

Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research



In Association With



Dev Samaj College of Education for Women, Ferozepur, Punjab

Published Proceedings of National Level Webinar on Covid- 19 Pandemic: Impact and Challenges before Higher Education Sponsored by ICSSR,

New Delhi

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COVID-19 ON EDUCATION SYSTEM: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Abstract

The spread of pandemic Covid-19 has drastically disrupted every aspects of human life including education. It has created an unprecedented test on education. In many educational institutions around the world, campuses are closed and teaching-learning has moved online. Internationalization has slowed down considerably. In India, about 32 crore learners stopped to move schools/colleges and all educational activities brought to an end. Despite of all these challenges, the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have reacted positively and managed to ensure the continuity of teaching-learning, research and service to the society with some tools and techniques during the pandemic. This article highlights on major impacts of Covid-19 on HEIs in India. Within a short span of the COVID-19 pandemic, many researchers have shared their works on teaching and learning in different ways. Several schools, colleges and universities have discontinued face-to-face teachings. There is a fear of losing 2020 academic year or even more in the coming future. The need of the hour is to innovate and implement alternative educational system and assessment strategies. The COVID-19 pandemic has provided us with an opportunity to pave the way for introducing digital learning. COVID-19 has revealed vulnerabilities; it has also surfaced extraordinary human resourcefulness and potential. This is a time for pragmatism and quick action, but it is also a moment when more than ever we cannot abandon scientific evidence. Nor can we operate without principles. Choices must be based on a humanistic vision of education and development and human rights frameworks.

Keywords: COVID -19, Education System, Challenges, Opportunities.

Introduction

Toward the end of December 2019, an obscure emergence of viral pneumonia was first showed up in Wuhan, China, and recognized as a novel corona virus called severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) and had broaden around the world very rapidly .The side effects are fever, discomfort, hack, and loss of taste or smell which resolve in a couple of days in few cases; but may progress to respiratory distress and organ failure. Person-to-person transmission of SARS-CoV-2 was found to occur through respiratory globules or fomites when individuals are in close contact with a tainted human. Regardless of this, other modes, for example, airborne transmission and contaminated utensil-contact transmission are additionally guessed. The Director

General WHO (World Health Organization) on 30 January, 2020 announced that the episode of COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019), sets up a general wellbeing crisis of worldwide concern and issued temporary recommendations under the International Health Regulations. Looking at the COVID-19 trend in India, the first novel corona virus or SARS-Cov-2 infection was accounted for on January 30, 2020, and cases increased to three by February 3, 2020. The day onwards, the quantity of infected cases is ceaselessly expanding, in this way to handle the circumstance the Govt. of India called for a Janta Curfew of one day and thereafter declared complete lockdown to break the chain of corona virus transmission. India's reaction to COVID-19 has been pre-emptive, proactive, favorable to dynamic, and evaluated with an elevated level of political responsibility and an 'entire Government' way to deal and react to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Teaching and Learning in Times of Crisis

The teaching and learning process assumes a different shape in times of crisis. When disasters and crises (man-made and natural) occur, schools and colleges need to be resilient and find new ways to continue the teaching–learning activities. One emerging reality as a result of the world health crisis is the migration to online learning modalities to mitigate the risk of face-to-face interaction. Universities are forced to migrate from face-to-face delivery to online modality as a result of the pandemic. When online learning modality is used as a result of the pandemic, the gap between those who have connectivity and those without widened. The continuing academic engagement has been a challenge for teachers and students due to access and internet connectivity.

Considering the limitation on connectivity, the concept of flexible learning emerged as an option for online learning especially in higher institutions in the Philippines. Flexible learning focuses on giving students choice in the pace, place, and mode of students' learning which can be promoted through appropriate pedagogical practice. The learners are provided with the option on how he/she will continue with his/her studies, where and when he/she can proceed, and in what ways the learners can comply with the requirements and show evidences of learning outcomes. Flexible learning and teaching span a multitude of approaches that can meet the varied needs of diverse learners. These include “independence in terms of time and location of learning, and the availability of some degree of choice in the curriculum (including content, learning strategies, and assessment) and the use of contemporary information and communication technologies to support a range of learning strategies”

The Role of Technology in Learning Continuity

Technology provides innovative and resilient solutions in times of crisis to combat disruption and helps people to communicate and even work virtually without the need for face-to-face interaction. This leads to many system changes in organizations as they adopt new technology for interacting and working. However, technological challenges like internet connectivity especially for places without signals can be the greatest obstacle in teaching and learning continuity especially for academic institutions that have opted for online learning as a teaching

modality. Thus, the alternative models of learning during the pandemic should be supported by a well-designed technical and logistical implementation plan.

Pedagogy for Continuing Education through Online

Lockdown and social distancing measures due to the COVID-19 pandemic have led to closures of schools, training institutes and higher education facilities in most countries. There is a paradigm shift in the way educators deliver quality education—through various online platforms. The online learning, distance and continuing education have become a panacea for this unprecedented global pandemic, despite the challenges posed to both educators and the learners. Transitioning from traditional face-to-face learning to online learning can be an entirely different experience for the learners and the educators, which they must adapt to with little or no other alternatives available. The education system and the educators have adopted “Education in Emergency” through various online platforms and are compelled to adopt a system that they are not prepared for. E-learning tools have played a crucial role during this pandemic, helping schools and universities facilitate student learning during the closure of universities and schools. While adapting to the new changes, staff and student readiness needs to be gauged and supported accordingly. The learners with a fixed mindset find it difficult to adapt and adjust, whereas the learners with a growth mindset quickly adapt to a new learning environment. There is no one-size-fits-all pedagogy for online learning. There are a variety of subjects with varying needs. Different subjects and age groups require different approaches to online learning. Online learning also allows physically challenged students with more freedom to participate in learning in the virtual environment, requiring limited movement.

