examinations, the Day School academics found that many students in the Introduction to Exceptionalities and Learning Needs course lacked sufficient understanding. They also noted that the abstract nature of the course material made it difficult for students to grasp certain disabilities. As a result, a study was initiated to examine the potential impact of video-mediated teaching. Subsequently, it was decided to enhance the learning experience of BEd(Hons) SNE

undergraduates by providing educational videos, with the aim of fostering a deeper understanding and improving their academic performance.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

This study attempted to investigate the impact of video-mediated teaching on students of the BEd(Hons) SNE Degree Programme

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

- To identify the existing usage of video material in the learning of BEd (Hons) SNE undergraduate students.
- To assess strengths and weaknesses of the usage of video material in the learning of BEd (Hons) SNE undergraduate students.
- To propose suggestions for better utilisation of video material in the learning.

METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted through the survey design followed by the mixed approach. The target population consisted of undergraduates of the BEd(Hons) SNE Degree Programme (2023/2024) and the academics of the Faculty of Education. The targeted population was one hundred and seventy students and the currently available lecturers who conduct the lectures for the Introduction to Exceptionalities and Learning Needs (SNU5338) course. Hundred and five students (n=105) and five (n=5) lecturers were selected as the sample with purposive sampling method. The main judgement that used for the quantitative probability sampling method. For the student population was, the students who gave their consent to participate in the survey during the given period and who had computer literacy skills. There were five lecturers who conducted lectures for the proposed module and all of them were selected for the study. The student representation from all three media was: Sinhala (73.1%), Tamil (19.2%) and English (7.7%) enrolled in the course SNU5338, Introduction to Exceptionalities and Learning Needs of the Bachelor of Education Honors in Special Needs Education Degree Programme (2023/2024). A google form was shared with the students with open and close ended questions. A semi-structured questionnaire was administered for the lectures. Descriptive statistics were used during the analysis of the quantitative data and narrative analysis was used for the analysis of the qualitative data identify the impact of video mediated teaching on the BEd(Hons) SNE Degree Programme offered by the Department of Special Needs Education, The Open University of Sri Lanka.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the questionnaire it was observed that the majority of the students were (90.4%) full-time teachers. It comprised 73.3% of Sinhala medium,19.1% of Tamil Medium and 7.7 % of English medium students. The majority of the sample was below 30 years and 89.4% of the sample consisted of females. Out of them, 94.1% watched the videos uploaded on OULMS. Figure 1, shows the overall perceptions of students about the videos and 97.1% stated that video materials have been useful.
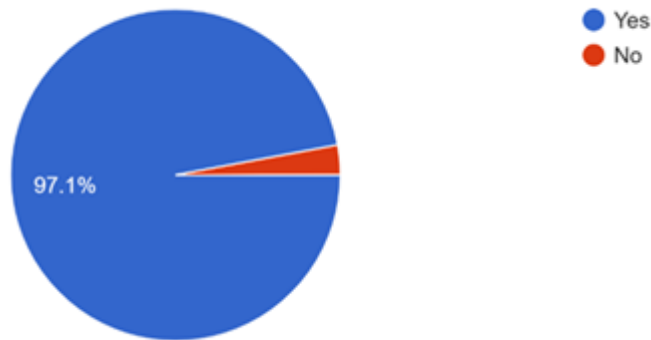
Figure 1: Usefulness of the Video Material

It was observed that 99% of the sample are using video material for learning. However, most of them use video material occasionally and only 18.4 % use video material every day.

Most of the students indicated that they used YouTube videos related to Special Needs Education. Even though they watch YouTube videos it was mentioned that they randomly watch the videos without a clear focus and the language used in those videos is difficult to comprehend. It was also noted that the videos they watch on YouTube are not directly relevant to the course content in SNU5338. Figure 2 indicated that 74% of the students found the videos which were specifically created for the course SNU5338 were informative. Further 28.8% of the students stated that the four videos which are uploaded to the course SNU5338 are mostly relevant to the course content.
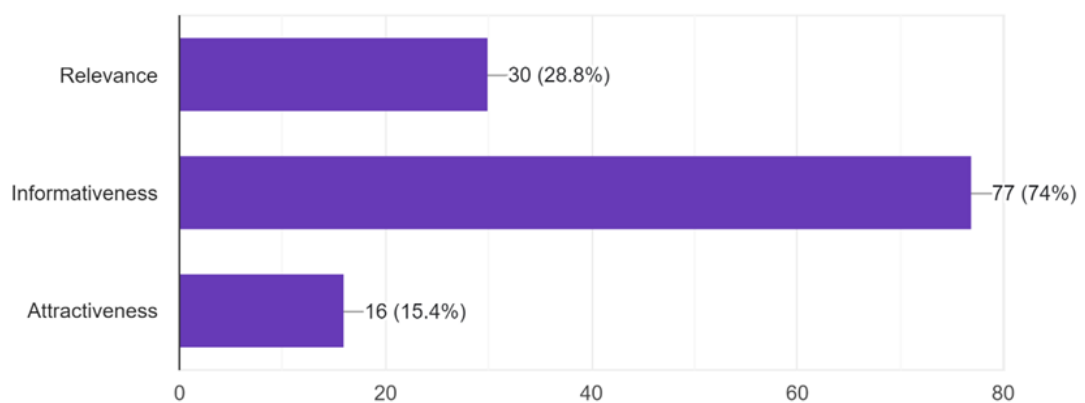

