

## THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON EDUCATION: ONLINE LEARNING AND ITS EFFECTS

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### Abstract

The pandemic COVID -19 has drastically affected every aspect of man's life, including academic activities. In academic's COVID caused an unprecedented disruption and the education has changed dramatically, with the distinctive rise of e- learning, whereby teaching is undertaken remotely and on digital platform. The COVID-19 has resulted in educational institutions shut all across the world. Globally, over 1.2 billion students are out of the class room. Research suggests that online learning has been shown to increase retention of information, and take less time, meaning the changes corona virus have caused might be here to stay. There are several challenges faced by the online education likes one students without reliable internet access and/or technology struggle to participate in digital learning; this gap is seen across countries and between income brackets within countries. The journal pointing out the online platforms, technical requirements, skills required for teacher and learner and impact of online teaching and learning.

**Keywords:** Covid-19, Education, skills, Information, Web, OBE

### Introduction

After Second World War, the COVID-19 pandemic is considered as the most crucial global health calamity and the greatest challenge that faced by the humankind. Pandemics in general are not merely serious public health concern, rather these trigger disastrous socio- economic and political crises in the infected countries. In December 2019, a new infectious respiratory disease emerged in Wuhan, China. It was named by the World Health Organization as COVID-19. The emergence COVID-19 in China has caused a large global outbreak and is a major public health issue. The whole educational system from elementary to tertiary level

has been collapsed during the lockdown period of the novel corona virus disease 2019 not only in India but across the globe. As the COVID-19 pandemic spreads, there has been an increasing move towards teaching online because of shutting down of schools, colleges and universities for an indefinite time as the only option left. Therefore, the world started to gravely rethink, revamp and redesign our education system in much demanding need of unprecedented current situation. Hence the world itself shifted to online education, due to the COVID-19 crisis. Teachers and students both felt compelled to embrace the digital academic experience. Besides, online teaching mode is providing the feeling of psychological safety to learning community in COVID-19 afflicting period. Previously, e-learning, distance education and correspondence courses were popularly considered as the part of non-formal education, but as of now, it seems that it would gradually replace the formal education system if the circumstances enduringly persist over the time. Several online platforms and applications helped teachers and their students to teach and learn through video conference and sharing lectures and notes. The video conferences are made available through ZOOM, Google Meet etc. Some of the most popular online communication platforms that would change the destination and direction of the whole education system across the world in post-COVID-19 circumstances are Google Classroom, Udemy, Start.me, Neo, Classtime, Classwize, Ted-Ed, Coursera, Skillshare, ClassDojo, Edmodo, and many more De- schooling society seems relevant as the current scenario tries to keep our children away from the traditional formal education system and provide an opportunity to flourish on their curiosity.

There are so many difficulties felt in the implementation of the change process in the education system that has been arisen after COVID-19 crisis. These difficulties are related with the novel perspectives of online education and their technological complexities. Later the world gets adapted to the changing education systems. Everyone, either teachers or students, were friendly skilled in using social media app viz. WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, which turned into smooth facilitation of using online educational platforms such as ZOOM, Cisco WebEx, Google Meet etc. as a sign of positive transfer of learning. Also, there are useful educational apps such as Office 365, Google classroom and much more user-friendly video conferencing app that can be downloaded free of cost and easy to use. Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization of education has been deteriorated remarkably due to limited mobility and limitedly confined exchange programs of academic

activities among the countries during the COVID-19 lockdown.

### **Online Teaching – Teachers’s Perspective**

The Covid – 19 pandemics replaced the traditional mode of education to online education. With schools and colleges closed indefinitely, a viable alternative to classroom teaching has to be evolved. When face-to-face classrooms are not possible, online teaching, especially for higher classes, is an obvious option. Technology, that we have come to increasingly rely on, has an uncanny propensity to make life’s challenges easier or more complicated based on who handles it. This is true of online teaching as well. In the Indian context, where technology is still a far cry for a large chunk of our student population and teachers can only record their teaching and send it by email to the students. This is likely the scenario in a vast majority of our schools. Teachers will have no students sitting in front of them to get feedback or get a sense of how their teaching is being received. To imagine a class and emote as if a class is in front of you is not easy. One has to rely entirely on the subject one handles in order to emote appropriately. This needs tremendous effort, which is yet another challenge. Thus online teaching is a new ball game altogether. Online teaching requires more effort in terms of preparation than conventional teaching.

