COVID 19- Response from Education System

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ABSTRACT

The world is facing numerous challenges caused by pandemic 'COVID-19, one of them is facilitating to continue education. Avoiding physical closeness is the prime solution for human being to be saved from it, which cannot be possible in traditional education system followed in India. Though MHRD is guiding academic institute to have online classes which itself has proved a challenge due to lack of resources, less technical knowledge among teachers and taught supported by poor internet connection. To get an understanding about online education in University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, the present study was undertaken with the objective to explore the present status and challenges of online teaching-learning system during lock down along with an understanding of precaution to be taken after lock down (from the students point of view). Data was collected through Google form and the results show that three fourth respondents feels that education system cannot afford lock down, online classes can effectively meet the need of the students and they are interested in having online classes, but student union elections are not in their priority. Students emphasised the importance of physical classes.

Keywords: Classes, Education system, Lockdown, Online classes, Physical distancing, Student union election

INTRODUCTION

In the global crisis of "Covid-19", most essential service like food, medical, electricity, education has been affected badly and education comes under the least prioritise service of the government and it's the last option which will government open when life will be normal so the option looked by government and other institutes for most essential but least attention given sector education is online education. Online education is electronically endorsing system which delivers study material along with interaction between teacher and student utilizing internet, proper amenities and ICT literacy. In developed countries like America, Russia, Europe etc. online education is not so new but in Indian society online education is a quiet not acceptable phenomenon over traditional method of education. India is in its early stage of online education where this method is yet adopted by early adopters only. There will be many hindrances in this abruptly implemented method-in its early stage of online education. Cost of internet pack is substantial which is not affordable for every student and also such apps like zoom, Skype, hangout, Google meet etc. require high bandwidth and strong internet connections. Table 1 shows the requirements of major online platforms.

An article of Hindustan times (2020), "IS E-LEARNING THE BEST BET DURING LOCKDOWN?" concluded that due to less accessibility of internet in rural as well as urban and lack of digital skills only higher class of urban in India are most likely seems to be ready for online learning. In an another article of The Print (2020), "WHY ONLINE CLASSES MAY NOT BE SUCH A GOOD IDEA AFTER ALL ESPECIALLY FOR KIDS" reported that many challenges faced by teachers like poor internet connection rural areas, requirement of high bandwidth connection for classes, lack of proper amenities like laptop, computer,

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Table 1:

Online platform	Group – lowest	Group- HD video 720p	Group – HD 1080p
Zoom (Computer)	0.8 Mbps up/ 1Mbps down	1.5 Mbps up/1.5 Mbps down	2.5 Mbps up/3 Mbps down
Zoom (on your mobile)	0.6 Mbps up/1.2 Mbps down	1.5 Mbps up/1.5 Mbps down	
Microsoft teams	0.5 Mbps up/ 1 Mbps down	1 Mbps up/2 Mbps down	
Google hangouts meet	2.6 Mbps up/2.6 Mbps down	3.2Mbps up/3.2 Mbps down	3.2 Mbps up/3.2 Mbps down
Skype	0.5 Mbps up/0.128 Mbps down	2 Mbps up/0.5 Mbps down	4 Mbps up/0.5 Mbps down

(*Source:* Business Insider South Africa, 2020)

smartphones etc., money for continuity in connections, struggling of teachers in coping up with technology, lack of instructions from institutes for online lectures and PPTs. Tiwari and Anjum (2013) showed that online education have many opportunities like it expand access to education, we can encounter faculty shortage through this, online education can improve quality of graduate, wide reachability, reduce physical infrastructure dependency, lower the costing, reduce geographical barriers, faster feedbacks, reduce male-female and urban-rural disparity, environment friendly, more understanding for learning material as they are in multimedia format. But at the same time it deals with challenges like requirement of proper training of ICTs, unfavourable attitude and motivation in faculty for enhancing quality of education, in many states computers are stolen or they are not being used, variation in implementation due to difference in policies of states, and lack of compatibility in learning material.