Online Teaching-Learning Adoption: An Opportunity

The ongoing pandemic changed the extremely conventional, chalk–talk education model to new ambitious web-based innovation and technology. This unsettling influence in the conveyance of schooling is pushing policymakers to sort out how to drive responsibility at scale while ensuring complete e-learning action plans and taking care of the advanced digital devices. It has allowed growing as good as ever proficient aptitudes/information through internet learning more effectively and beneficially Internet erudition is the most excellent arrangement amid the current pandemic circumstance. Along these lines, the computerized India vision of the legislature is rising as an imperative apparatus for illuminating the current emergency because of Covid-19. Technology-based instruction is more straightforward with all regard. Keeping in view of pandemic challenges, the Universities and Schools being closed as per the legislature of India, just as state governments and private players have attempted legitimate activities (The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has made a couple of strategies, including on the web entries and education channels through Direct to Home TV, Radios for understudies to continue learning. For the duration of the lockdown, understudies scholars and students are utilizing famous web-based media apparatuses like WhatsApp, Zoom, Google meets, Telegram,

Youtube live, Facebook live, and so forth for the online teaching-learning system. A multi-pronged technique is critical to manage the crisis and assemble a strong Indian education structure eventually.

Diksha platform contains e-Learning content for students, teachers, and parents adjusted to the educational program, including video works out, worksheets, course readings, and assessments. Under the direction of Central Board Secondary Education (CBSE) and National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), the substance has been made by more than 250 teachers who educate in various vernaculars. The app is available to use in offline mode also. It has in excess of 80,000 digital books for classes 1 to 12 made by CBSE, NCERT in numerous dialects. Other than Diksha, different platforms like the National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER) entrance give a large group of assets to understudies, and educators in numerous dialects are including books, intelligent modules, and

recordings including a large group of STEM-based games. Swayam is the public online training stage facilitating 1900 courses covering both school (classes 9 to 12) and advanced education (under alumni, postgraduate projects) in all subjects including designing, humanities and sociologies, law, and the board courses. Swayam Prabha has thirty two direct to home television (DTH TV) channels sending instructive substance on twenty four hours by seven days premises. These channels are accessible for surveys all over the nation utilizing DD (Doordarshan) free dish set top box and antenna. The e-PG Pathshala is dedicated to postgraduate understudies and they can utilize this platform for digital books, online courses, and study resources during the lockdown period and ongoing public health emergency.

Further, there is a need to create comprehensive learning arrangements, particularly for the most powerless and underestimated. With a speedy augmentation of versatile web customers in India, which is needed to show up at 85% nuclear families by 2024, development is enabling ubiquitous access and personalization of guidance even in the remotest bits of the country. This can change the coaching structure and augment the suitability of learning and educating, giving understudies and teachers different choices to investigate Educational institutions of India have acknowledged the demands and are making an honest effort to offer consistent help administrations to the students during the pandemic. Pandemic has accelerated the adoption of advanced innovations to deliver education. Instructive organizations moved towards a mixed method of learning. It supported all educators and students to turn out to be more innovative and insightful. The utilization of learning the board frameworks by educational institutions turned into an incredible interest. The use of a soft copy of the learning material has improved. There is a gigantic demand for open and distance learning courses

Challenges in Adopting Online Teaching-Learning

Besides the willingness of a larger part of educators and students in schools and other educational foundations towards utilization of different computerized and E-learning platforms, the most well-known difficulties looked by both understudies and instructors are technical issues, interruptions and time management, staying

motivated, understanding course expectations, absence of in-person interaction, adjusting to innovation and vulnerability about the future. Indeed, fundamental e-learning components are absent, for example, PCs, power, skills, and dynamic cooperation of students and instructors in distant and not so developed regions of the country. The greatest challenge most likely sets in guaranteeing that specific preconditions are required for e-learning, for example, admittance to ICT apparatuses and network foundation. Orienting the perception of instructors and students in favor of e-learning and persuading them to acknowledge it is additionally also very crucial. Another perspective that should be taken care of is the specialized competency of the individuals which will connect with the e-learning scheme. One of the most widely recognized issues revealed by both the partners is that there were no experts to prepare them in the utilization of e-learning stages and that there was insufficient preparation when it went to the utilization of the innovation. The cost of getting, overseeing, and keeping up ICT Infrastructure has been recognized as a significant hindrance in the course of action and determination of e-Learning by organizations and academic bodies. A portion of the elements, for example, inadequately prepared lecture rooms and absence of power have frustrated the organization and the resulting selection of e-adapting, particularly in rustic and remote territories. Further absence of a legitimate e-learning educational program is a significant boundary to the successful sending and reception of e-learning. Another course issue is the conveyance method of the course. The factor concerns whether understudies ought to be permitted to pick the mode of content delivery.

Educators who are deficiently prepared in their subjects, and have next to zero PC experience are a block to a successful organization and reception of online learning in institutions. The blending of ICT advances would necessitate noteworthy pre-administration and in-administration instructors preparing in fundamental PC proficiency just as how to educate with e-learning advances for powerful sending and reception of e-learning in educational institutes. Specialized aptitudes are a huge part of the execution and incorporation of e-learning innovations in the instruction framework. Establishment, accessibility of the most recent technologies, quick web association, continuous delivery of electric power, up to date maintenance, organizational administration, security, and lack of skilled technical assistance are different big issues.

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