

Impact of COVID-19 on Higher Education

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Abstract: The spread of pandemic Covid-19 has drastically disrupted every aspects of human life including education sector. This study shows the Impact of COVID-19 on Higher Education. An online survey was conducted by sharing google form, to collect the information. A structured questionnaire link using 'Google Form' was sent to college students' through WhatsApp and E- mail to complete this survey. A total of 150 students provided complete information regarding the survey. The simple percentage method and Likert scale method were used to assess the learning status and mental health issues of the students. During the lockdown period, more than 70% of students were involved in e-learning. Most of the learners were used android mobile for attending online classes. College students are facing so many problems related to health and most of the students are facing financial problem in this COVID-19 pandemic. Students have been facing various problems related to depression, over thinking, anxiety, poor internet connectivity, depressive thoughts, unfavorable study environment at home, etc. These impacts on college students will eventually affect their academic performance and progression. The purpose of this study is to identify the negative impact of COVID-19 pandemic on education sector in India. This study suggested some measures to overcome from this situation. Thus, higher education institutions should put it these measures to help students recover from the impacts of COVID-19 pandemic



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I. INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 virus has spread all over the world. The COVID-19 virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes. World Health Organization (WHO) was informed by the Chinese government about several cases of pneumonia with unfamiliar etiology. The outbreak was initiated from the Wuhan city of China and rapidly infected more than 50 peoples. The live animals are frequently sold at the Human seafood market such as bats, frogs, snakes, birds, marmots and rabbits. The spread of COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted every aspects of human life including education sector. The COVID-19 pandemic quickly led to the closure of colleges and universities around the world with government instructions to follow social distancing to reduce the disease.

In India, the first death was reported on March 12, 2020 due to coronavirus. On 22nd March, Prime Minister Narendra Modi encouraged people to follow the Janata curfew in India. Indian Government has temporarily closed educational institutions to reduce the spread of the COVID- 19 pandemic to follow social distancing. The government has announced the lockdown. The lockdown has compelled many educational institutions to cancel their classes, examinations, research, internships etc. The government also issued an advisory for HEIs to continue teaching through online (virtual) mode and requested teachers to teach from home.

In this pandemic most of the students was facing problems in online learning. Students was attending online classes through android mobile. The lockdown has given them a new way for teachers and students to continue their education through online mode. In this lockdown traditional education that is offline classes was replaced by online that is virtual classes. The teachers was taking classes and assigned work to students through online mode like Zoom, Google meet, Google Classroom, etc. Some students are living in remote areas, they don't have new technological advancement, poor internet connectivity, etc. Most of the students' parents faced financial problems during lockdown, they find difficult to pay fee of their children college fees.

The physical closure of colleges and universities to promotes social distancing and staying at home but has impacted students in several ways. Some of the impacts

that have emerged due to COVID- 19 include impacts on mental health, academic performance, academic progression, family life, social networks, etc. COVID-19 contributes to the mental health issues, mainly due to closures of colleges, restricted social connections with friends and family members. Most youths are paying more attention to mental health, doing meditation, learning new things, yoga and exercising frequently which may positively improve their mental health. These impacts may also affect the academic performance of the college students, because mental health is highly associated with a student's performance and progression. Therefore important that colleges and universities should put in place mental health experts to help their students recover from the mental health impacts of COVID-19

II. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY:

This study is based on primary data and secondary data. Data have been collected through questionnaire method and some secondary sources like websites, newspaper, report by leading organization, published research paper researcher has taken Sample Size of 150 Respondents

III. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY:

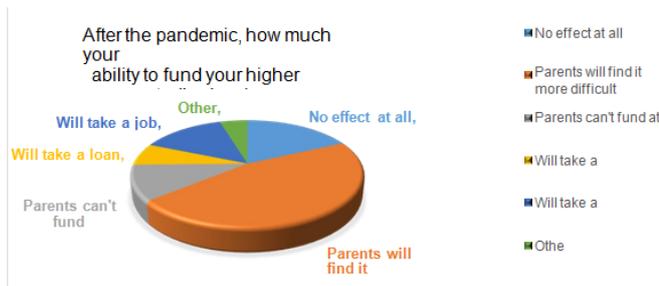
- To find out the impact of COVID-19 on higher education sector.
- To find out the negative impact of COVID-19 on education sector and to explore the corrective steps to overcome the negative impact.
- To know the effects of the COVID-19 on the mental health and their learning of college students.