In this era of technology Indian society is still not aware of consciousness of online–teaching and learning supported by gender biasness in many of Indian families. Patriarchy and male dominant mind-set says "Smartphone are not for girls. Household work is more prioritized then online classes etc." Sangya Upadhyay who has been teaching Hindi in Girls College of Delhi University shared many messages of girls that why they are not able to attend online classes in her post. Many of these messages witness gender biasness and smell of patriarchy was there. These girls are very few girls mentioned by Sangya Upadgyay, there are many more girls who are not able to take online classes due to the same reasons. ICT enable person to manage and evaluate the information which is provided online. There can be many other hindrances also like- distraction during class, lack of silence, proper

monitoring and evaluation of performance of student, lack of understanding between teacher and student, disturbance of family members during class, lack of knowledge of handling technology, lack of proper space in house for taking online classes and so on. The present study tried to explore the present status of online Teaching-learning system among students and to list out the challenges and required precautions (after lock down) for the effective teaching-learning.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted with the students of University of Rajasthan, Jaipur of Rajasthan, as this is the one of oldest and largest state University in the Indian state of Rajasthan situated in the capital, offering PG, SFS courses, Ph.D. and M.Phil. Programme. There are 5 constituents' colleges and 250 affiliated colleges in this University. More than 70 per cent students in this university belong to rural background. A Google form was developed with different section like personal information, awareness, opinion, challenges, and precautions etc. to check current status of online education in selected locale. This tool was circulated to students group through social media and whatspp group. 150 complete responses were analysed for purpose.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The collected data on selected components are presented in four sections namely background, awareness and opinion about online classes, challenges faced and suggestive precautions after lockdown period.

Most the respondents (52%) were female doing PG degree in science faculty and perusing their degree in second semester. Jaipur was the second district of

Rajasthan to impose lockdown of 10 days even before the centre imposed lockdown. The sudden lockdown without any further notice and preparation resulted in disturbance of academics. As a solution online classes had been approached. The results shows that No prior preparation were done for online classes and students were not much aware of this concept but still good number (70%) of students were aware with UGCs' online learning and were interested in online classes (78%) with a belief that online classes would facilitate their learning. University declared summer vacation during this lock down but it was good to see that almost half of the teachers were taking online classes during breaks to facilitate students learning and utilizing this time period of lockdown. There are various platform which can be used for online teaching and learning recommended by university for online classes like Google-classroom, Google-hangout, Google meet, zoom, webinar, kahoot, G-suit etc. out of which most preferred platform was Google-classroom followed by zoom and Google meet as shown in Table 3. Except all these students also mentioned other platform used for online learning were WhatsApp and YouTube.
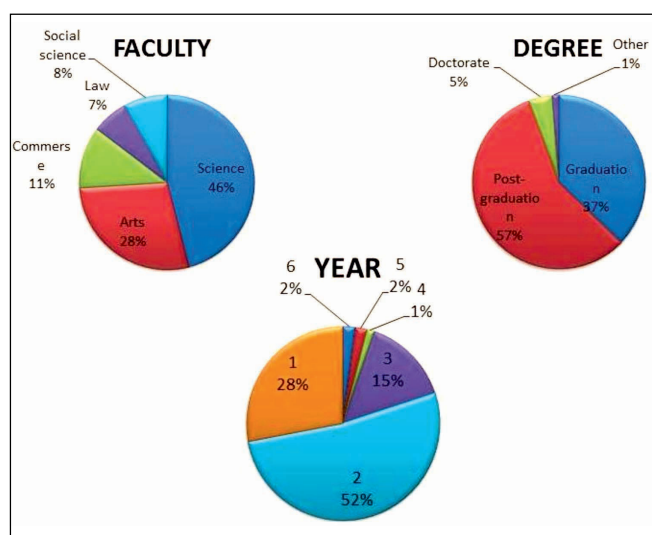
Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to their knowledge and skills regarding online learning (N=150)

