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Research Paper Title: **e – Proctored Exam in ODL**

Name of the author: **Asma Ramzan**

Designation: **Lecturer**

Official contact address: **M.C.E. Society's Junior College of Education,**

 Azam Campus, Pune – 1.

Contact number: **9764430647**

e-mail ID: asmaramzan29@gmail.com

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby would like to explicitly state the research article titled

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Name: **Asma Ramzan**

Date: 15th November, 2021.

e- Proctored Exams in ODL

Asma Ramzan [a],*

(M.Sc., M.A., M.Ed.)

Lecturer

M.C.E. Society's Junior College of Education [a]

Abstract:

With the sudden increase in online distance learning and the need to ensure academic integrity universities have adopted different e-proctoring technologies to monitor online exams. During the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular, the rapid digital transformation has been astounding. Colleges have been racing to obtain a good online proctored tool to maintain the integrity of their education system. This paper will contribute to an understanding of the holistic experience of using e-proctoring tools, especially during a crisis. This paper will give educational bodies insights into how to use these tools to enhance the richness of assessments and foster their integrity.

Key words: e- proctoring, online distance learning, holistic, assessment, integrity.

Introduction:

The development of information and communication technology has reshaped our education system. Schools and universities are challenged to

introduce e- learning innovation in their teaching, learning and administrative processes. The transitional shift to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic has occurred on an unproven, uncorroborated and unprecedented scale. However, this shift has its own challenges. As online learning surfaces as the new model of contemporary education across the globe, it gives conventional higher education institutions an opportunity for growth and the ability to expand their course offerings, but ensuring exam integrity in the online environment is becoming a major challenge to many higher educational institutions. The pandemic also created a surge in demand for exam proctoring tools. Examinations are vital and indispensable for any educational program, where well designed, reliable, secured proctoring and unprejudiced, non-deceptive graded exams are an essential part in the education process, and online educational programs are no exception.

e- proctored Examination:

Its Meaning: What is an e – proctored exam?

The online proctor can watch students during online exams by accessing their webcams, screens and microphones to ensure that students are complying with the rules. Usually, the online proctor is associated with an artificial intelligence system that analyses students' movements and their environment to decide whether to mark up the potential cheating behaviour. Online proctoring services help to curb student cheating by including restricted browser modes, video/screen monitoring, local network traffic analysis and eye tracking. Also, students are required to maintain both an audio and visual connection to the proctor throughout the exam duration and must first verify their identity too.

Online Proctored Exam Process:

During the online proctored exam, the technological devices and equipments replace various human interventions and mediation. The student will be informed electronically about the date and time of the online exam. The student is required to setup and check the proctoring devices. Students' information and exam questions are already available in the system. The server side stores the identification data of all students and their important behaviour change status including facial expression, eye and mouth movement and speech. The browser side collects and analyses multimodal data of the student who is writing the online test and transfers the student's most important data to the server. Real time face recognition and voice detection are implemented with the support of the software. When the exam starts, student has to log into the system and the timer starts. The students start to answer and the proctor (artificial
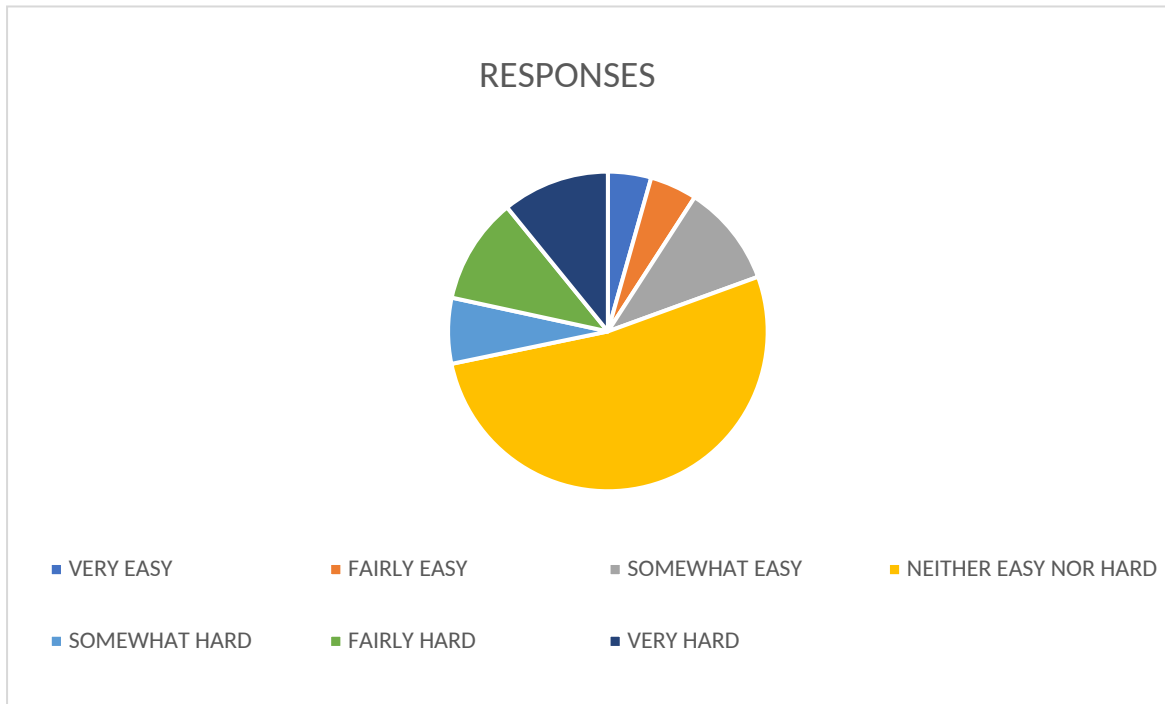
intelligence) keeps monitoring them. In the absence of cheating attempt, the exam goes on until the time is up. Otherwise, the system will add the cheating attempt to the log file, which is reviewed by the exam committee. At times, the system may automatically log off the student if some suspicious moves are detected. The system corrects the answers submitted automatically and the result is then displayed by the evaluation system.