We need to exercise precision in thinking and economy in words. Clarity is the proverbial hallmark of a teacher, whatever the mode of teaching. So, one should be loud enough to be heard clearly. The teacher’s voice, modulation, pause, emphasis on certain words or statements etc. are all essential elements here. The body language of the teacher, including one’s gestures, facial expression and relaxed appearance establishes an instant ‘connect’ with the students. Teachers should build their confidence by practicing in front of their colleagues. Peer review of lessons will be a useful method to improve one’s presentation skills. Yet another challenge for teachers is their exposure to parents and others. The classroom was always the teacher’s kingdom, rarely overseen by others, but in the present scenario, there is visibility and transparency. A teacher’s mannerisms and weakness in terms of language, factual correctness might be magnified by those who are keen to find fault with teachers. The teaching community should approach online teaching with seriousness to ensure that we win the confidence of the students. Teachers need to find ways and means to improve online teaching and make it an effective alternative, as it will be the ‘new normal’ for some time and should go ahead with confidence and hope. Teachers are still the hope of the new generation

of students.

### **Online Teaching – Student's Perspective**

The online education is better opportunities for all the students to study from home itself, in a comfortable environment. They are entirely free from the busy life of studies. The advent of online learning in tertiary education has changed the way students interact with institutions and undertake their studies. All students interact with their courses through an online learning environment. While online learning environments can be evaluated in a number of ways, the perceptions of the key users and their levels of satisfaction with the online learning environment are important measures. All students were enthusiastic about learning in such an online environment. The main advantages are the flexibility that it provides and the ability to study when it suits students. The disadvantages include technical issues such as speed of access, and the need to participate regularly. There are several advantages for online education in students perspective other than flexibility, like it provides self-paced learning, help students in better time management, provides self-motivation, improves virtual communication and collaboration etc. the online education helps students to work along with learning and to grow professionally. Additionally, students don't always feel comfortable asking professors to repeat a point they made in their last lecture or dive into deeper detail on a specific topic. This added flexibility allows online learners to move through the course work at their own speed and get the most out of the degree program. Online education will improves the time management skill in students. Because there are no set classroom times within an online degree program, and students have the flexibility to create their own schedules, it's up to the student to proactively reach out to faculty, complete assignments on time, and plan ahead.

Students in online programs come from across all over the world. Because of the ability to log on from any location, class discussions feature a broader range of perspectives, helping students enhance your own cross-cultural understanding. Students then not only have the opportunity to network with people from around the globe, but can also broaden their perspective and become more culturally aware. Being exposed to new ideas from professionals in other countries may spark creativity of your own creativity that can turn out to be valuable for your organization. Online learning facilitates the ability to think critically about what they do every day. The goal in the classroom is to challenge them to think

differently, and employers want them to do that, to think critically in their role at work. Mastering this skill is what will set them apart as a student, and as an employee. Critical thinking plays a role in any type of education; however, online learning forces students to develop their critical thinking skills in ways that they might not have practiced in an in-person classroom setting. This sort of self-paced and self-motivated learning demonstrates to future employers that they have the ability to think critically and overcome any obstacles that might stand in their way.

### **Online Assessments & Examinations**

Online assessments are online tests conducted with the purpose of evaluating, measuring, and documenting the academic readiness, learning progress, skill acquisition or educational needs of the test takers. In the past, assessments were usually given in paper printouts and had to be handed out manually. The use of online assessments saves institutions a lot of time and money. Often the assessments can be completed in less time, number of students can complete the online assessment at the same time and there is no need for specialized and expensive personnel. Also, the test takers are able to take the assessment during class, or at home, using their own devices. The results and answers can be provided soon after the exam and get instant feedback about the examination. That helps the teacher or trainer, to learn more about your students and adapt to their needs, strengths and weaknesses. An online examination system has plenty of advantages. It saves paper. Teachers never have to print an exam for their students and hand them out. Teacher can setup an exam in such a way that it will auto-grade itself. If they only use multiple choice questions they never have to check an exam again. The online exam system will take care of that hassle. Completely automated and saves time. The distribution of the exam doesn't take any time. Just upload the email addresses of students and send them an invite. And after the exam they get their result instantly. It saves you money and saves on the logistics. The students don't have to assemble in classroom to take the exam. They can do it within a given time frame from their own device. Not much can be said about the disadvantages of online assessments, since the advantages outweigh them by far. But there might be some, for example, you need to be computer literate in order to create and take an assessment. Technology is not always reliable; there might be connection or internet problems, energy breaks and other things like that. Also, there's a cost involved in online assessment software. Teachers have to keep in

mind that their students will take the exam on their own device in their own time with nobody to check up on them, so teachers have to alter the questions to provide for this situation. They have to ask questions which are not easily to be retrieved from books or the internet or can add a timer to each question so there is no time to search for the answer. Open text questions are possible, but they don't auto-grade. An online exam system is a little bit more susceptible for fraud. So teachers have to keep that in mind while setting up exam. Here are lots of reasons you want to use an online exam system, but the main reason is the overwhelming advantages you get from using such an online exam system instead of the good old fashioned paper exam. There are lots of reasons to use an online exam system, but the main reason is the overwhelming advantages form using such an online exam system instead of the good old fashioned paper exam.

