A SURVEY STUDY OF IMPACT OF COVID19 ON CURRENT EDUCATION: STUDENTS PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Background: On the verge of COVID 19 educational activities are suspended. Examinations are cancelled in Maharashtra state of India. Students are in sticky situation. The aim of current study is to evaluate effect of COVID19 on education.

Method: Questionnaire was prepared in google form, distributed through online mode and responses were collected from diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate students of various branches like pharmacy, engineering and science of Nashik region of Maharashtra state, India by random sampling.

Result: 373 responses were recorded. 43.7% students find online education useful in this situation. 71.6% students responded that google classroom is useful tool for online education. 62.5% students think that lack of internet connection is major hurdle in online education. Though online education find its important, 52.3% students think that conventional method is good for education. About 76.9% students think that COVID19 pandemic pushed them towards self study. 68.1% students think that examinations should have been conducted for fair assessment. Job opportunity in future will be hampered, is said by 75% of final year students.

Conclusion: Online education is proving its importance. But overall system is needs to be oriented towards online education. COVID19 may produce less job opportunities.

KEYWORDS: COVID19, Examinations, Google form, Lockdown, Online education, Students.

INTRODUCTION:

Corona virus is family of virus ranging from common cold to Severe Acute respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The most recent corona virus is COVID19 originated in China.[1] From China, now almost every country is affected. 1st case in India was reported on 30th January 2020.[2] From last week of March lockdown is imposed in India to counteract corona virus diseases. Due to lockdown all activities including educational activities are suspended from then to stop community spread. Since lockdown various educational institutes, schools and colleges are closed. Initially students were contented because of holidays but as lockdown increased, it caused much stir in their mind. Students are in big dilemma regarding their examinations, how examinations will be conducted? Weather examinations will be conducted or not? How remaining syllabus will be completed? and many more. On the backdrop of COVID19 and lockdown various institutions are pursuing education via various online methods like enterprise resource planning (ERP) software, google classrooms, youtube lectures, by using zoom application and many other methods. As lockdown is increased 10th, 12th, diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate level examinations in Maharashtra state of India has been cancelled. Currently only examinations of students who are in final year are planned by universities as their further carrier will be based on final semester marks. On this whole scenario, in the current study, a survey is carried out using google form to study what students think about online education, cancellation of examinations, and effect on their carrier. Google form is used for survey because it an easy, handy online tool and data can be collected by simple and contactless method. Google form has several advantage like fast data collection, high coverage, automatic analysis of collected data and 100% free.[3]

METHOD:

We designed a survey that contained questions concerning effect of COVID19 on education by using google form. Link of google form was distributed through online mode, majorly by using whatsapp mobile application among students of Nashik district of Maharashtra state. Data was collected in between 10th May 2020 to 12th May 2020 by using random sampling. Target population was students of diploma, undergraduate and postgraduate level. Questions were distributed in two sections in google form.[4] In 1st section general information like name of student, name and address of institution, current course and current semester were included. In another section 18 questions related to research were included as follows;

1. How much syllabus was completed before lockdown?

2. Is internal exam conducted?

3. Are continuous assessment activities completed?

4. Is remaining syllabus completed though online mode?

5. Do you find online education useful?

6. Which online mode is used for completion of remaining syllabus?

7. What do you think is the major hurdle in online education?

8. Do you think that online education is superior over chalk and board conventional method?

9. Do COVID19 pandemic pushed you towards self study?

10. Do all your queries about subject get solved through online method?

11. Will you prefer online education system in future?

12. Do you fill sad that syllabus is not completed through conventional method?

13. Do you think that written exam should have been conducted for proper assessment?

14. Do you think that cancellation of exam will hamper your future?

15. Final year students, do you fill that COVID19 will affect on your job opportunities?

16. Are you ready for online exams?

17. What is your current mind set?

18. Your opinion on current situation of education?

Appropriate options were given along with questions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION:

After distribution of google form, around 373 responses were recorded. These responses were classified according to sex, according to education level, according to year in which they are studying. Among 373 responses, 166 responses were recorded by female students while 207 responses were recorded by male students. Among 373 responses 55 students were from diploma level, 248 students were from undergraduate level while 70 students were from postgraduate level.