Related literature on online proctored exams:

According to a research paper in 'International Journal for Educational Integrity' by A. Reedy, D. Pfitzner, L. Rook, L. Ellis, titled - Responding to the COVID – 19 emergency: Student and academic staff perceptions of academic integrity in the transition to online exams at three Australian universities, students' responses were noted on a 7 – point Likert scale, about their perception of ease of

cheating in online proctored exam in comparison to traditional invigilated exams. More than half of the students perceived that there was no difference in the ease of cheating between a traditional invigilated exam and an online proctored exam. The responses of the students are as shown in the diagram.

Traditional vs Online Proctoring examination features:

- While the traditional examination system involves more human intervention, online system relies more on technology which essentially requires high speed internet connection.

- Traditional examination system is more time consuming while evaluation by online exam systems is quite rapid.

- Online proctored exams require proctoring devices that need to be tested before the exam

which is not required in traditional exam practices.

- Traditional exam systems demand a lot of manual work and more human resources for its administration while proctored online exams require IT experts and software engineers for its preparation.

- Compared to traditional exam system, online exams reduce time and paper work and minimizes errors in evaluation. Also in online proctored exams, there is no risk of loss of answer scripts or chances of mis-evaluation.

- Traditional exam practices require physical presence of students at the examination centre, while using the online proctored exam mode students can appear for the exam from any corner of the world.

Challenges faced in e- proctored exams:

Since online proctoring relies heavily on the usage of advanced technologies, it becomes essential that these tools are made available everywhere. In remote areas where there is very less technological development, administering exams via online mode becomes difficult. Students suffer if they belong to areas where internet connection is unstable. Students and teachers in rural areas are not well-versed with technology handling and have limited access to e-gadgets.

Development and installation of examination access tools, proctoring devices and evaluation software is expensive and needs IT experts. Moreover, use of technological tools and access devices like computers, laptop, Android mobile phones, webcam, internet connection, etc. adds to the cost of conducting these online exams.

At a certain point, proctoring still requires human intervention in order to review cheating logs. It also needs security software and backup plans.

Conclusion:

As more students enroll in e-learning courses, the need for exam proctoring to provide a quality educational experience and maintain academic rigor rises in importance. This technology validates students' identities and flag suspicious activities during the exam to discourage cheating. The government officials in the education field should utilize educational funds in digital transformation of education system which has become the need of today. Academicians, education policymakers should use multiple strategies like live proctoring, 360° camera, etc. to support online proctored examination system to overcome the

difficulties and establish reliability and credibility of such exams.

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