### **Data Security and Quality Assurance in Online Education**

By the second week of March, state governments across the country began shutting down schools and colleges temporarily as a measure to control the spread of the corona virus. This is a crucial time for the education sector to conduct board examinations, nursery school admissions, entrance tests of various universities and competitive examinations, among others. As the days pass by with no immediate solution to stop the outbreak of Covid-19the classes and educational system is conducted in online mode. As an Internet-based learning method, online learning depends on the Internet for its execution. However, there are any number of illegal activities and security threats taking place on the Internet. Consequently, the e-learning environment is inevitably exposed to constant security threats, risks, and attacks. Unfortunately, many educational institutions are rushing into adopting online learning management systems without careful planning and without a thorough understanding of the security aspects of online learning.

In online learning, security means that learning resources are available and unimpaired to all authorized users when they are needed. Since online learning takes place via the internet, every element in an online learning system can be a potential target of hacking or attacks. This may lead to unauthorized modification or destruction of educational assets. Online learning must consider the inherent security risks on the Internet, such as identity theft, Security Risks and Protection in Online Learning impersonation, and inadequate authentication. Online learning systems have attracted the attention of cybercriminals who

thrive on their ability to hack into such systems. The risk is great; as the functionalities and features of online learning systems become more complex, online learning is increasingly exposed to security threats. Security is essential as a means to retain user's trust in the online learning environment because any risk can dramatically affect student's perceptions of a system's reliability and trustworthiness. The security risks inherent in online learning have not been seriously taken into account in an educational context. It may be that security issues have not caused as much damage in the realm of distance learning as they have in the business world. Since nothing serious about security has yet happened in the realm of online learning, not much attention has been paid to it in blog posts so far.

### **OBE Through Online Teaching & Learning**

In this rapidly changing world driven by globalization and knowledge economy there is need to produce qualified and skilled professionals. OBE is a powerful education strategy that should be used as a focus for curriculum planning, as a means of making informed discussions about the approaches to teaching and learning is adopted, and as a basis for the assessment of students/trainees and of the education Programme itself. Nowadays, companies hire those university graduates who not only have knowledge, but also have skills to be productive as well as effective in the workplace. To meet these challenges, higher education institutions worldwide started redesigning their academic strategies with the focus on the continuous improvement in the course curriculum and delivery of essential knowledge and skills to the students so that they are successful in this fast changing world. This academic strategy requires the involvement of teachers and students in the process of understanding, implementing and teaching. To support and coordinate these activities there is need for an organized computerized system to link all the course related activities including teaching, assessment and performance measurement. In order to meet this challenge in this pandemic time, most of the higher education institutions around the world are investing in new e-Learning tools for efficient and effective management of their teaching, learning and assessment.

### **Teacher Skill Sets in Online Education**

There are several excellent self-scoring assessments on the Web for students to assess their readiness for online learning, yet few for instructors and faculty planning to teach online.



The purpose of such questionnaires is to help students identify what skills they'll need to be successful, technical and soft skills such as self-direction, time management, etc. Teaching in an online course involves more than replicating classroom strategies in a different form. It requires a different approach one that focuses less on the amount of time students spend together in a particular place, and more on facilitating a distance community and on activities designed for students working individually. It's the mindset of a traditional education model that puts up the biggest barriers to instructors transitioning to teaching online. An extreme example of an instructor unable to adapt to a student-focused approach is from a MOOC. The different skills required for a teacher to teach online are:

***Technology and Social Media Skills:*** Technology skills are fundamental, and though social media skills not an essential, they enhance the instructor's ability to connect with students. Skills include basic computer skills, proficiency with software applications, installing/updating software and plug-ins, internet search literacy, proficiency with features and functions within the LMS including uploading files, grading tools and grade book, LMS tools for asynchronous/synchronous communication, familiarity with platforms for communication/engagement outside of LMS, e.g. Pinterest, Twitter, Google+.

***Administrative and Organization Skills:*** Includes skills such as time management example ability and willingness to respond to student questions with immediacy e.g. within 24 hours. It provide constructive feedback on student assignments in timely manner, proficiency with grade book and ability to submit grades by required and monitor/follow-up with academic integrity issues.

***Pedagogical Skills and Teaching Approach:*** It is a student focused learning model, instructor focus on supporting and guiding learning not delivering content and instruction, providing constructive feedback and establishing and sustaining online presence.