Figure 2.Useful aspects of videos

On the other hand, a few students have mentioned that these four videos do not cater to their learning styles and lack depth compared to other resources. According to Figure 3, 68 participants have faced difficulties in watching videos and among them, 11.8% stated that quality should be improved in the video. Moreover, 44.1% indicated that they experienced technical issues while watching. Additionally, 22.1% stated that the content was too complex to follow.
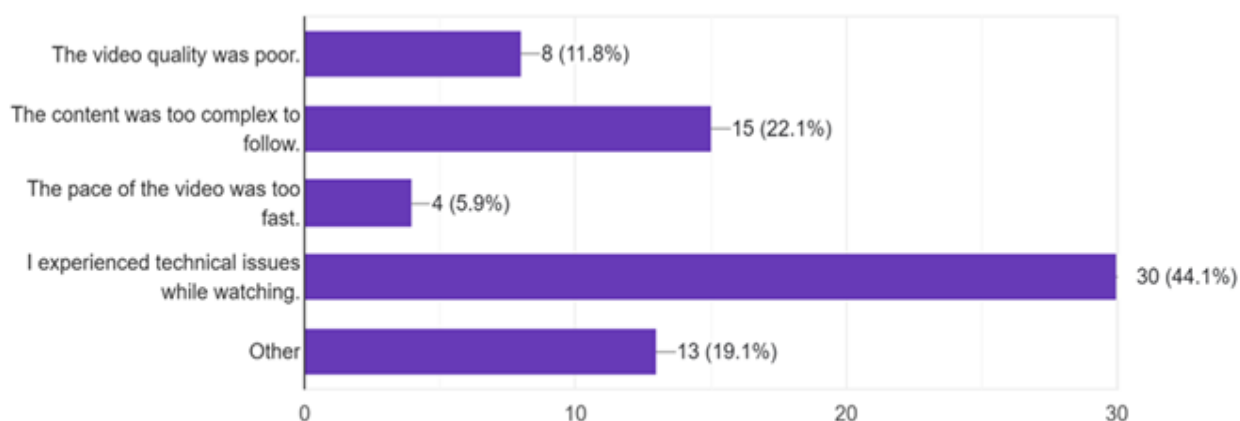

Figure 3. Weakness of videos

Further It was observed that out of 78 responses, 60.3% of the students stated videos were easy to understand and it makes learning more engaging. Further, they stated that the video content was directly linked with the printed course materials.

The study revealed that 97% of the sample found the videos uploaded on OULMS under the course SNU5338 were very useful for them. 71.6% of

the sample stated that the videos have helped them to understand the concepts better and 74% mentioned that the video material is highly informative.
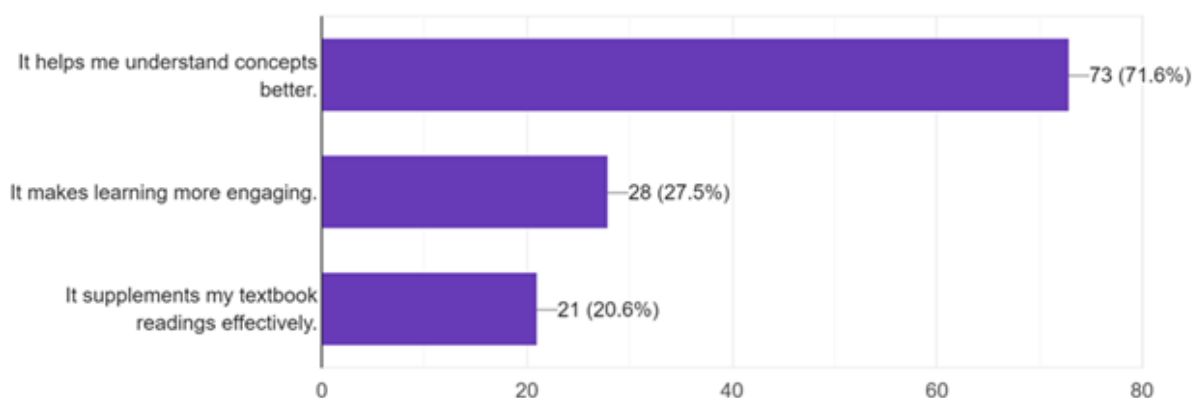

Figure 4. Benefits of videos

Based on the interviews conducted with the academics it was identified that these video materials supported the BEd(Hons) SNE students to understand the complex concepts related to the course SNU5338.

Furthermore, academics stated that incorporating video resources enhanced student engagement in learning. For instances,
"…Videos are very versatile, and all agreed that videos are super handy for students…"(Academic A).
" *It was easy for us to manage dayschool sessions when students come prepared for Dayschools after watching such videos" (Academic B)*
"…This new approach with videos is great because it means students can learn even while they're busy with other things…"(Academic C)
These videos are very attractive and used simple language .The visuals to support the concepts carets to different learning styles" (Academic D)
"….I wish these videos should incorporate with all three language, even subtitles you can include …."(Academic E)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION
The study revealed that the majority of the BEd(Hons) SNE students used video materials uploaded in the SNU5338 course for their learning and video material uploaded in OULMS helped them to understand the concepts better and the videos were found to be very effective. Academics also supported the fact that the videos uploaded in OULMS for the course SNU5338 were very attractive, time saving, used a novel approach, suitable for the busy lifestyle and they provided overall support for learning. A few informants felt that the videos incorporated in the course SNU5338 did not cater to their learning needs and quality should be improved.
Therefore, it can be recommended that more video materials should be incorporated into all the courses in the BEd(Hons) SNE programme. Hence, the department of SNE must take immediate steps to prepare more relevant quality videos and upload them on OULMS. In addition, it is recommended to include subtitles to make it more beneficial for students in Sinhala, Tamil and English media.

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