

A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON ONLINE AND ONCLASS TEACHING MODES TO LEARN SCIENCE FOR GRADE 7 STUDENTS

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Due to the current COVID-19 outbreak, the worldwide school students' education has been dropped in a considerable way. With that, the traditional on-class teaching learning mode has to shift to an online mode. That has affected students' academic related activities, mentality, teacher-student relationship, and student-student relationship. This situation emerged with computer-based learning as the closest substitute instead of the on-class mode. The purpose of this comparative study was to find the most effective teaching-learning mode between online and on-class modes to teach science for grade 7 students. This scientific study is based on both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Data were gathered from 30 students of grade 7 at a 1AB school in the Kalutara Zone, Western Province. To collect data, the researcher used the scores of six different unit test papers, the previous two science term test results, answers to a Google form questionnaire, interviews and observations. The quantitative data was analyzed using Microsoft Excel and Origin 6 data analysis and graphing software. Qualitative data was analyzed through thematic analysis. According to the results of this study, it has revealed that most of the respondents preferred to learn science via on-class mode due to their bad experiences with online learning. This online mode has negatively affected students' unit test scores that have been given under three lessons. These tests results and the students' views, perceptions, and preferences that have been collected through a questionnaire have provided evidence to confirm that the junior secondary students are willing to learn science subjects through an on-class teaching learning mode. But 19.3% of them accepted some positive factors of the online mode due to its easiness to use from anywhere, flexibility, and less time-consuming to answer for online examinations etc. Moreover, some students' proficiency levels have affected their unit test scores when the teaching learning mode is online or on-class.

Keywords: *Online teaching learning mode; On-class teaching learning mode, Proficiency level; Students' perception, COVID - 19*