### **Learner Skill Sets In Online Education**

Successful distance learning students are self-disciplined, self-motivated, prepared, good readers, good organizers and have good time management skills. It may go without saying, but being a successful student also includes getting adequate sleep, eating healthy and drinking water, exercising, and overall prioritizing your time. In order to prepare yourself for online learning experience, the first step is to become orientated to how online learning



works. Be sure to complete Online Readiness Quiz to think about yourself as a learner, while evaluating your time management and technical skills.

### **Online Education: Cost Effectiveness**

The early studies on cost-effectiveness of open and distance education have shown that "distance education can be more cost-effective than face-to-face education and that costs are predominantly dependent upon student enrollment and the fixed costs of course development and delivery".

The Covid-19 pandemic has caused educational institutions worldwide to go online and an e-book must be cheaper than a regular book, some people feel that an online class must be cheaper. Others feel that online education is inadequate because of decreased human interaction. In the review of the effectiveness of online education suggest that reduced costs and increased revenue have been major factors in the drive towards online education, but many studies purport to show that online delivery modes produce educational outcomes are generally as effective as more traditional face-to-face modes. Some observations suggest that online education may produce improved educational outcomes through wider access to a variety of multimedia resources and information combined, surprisingly, with increased opportunities for interaction with other students and instructors.

Online learning is much more economical than traditional learning methods. In fact, online degrees cost almost a tenth of their offline counterparts. This is a crucial aspect in today's economy, where job losses and pay cuts are rampant. Students can rest assured that the economic blows dealt by the pandemic will not affect their education and, in turn, the future of their careers. The traditional learning method—rote learning followed by a degree is now almost rendered outdated. Today's students understand that hands-on learning and relevant practical industry training are far more valuable in building a successful career. As a result, the desire to learn from industry professionals is booming. Students believe that such experiences will help them prepare for employment more effectively than in a classroom with archaic lessons. Now that online education is the only viable option, a revolution is on the horizon. Millions of students who embrace e-learning during these difficult circumstances may stick to it even after the pandemic has passed. Online learning will be an intrinsic part of the new normal. It is a novel method of learning that has been steadily gaining momentum for a while, and by the looks of it, is here to stay.

### **Online Education: Certification**

Professional development for teachers, in any form, is an important aspect of becoming a well-rounded and experienced educator. The practice of continually developing one's skills as an educator is vital to creating a teaching workforce that is best suited to helping students from varying backgrounds. Examples of ways for educators to develop their skills might include interactive trainings put on by their school or district, workshops on fields like technology in education, or certification programs and short courses designed to provide a comprehensive overview of specific aspects of education. These education-specific courses might be the best option for those who want in-depth training on a subject of their choosing. As taking an in-person education course isn't within the realm of reality for the majority of busy working teachers, the most efficient option for those interested might be to explore online teaching courses. One of the advantages of enrolling in an online education course is that it will help you become extremely well-versed in a topic or variety of topics, as opposed to a workshop that will only provide an overview. Here are many benefits to pursuing an education certificate online, enrolling in online teaching courses in general, or seeking out continued education in any form. From gaining new skills to become a better teacher to opening up the possibility for a higher income bracket, there are a variety of valid reasons to consider taking on online teaching course.

### **Skill Training In Online Platforms**

With the rapid growth of digital technology and rise in virtual learning centres offering online courses and degrees to students, E- Learning has gained a vital role to play in future as a class room teaching tool and self-study platform for skill development. The emphasis of this paper is to identify prominent factors of e-learning for the development of job-specific skills. Step wise multiple regression analysis was performed. The result suggests that from the student's perspective, besides other factors flexibility in E- learning is the most prominent factor for developing job specific skills.

The study also confirms that e-learning is preferred by the students as it is easy to use & occupation oriented that make them ready with job specific skills. Further, it suggests that transfer of skills & knowledge is also one of the factors of e-learning considered by users. The researchers, however, agree that the student's level of skills with information &

communication technology has a significant impact on the participation in e-learning activities. Thus for educators involved in e-learning business must ensure to incorporate, easy to use and occupation oriented modules for e-learning along with flexibility.

### **Conclusion**

From the above study, it can be concluded that factors like easy to use and occupation oriented, transfer of skills & knowledge and flexibility in learning influence students in adopting the e-learning course. These factors facilitate job specific skills among the learners, and the educators must consider the above mentioned factors while planning and developing their activities and modules for e-learning. Along with the advantage of occupation oriented and cost effectiveness, there are some drawbacks are there; they are lack of internet facility, speed of internet background of students like family issues etc the interaction among students. Also stress level of students might get increased due to the missing of friends and interaction between them.

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