IV. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

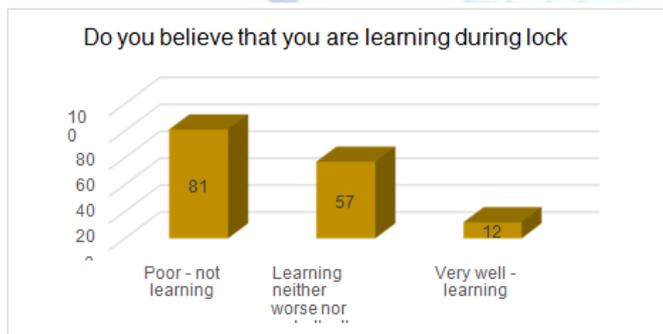
- The sample size was too small to complete this research.
- The findings are based on the answers in questionnaire given by the students, so any error or bias may be affect the validity of the finding.
- The study is only based on young adulthood that is college students.
- Time constrain is also one of the factor.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Following the online survey, the results are as follows-

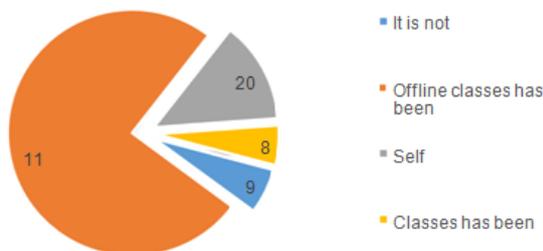


According to our survey, it is clearly stated that 46% of the students' parents was facing more difficult to fund the higher education. Whereas 11% of the students' parents can't fund, 14% of the students will take a job, and around 6% of the students will take a loan for higher education.



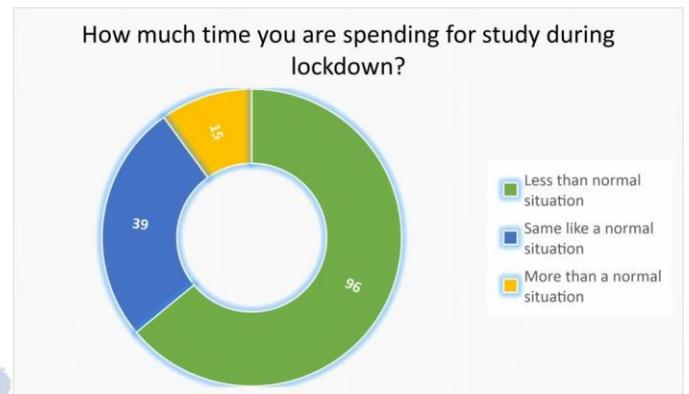
Majority of students that is 54% are belongs to poor that is not learning than usual; 38% are belongs to learning neither worse nor better than usual and 8% are Very well - learning more than usual. Thus it can be say that most of the students are not learning or studying during lockdown.

How has COVID-19 affected your classes and

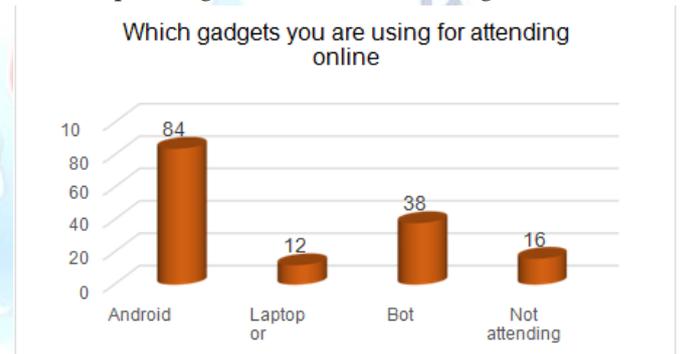


From the above pie chart it is clear that majority of students that is 75% of the students was replaced by online classes to offline classes. While 13% was doing

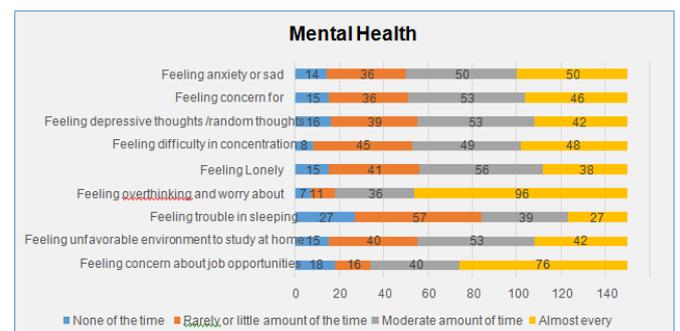
self-study and 5% of the students was saying that classes was canceled. Lockdown has had a huge impact on education.



Most of the students that is 64% was thinking that they was not spending time for studies that is less than the normal situation. Whereas 26% was thinking that no change in time spending for studies during lockdown. Thus it can be concluded that majority of the students are not spending time for studies during lockdown.



More than 56% of the students they are using android mobile for attending online classes and 8% are using laptop or computer for attending online classes. While 25% are using both that is android mobile and laptop for attending classes. While 11% of the students are not attending online classes.



According to our survey, most of the students was facing mental health issues during this pandemic. To analysis the impact of mental health on college students we was used Likert scale that is: - None of the time; Rarely or little amount of the time; Moderate amount of time and Almost every time.