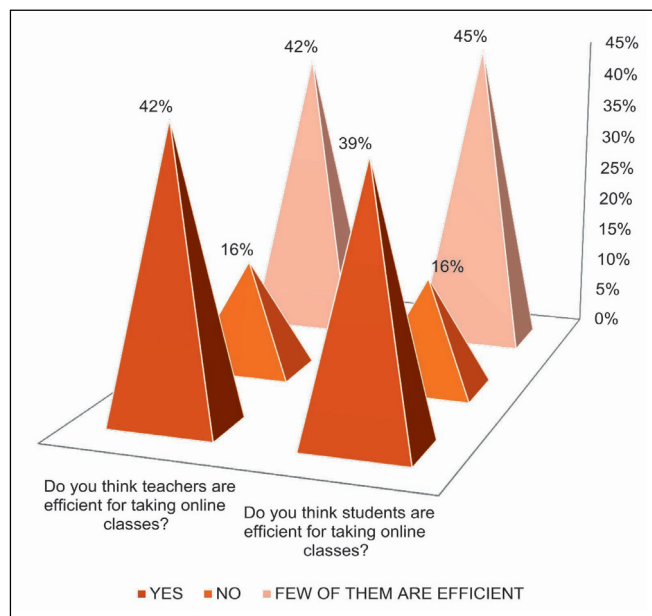| Particulars	Percentage
Awareness with UGC online learning programme	70
Interested in online learning	78
Provision of Online classes provided by institute	48.7
Learning enhancement through online classes	74
Education system can afford prolong lock down	40.7

Table 2: Distribution of respondents on the basis of their knowledge regarding platform used for online classes

Platform used for online classes	Percentage
Google-classroom	36.7
Google hangout	0.7
Google meet	5.3
Zoom	13.3
Webinar	2.7
Kahoot	0
G suit	0
None	26.7
Other	14.6

Due to this unplanned lockdown students felt that many teachers and students were not having required infrastructure and skill for meeting together for online learning. Figure 3, itself shows that in the opinion of students, majority (84%) of teachers and students were in the category of efficient and semi efficient for online classes. Today we are living in a technical era so it's good to see that only 16 per cent of respondents consider that very few number of teachers' as well as students' lack efficiency to take online classes. Slowly and gradually the technology is overtaking in each sphere of life,

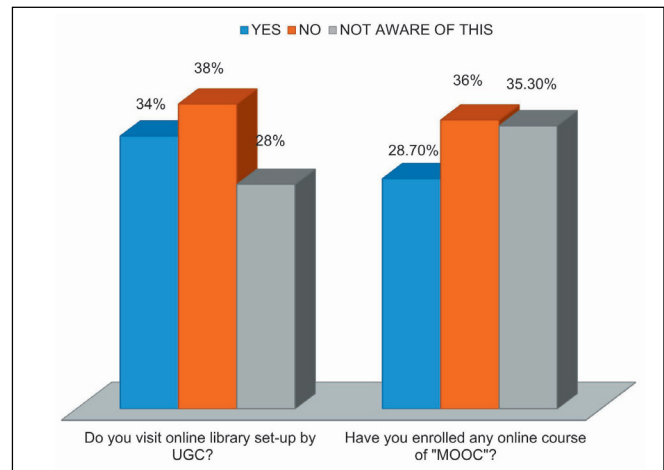**Figure 1: Background information of respondents (N=150)**

Figure 2: Distribution of respondents according to their opinion regarding efficiency of teachers' and students' in online learning