Table 1: Distribution of study population (N = 373)

Students profile	Number (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	207	55.49 %
Female	166	44.50 %
Study Level		
Diploma	55	14.74 %
Undergraduate	248	66.48 %
Postgraduate	70	18.76 %
Study Year		
1st	82	21.98 %
2nd	131	35.12 %
3rd	79	21.17 %
4th	81	21.71 %

About 137 (36.7%) participants responded that in between 50 to 70 % syllabus was completed before lockdown. While only 40 participants (10.7%) responded that 100% syllabus is complete. It should be noted that students having yearly pattern examination like diploma in pharmacy have reported nearly 100% syllabus completion.

From above data it can be said that students studying in semester pattern are far away from syllabus completion. This should be taking into consideration while taking examination.

Regarding internal examination completion, around 172 (46.1%) students responded with yes while 85 (22.8%) students said no and 116 (31.1%) students responded that internal examinations are partly conducted.

As lockdown was imposed various institutions moved towards the online methods of education for syllabus completion. From students response it was found that only 214 (57.4%) students responded yes that remaining syllabus is completed through online mode while 159 (42.6%) students said no. When asked about usefulness of online education about 163 (43.7%) students responded in positive way while remaining students are uncertain. For online education institutions followed various methods, among them google classroom is most followed. About 267 (71.6%) students find google classroom useful for online education. Remaining students responded positive to ERP software, youtube lectures, whatsapp application groups and video lectures on zoom application. Though online education is going on around 267 (71.6%) students think that institutions should have been started for regular education though it is not possible on the backdrop of COVID19.

One of the main concerns for online education is various types of hurdles which make online education difficult. Among these hurdles one of the major hurdle faced by students is lack of internet connectivity, especially in rural areas. In developing country like India it is hard to find high speed internet connectivity throughout. Students are mostly connected on digital platform through smart mobile phones. But in rural areas, mobile network connectivity is limited upto 2G or 3G which causes difficulty in online streaming making learning process slow and tedious. Another major concern regarding online education is questionable online assessment of student's performance. It is found that students can easily take advantage of online process while answering the questions making it difficult for evaluation. Some students responded that online education caused stress on eyes and headache as it requires to seat for hours in front of screen. Also half of students responded that they find it difficult to get their query solved through online mode. Due to these various reasons around 195 (52.3%) students find chalk and board conventional method of education superior over online method while 66 (17.7%) students are in dilemma over which method is good. On this whole scenario 287 (77%) responded that COVID19 pandemic pushed them towards self study and 264 (70%) students though that syllabus should have been completed through conventional chalk and talk method. Contrary to belief majority of students, 254 (68%), believe that written examination should have been conducted for fair evaluation. Students who are in final semester were asked to respond questions like, will COVID19 hamper their future and job opportunities? To this 75% of final year students think that this situation will adversely affect job opportunities. Post COVID19 word will be different. Many studies are indicating that recession will be on high side.(5) Definitely this will hamper on employability of upcoming graduates also.

As lockdown increased, along with online education, online examinations are also considered by universities, to this, 209 (56%) students responded that they are not ready for online examination while 164 (44%) students responded that they are ready for online examination. It should be noted that among 44% students some are already familiar with online examination. This shows that student's mindset in current situation is not towards online examination. Students will not accept sudden change in education and examination pattern. Acceptance towards online education will increase gradually. Definitely there is need to shift conventional education system towards online digital mode in current situation as well as in future also but it should be based upon considerations of students, parents as well as faculty. Also digital infrastructure present at various institutional levels should be checked before proceeding.

Lastly students were asked their opinion on current education situation; some of them are mentioned below.

"Online education is good but due to more use of mobile and laptop it caused stress on eyes and cause headache."

"In villages, internet is not available properly so some time we are not able to attend some online exam or lectures."

"Exams must be conducted in written form."

"It's not as it was, although online education is being given but still its make the differences. Conventional teaching is good to understand but we all are held up with this pandemic. In this tough situation online study is helping us to gain knowledge."

"Online education is good."

CONCLUSION:
Form the survey several points can be concluded. As far as education field is considered COVID19 pandemic has huge impact. Syllabus is not completed, examinations are cancelled, and students are in confusion with respect to their future. Currently online teaching and examination methods are followed by educational institutions. Majority of students are not able to understand through online mode. In future defiantly we have to look forward towards online education. For this purpose improvement in basic infrastructure is necessary. Student's mentality will slowly move towards online education. Apart from these students graduating may face problem in their carrier. Job opportunities may be decreased in future.

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