

**Attitude towards Online Learning/Teaching in Anatomy during
COVID-19 Pandemic Period among Pre-Clinical Students in
Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya**

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Covid-19 pandemic related University closure resulted in faculties moving quickly towards online education. The Department of Anatomy, University of Peradeniya, initiated its online teaching course for undergraduates late in March 2020. This survey was conducted to assess the attitudes and barriers faced by students during the online anatomy course. A questionnaire was designed using available feedback questionnaires from the faculty and the net consisting of 5-point Likert scale questions, which was pilot tested and finalized. It was distributed via Google-forms to 185 second-year students who had undergone 2 semesters of online teaching. A total of 115 Google-forms were received. Females represented 50.9%, with a mean age of 21.9±1.022 years. Smartphones (86%) tablets (68.4%) and laptops (41.2%) were used to access online material in combination. Mobile data was the commonest (79.8%) method used for internet access. Online learning tool usage was, Moodle-98.2% Zoom-94.7% and Youtube-66.7%. Attitudes towards online learning were positive with 77.2% finding this mode of teaching effective during the pandemic. Prior preparation for teaching sessions was as high as 97.4% and 81.6% claimed that they actively participated in the online sessions. Majority preferred Moodle (81.74%) for online lectures while for gross practical sessions it was Moodle (80.87%) and YouTube (41.74%). For histology practical sessions 89.57% and slide projections 82.74% preferred Moodle. For tutorials (70.44%) and question discussions (76.52%) majority preferred real time Zoom sessions. Of the respondents 57.9% feared lack of direct anatomy learning might have an impact on their clinical knowledge in future. The main problems of online learning were identified as lack of self-motivation, lack of onsite practical sessions, and prolonged screen time. Even though most students preferred onsite learning to online learning (70.5%) the attitude towards online learning appears to be mostly positive during the pandemic.

Keywords: COVID-19, Anatomy, Pre-clinical, Online learning/teaching, Medical education