Table 3: Precautions to be taken by academic institute once the lockdown period over
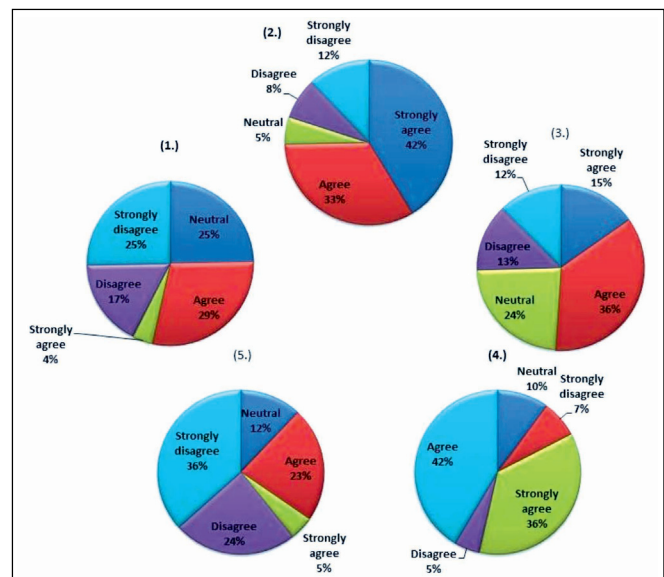
Particulars	Number	Percentage
Classes in batches to maintain social distancing	110	73
Wearing mask should be mandatory	104	69
Monitor every students health timely (thermal checking)	88	59
All kind of events should be avoided in university to avoid gathering	87	58
Use of blackboard should be restricted in classrooms	50	33
Universities meetings should be virtual (online)	69	46
Arrangement of furniture should be proper to maintain physical distancing in classrooms	76	50
Sanitizer should be provided in every classrooms	96	64
In hostels, mess should run in batches to avoid gathering	79	52
Proper hygiene and precautions should be followed in hostels	83	55

education is not an exception. Now a day UGC is providing various platforms to facilitates learning of student, make learning more accessible for students like e-library and MOOCs. These are freely available to students and UGC continuously upload lectures, videos and study material on such platform from past 3 years and updating students through newspapers and its website, still after so many efforts one third of respondents are now aware of e-library (38%) and MOOC (36%).

Students were further asked to give their opinion on associated component of online learning viz., Online teaching can substitute classroom teaching in well and proper manner (1), After lockdown, University should give some time to students before conducting examination otherwise it will affect student's result Examination should be conducted soon after lockdown (2), This lock down will effect students' union election (3), Just after lockdown if examinations are conducted it will increase chances of "Covid-19" again (4) and Examination should be conducted just after lockdown (5), which are presented in Figure 4. Reponses made it clear that students didn't agree that online teaching can substitute regular teaching, they need some time for preparation before resuming to regular examination, also it may increase the chances of spread of disease so, the examination should not be conducted soon after lockdown period is over. It was also expressed that Lock down is going to effect the student union election. Normally, students get involved in election campaign from the examination and continue till election but for the coming

Figure 3: Distribution of respondents according to their knowledge regarding UGCs e-library and MOOC
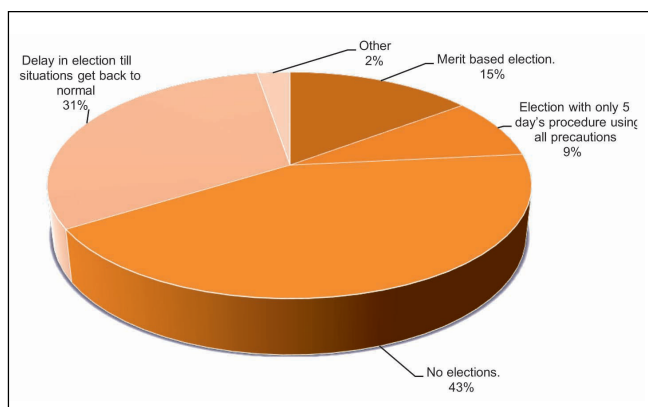

