



Consequences of Covid-19 On Higher Education

Ambhore Pooja S., Shinde Mira D.

M.Sc. Home Science (Foods Science), Department of Food Science and Nutrition, College of Community Science, VNMKV, Parbhani, Maharashtra, India

ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the whole world. Specially, pandemic COVID-19 impacted significantly on the education sector. It forced all worlds to enforce lockdown therewith bringing everything to sudden stop for certain period of time. COVID -19 pandemic is a huge challenge to education systems. Education system have been fighting and find the way to survive in this critical situation like changes in teaching learning and innovate various technologies have been completely changed by this crises. Hence, current study focus on the effect of COVID-19 pandemic on the student teacher and ultimately on higher education.

Key words: COVID-19, pandemic, lockdown, teaching, learning, higher education

I. INTRODUCTION

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) classified the corona virus (COVID-19) as a pandemic, due to the increase in cases of individuals who have contracted the virus worldwide (Roy 2020). This pandemic has made the world to observe social distancing in the public space. COVID-19 was first identified in Wuhan, China and then it gradually started spreading in other parts of the world. It has claimed millions of lives across the world. According to the UNESCO report more than 90% of total student population in the world was affected due to the pandemic during the initial phase of its outbreak. It has caused a serious and very deep impact on the social, economic and also psychological life of people in different parts of the world. Economies are collapsing in rapid pace and massive unemployment and recession will follow in the near future. Worldwide the governing bodies, educational institutions, public and private organizations, all are affected and radically changed their way of functioning within weeks and unfortunately, might be for longer run too (Saha et al. 2021). The guidelines that were issued by the WHO which were ratified by the most of the countries across the world forced the governments to shut down the institutions of mass gatherings (Tari and Amonkar 2021).

COVID-19 pandemic has changed the world much sooner than anyone could not have been imagined. COVID-19 pandemic has not stopped at national borders. It has affected people regardless of nationality, level of education, income or gender. But the same has not been true for its consequences, which have hit the most vulnerable hardest. The pandemic stopped international mobility in its tracks, leaving thousands of current students stranded, overturning the new unit arriving in countries that began their academic year in March, and

imposing what seems likely to be an online only start in many countries next academic year in August/September 2020 (Chan, 2020). So ultimately in this process all the educational institutions suffered a massive setback in India. All the educational institutions in India had to be shut down right from the primary schools to the universities. The regular classes were suspended citing threat to the lives of the learners and the teachers. It also affected the lives of the aspirants who were preparing for competitive & entrance exams. The outbreak of COVID-19 has forced many countries to enforce lockdowns that brought everything to a standstill including the teaching and learning process (Tari and Amonkar 2021). Today, very little is known about the COVID-19 effects on the higher education industry. The issue of the COVID-19 and its impact on the higher education industry is a growing topic of discussion worldwide (Fischer, 2020). Therefore, the COVID-19 pandemic impact on the student, teacher and education sector is discussed in this study with following objectives.

II. OBJECTIVES

The present study is focused on the following objectives

1. To highlight the impact of COVID-19 on higher education
2. To examine the effect of COVID -19 on learning methods.
3. To identify the different aspects for significant learning.

1. COVID impact on Higher Education

Around the second week of March 2020, state government across the country began to shut down the schools, colleges due to COVID-19. As we all know that this was the crucial time for students as different University, college examination are usually held during this period and also different entrance test of various universities and competitive examinations were to be held during this period. And since there found to be no immediate solution to prevent the outbreak of COVID 19, college, school and university closure had to be made compulsory to prevent the spread of virus. It has affected more than 285 million young learners in India. This closure of educational institutions disrupted the structure of learning; assessment and examination which made the Indian education system go through an irreversible teaching & learning crisis. And therefore sudden shift was made from traditional face to face classroom method to the online mode of education. It just became like the yesterday's disruptors became today's survivor. Online method was considered as the threat but today it has come to rescue. However there were several issues that also started coming up along with the introduction of online mode of teaching in higher educational institutions (Tari and Amonkar 2021).