Feeling anxiety or sad: A majority of students that is 33% are almost every time and 33% are moderate amount of time of feeling anxiety or sad. It indicates that majority and cum majority of the students are said that feeling anxiety or sad during lockdown.

Feeling concerned for health: A majority of students that is 35% are moderate amount of time and 31% are almost every time of feeling concern for health during lockdown. Most of the students are expressed their level of fear and worry about their own health and the health of their loved ones.

Feeling depressive thoughts /random thoughts: A majority of students that is 35% are moderate amount of time and 28% are almost every time of feeling depressive thoughts or random thoughts during lockdown. Major contributors such as depressive thoughts were loneliness, concerns about academic performance, overthinking or hopelessness, etc.

Feeling difficulty in concentration: A majority of students that is 33% are moderate amount of time and 32% are almost every time of feeling difficulty in concentration during lockdown. Major factors of difficulty in concentration that is social media, internet, and video games, lack of accountability and prolonged attention to a computer screen, etc.

Feeling lonely: A majority of students that is 37% are moderate amount of time and 25% are almost every time of feeling loneliness during lockdown. Loneliness due to isolated in house during lockdown, lack of face-to-face interactions, outdoor activities, etc.

Feeling overthinking and worry about future: A majority of students that is 64% are almost every time and 24% are moderate amount of time to felt over thinking and worry about future. Most of the students was feeling overthinking and worry about future during lockdown.

Feeling trouble in sleeping: A majority of students that is 38% are rarely or little amount of the time, 26% of respondents are moderate amount of time and 18% are almost every time to feeling trouble in sleeping during lockdown.

Feeling unfavorable environment to study at home: A majority of students that is 28% are almost every time and 35% are moderate amount of time to not have a favorable environment to study at home during lockdown. Due to online learning environment, lack of concentration, concern about health in this pandemic.

Feeling concerned about job opportunities: A majority of students that is 55% are almost every time and 27% are moderate amount of time to concern about job and internship opportunities during lockdown. Most of the students are worry about job and career opportunities.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ❖ Most of the student's parents was facing financial problems during lockdown, to overcome this problem HEIs should provide rebates in college fees or installment payment system. So, that students can take classes without any disturbance.
- ❖ Higher educational institutions should adopted new approaches for academics such as giving small projects, organizing creative activities, organizing webinars, quizzes, etc. So that students gets more involvement in attending online classes
- ❖ Immediate measures are required to minimize the effects of the pandemic on job offers, internship programs, and research projects.
- ❖ Educational institutions should provide better quality of the learning material and platform for taking online classes.
- ❖ In current situation, access to technology and internet is an urgent requirement for college students. So, the digital capabilities must reach to the remotest and poorest communities to facilitate the students to continue their education during the pandemics. The state governments/ private organizations should come up with ideas to handle this issue of digital education.
- ❖ Some more suggestions related to Mental Health Issues:-
 - For Anxiety-
 - Identify an activity/hobby that brings you joy and perform it.
 - Make an effort to replace negative thoughts with positive ones.

- Divide your time clearly as work and non-work times. Planning the daily routines helps in adapting quickly and managing anxiety.
- For Loneliness-
 - Be in touch with friends, family, and colleagues over social media or the phone.
 - Pick a new hobby. Learn something new every day. Keep your mind engaged.
 - Pen down your thoughts and emotions regularly.
- For Difficulty in Concentration-
 - Most effective way to improve concentration is to meditation and yoga. Spend at least one hour per day on your physical health.
 - It is important to be rational regarding the expectations we set for ourselves as well as for those in care of us. Do not have high expectations of others because they are sailing in the same boat.
- For Random Thoughts & Depression-
 - Distract yourself with new hobbies or family discussions when you feel depressed.
 - Taking care of yourself by exercise regularly, eat healthy food and sleep thoroughly

VII. CONCLUSION:

This study highlighted the systematic analysis of the effects of COVID-19 on higher education. To study these effects, we surveyed 150 students and present quantitative evidence showing the negative effects of the pandemic on students' learning and mental health. For example, we find that 6% of students have skipped their graduation due to COVID-19. The majority of students are facing mental health issues. Such as: depressive thoughts, overthinking, loneliness, anxiety, difficulty in concentration, concern for health & job opportunities, etc. On the contrary, few students reported having positive experiences with their families and friends, despite being in such a difficult situation. In this Pandemic virtual classes is the most preferred mode of education due to the outbreak of Covid-19. Our results suggest that mentors and parents should support the students to overcome these types of mental health issues. Government and HEIs are need to provide internet and technology facilities

in remote area for students to continue their education during the pandemic. It is need for the educational institutions to strengthen their knowledge and information technology infrastructure to be ready for facing this pandemic situation.

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