Figure 4: Opinion of students regarding associated component of online learning

academic session 2020-2021 the situation is different if students get involved in election campaign this may lead to crucial conditions of covid-19. As shown in Figure 5, 43 per cent respondents say no for election followed by delay in election (31%) till situation get back to normal. Some respondents (15%) said that there should be merit based election procedure as precaution and only 9 per cent agreed to election with 5 days' procedure using all precautions and 2% other said that there should be online procedure for voting as per precaution of "covid-19".
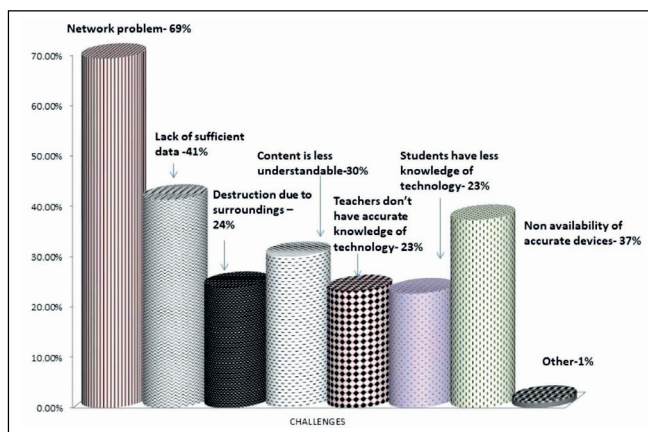
India is having the highest smart phone user in the world but in case of internet network not in the top countries which directly show that how difficult it is to use internet dependent technologies. According to few study only 24 per cent of Indians have access to smartphone it means one in every four Indian with poor mobile network. India is second largest in the world with internet connection on the same platform it has a huge number of population that's why only 34 per cent of Indian population uses internet. (statica.com) Online teaching learning process is a laborious way to go in ordinary period which become more difficult to indulge during lockdown. Till 14th April 2020 about 5 million of mobile phones were out of network due to software and hardware problems (need reference). Not everyone has proper amenities to take online classes whether teacher or student. Teachers also need to be updated with amenities and technologies so that they also become capable of executing. ICT literacy is must for online teaching and learning, it rejuvenate process of education along with better content with efficiency of teachers as well as student in understanding process of learning through technology.

Figure 6 shows that majority (69.30%) of the students said that good quality of network was a big problem followed by lack of sufficient internet data (41.30%) to attend classes, improper devices/ equipment (37.30%) content is less understandable in online class (30%), distraction due to surrounding (24%), teachers have less knowledge about technology (23.30%) and less knowledge of students toward technology (22.70%) respectively were the challenges faced by students during online classes. Once the lockdown will be over and life will be on the struggle of being normal, the precaution

and awareness will only help. Although, from time to time government is suing SOP for the general masses and institutes but a rigorous follow-up can save human being. Standard protocol cannot be applicable for every situation, so to know the student's opinion on the precautions applicable for academic institute one section was added to the tool made for information collection. The respondents mentioned that maintaining social distancing in class room (73.30%), mandatorily wearing mask (69.30%), provision of sanitizer in every classroom (64%), thermal health checking (58.70%), avoidance of all kind of cultural events (or the events which attracts more number of students) in university (58%), proper hygiene and precautions in hostels (55.30%), running mess in batches (52.70%), proper arrangement of furniture to maintain physical distancing in classrooms (50.70%), virtual meetings only (46%) and restricted use of blackboard (33.30%) were the major suggested precautions to be strictly adopted by the university.

Figure 5: Procedure to be adopted for student union election

Figure 6: challenges faced by students during the process of online learning

CONCLUSION

In current time period more students are interested in online-classes and are aware with online learning and teachers are also putting efforts to facilitate learning even in summer vacations. There is a large number of students who still are not awarded and use e-library and MOOC courses there is a need for spreading awareness among student so that they can get benefit of such facilities. The common challenges like network problem, lack of sufficient data, distraction due to surrounding etc. can be taken care off. There is a need of ICT training to teachers as well as students for better and proper implementation of online learning and they should be well equipped with amenities. One should keep in mind that when study resumes there is need to follow many precautionary measures for premises and students' union elections as well.

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