2. COVID impact on the student

Students had to face severe problem as they were not aware of the future examination especially students who were in the final year and also those who were to answer entrance test. One of the significant question arises regarding online learning that whether it is effective or not. However answer is that it is effective for those who have right access to the technology. In the country like India all students cannot be expected to have all the required facilities due to different socio-economic background which might cause discomfort and frustration to students which might give the student the feeling of segregation and thus create digital divide between the rich who can avail all the facilities and the poor who cannot afford to purchase the equipment's that are required for E-Learning. So in India lot of people are not completely well equipped with all the

facilities and many times they cannot get access to fast internet which is needed at the time of Teaching & learning process. Therefore India is still facing this challenge of digital divide. Lack of student involvement during the online classes has increased absenteeism and poor performance. Unfortunately student's passive role in the classroom became one of the significant reason for ineffective online teaching and learning process (Tari and Amonkar 2021). Students' mental health is greatly affected when faced with a public health emergency, and they need attention, assistance, and support from the community, family, and tertiary institutions. It is recommended that the government and schools should collaborate to solve this problem in order to provide crisis-oriented psychological services that are of high quality and timely bad character to students (Khodabakhshi-koolae 2020).

3. Online education platform

From a positive perspective, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced governments and educational policy makers, at all levels of education, to take immediate action to optimize implementing e-learning systems during the Covid-19 global pandemic (Godber and Atkins 2021). Internet plays very vital role for better learning and for higher education. Mobile applications or virtual meeting platforms like Zoom, Google meet became the virtual meeting hubs. Educational institutions directed teachers to engage classes through online mode using the virtual meeting platforms like Zoom & Google meet. The teachers who were not well versed with modern technology and mobile applications had to struggle a lot to engage online classes due to the sudden shift from face to face teaching to online teaching. Some teachers were just conducting classes because they were asked to do so. A lot of students were just joining the classes to mark themselves present. They hardly paid attention towards what was being taught by the teacher as the factor like class control doesn't exist on these virtual platforms (Tari and Amonkar 2021).

4. Initiatives taken by the policymakers to make the educational system learner friendly

Though COVID-19 created many negative impacts on education, at the same time it has brought new dimension to the teaching learning process in India. Though there are many drawbacks of online learning, it became survivor during the worst situation in the country. It enhanced the digital literacy. People started learning and using digital technology. Electronic media was used for sharing information worldwide. Students and teacher got good opportunities to interact with different people around the globe improving the communication. Students preferred Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode of learning as it encourages self-learning. The HEIs also gave their positive response by adopting different strategies during this crisis situation. UGC, MHRD also have made available teaching and learning materials for students to motivate learning. Some of the digital initiatives have proved to be very effective during the COVID crisis. Some of them are listed below:

E-Gyankosh, - One of the initiative taken by national government to shae digital learning resources which is developed by the open and distance learning institutions in the country. Study material is also made available for the students.

Gyandhara- It is internet service where students can listen live discussions made by experts and also can interact with them through telephonic conversation E-Adhyayan.

Swayam- It is said that SWAYAM covers over 1900 courses are available which covers school and higher education.

DISHTAVO- Dishtavo was especially developed during the COVID crises. The main Motto of this platform is to create a repository of the e-content as in step with the prescribed syllabus by the Goa University. The principle cause is to provide the students with lectures both in online mode as well as in offline mode. Students can directly watch the lecture videos and download the reading material related to it from the DISHTAVO portal if they have access to the internet. If they do not have access to the internet then they can ask the college to provide them with the lecture videos which they can copy in their pen drive & take those videos at home. This initiative of the government of Goa has in the true sense changed the nomenclature of teaching and learning process. Those who miss out lot of things that are taught during online classes due to various reasons can watch the videos of the lectures from the DISHTAVO portal. Secondly this platform has strengthened the educational system or one can say that it has made educational system immune against the serious challenges arising from pandemic or disastrous situations like this. Development and change is one of the inevitable part of human life however during the pandemic people had to accept sudden change as it became necessary for the survival. It encouraged personalized learning which in long run will be beneficial for qualitative teaching and learning process. It also facilitate improvement in collaborative work (Tari and Amonkar 2021).

III. CONCLUSION

This study highlights the various impacts of Covid-19 on higher education in India. The COVID-19 pandemic created an opportunity for change in pedagogical approaches and introduction of virtual education in all levels of education. The world gradually moves towards the online/virtual education due to the demand of the current crisis. Combination of the traditional technologies (radio, TV, landline phones) with mobile/web technologies to a single platform with all depositories would enhance better accessibility and flexibility to education. This would involve upgrading the service platform to enable it to meet the required volume of educational demands of students. The post Covid-19 education seems to be an education with widely accepted online/virtual education which may perhaps be a parallel system of education. Online mode of learning can be the best mode of teaching if it can be accessed by all the sections of the society however it can pose threat if certain section of society cannot avail this facility and thus exclusion. It is therefore important to take cognizance of online education and plan for interventions that will prioritize greater inclusivity, connectivity and equitability. It is important that colleges and University understands the experience and issues of the students and prepare according the further and design the study pattern in such a way that all students benefits.

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