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Effect of COVID-19 on Higher Education

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ABSTRACT: The global lockdown of education institutions is going to cause major (and likely unequal) interruption in students' learning process. The COVID-19 pandemic is first and foremost a health crisis. Many countries have (rightly) decided to close schools, colleges and universities. The crisis crystallizes the dilemma policymakers are facing between closing schools (reducing contact and saving lives) and keeping them open (allowing workers to work and maintaining the economy). The severe short-term disruption is felt by many families around the world: home schooling is not only a massive shock to parents' productivity, but also to children's social life and learning. Teaching is moving online, on an untested and unprecedented scale. Student assessments are also moving online, with a lot of trial and error and uncertainty for everyone. Many assessments have simply been cancelled. Importantly, these interruptions will not just be a short-term issue, but can also have long-term consequences for the affected cohorts and are likely to increase inequality.

Keywords - *COVID 19 Coronavirus disease, Effect on higher education, effect on Families, effect on Society*

INTRODUCTION:

The novel coronavirus disease that emerged at the end of 2019 began threatening the health and lives of millions of people after a few weeks. Highly contagious with the possibility of causing severe respiratory disease, it has quickly impacted governments and public health systems. These have responded by declaring a public health emergency of national and international concern, as well as by adopting extraordinary measures to prevent the contagion and limit the outbreak. Millions of lives have been significantly altered, and a global, multi-level, and demanding stress-coping-adjustment process is ongoing. The current pandemic is not only seen affecting the health of the citizens in the country but is also seen hindering various industries and shaking them to their roots. The national lockdown and the ascending health crisis were striking the education of the students as well.

The COVID-19 disease has now achieved pandemic status. The World Health Organization has issued guidelines for managing the problem from both biomedical and psychological points of view. While preventive and medical action is the most important at this stage, emergency psychological crisis interventions for people affected by COVID-19 are also critical. This includes direct interventions for patients, and indirect for relatives, caregivers, and health care professionals. The global higher education sector has been dramatically transformed, as a result of the coronavirus. In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, nearly all higher education institutions (90 percent) in a recent survey used some form of emergency distance education to complete the spring 2020 term. And 56 percent of faculty who moved courses online were using teaching methods they had never used before.COVID-19 has created a new normal for the higher education sector, revolutionizing the online learning landscape, reshaping application processes, and refreshing crisis management strategies.

The most effective tool in keeping student retention and maintaining access to learning has been online courses. Universities across the world have adjusted their programs in response to the spread of the coronavirus.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY:

The primary objective here is to spread the access knowledge and perceptions about COVID-19 among a convenience sample of the general public with sufficient information about government policies, government of India is taking all necessary steps to ensure that we are prepared well to face the challenge and threat posed by the growing pandemic of COVID-19 the Corona Virus. With active support of the people of India, we have been able to contain the spread of the Virus in our country. The most important factor in preventing the spread of the Virus locally is to empower the citizens with the right information and taking precautions as per the advisories being issued by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Literature review provides knowledge and guideline to understand the present pandemic situation. The educational reform in India in the COVID-19 era seems to be a live example of how need truly is the mother of invention or reinvention, in this scenario. Allowing educational institutions to adopt online learning and infuse a virtual study culture, the pandemic is already steering the sector forward with technological innovation and advancements. The switch to online education has been ensuring that students suffer no loss of studies and their progress is being tracked simultaneously with timely evaluation. It is probably a first for India to experiment with the education system and make a shift to the virtual world, blending classrooms with online learning.

Education with technology and forming a collaborative strategy to tread ahead while providing online lectures will also enable the students to learn creatively. Boosting retention of the syllabus by using innovative technology, the universities are also engaging students to learn by choice and not just by their physical presence in a classroom. In fact, some of the universities are also offering courses related to the fourth industrial revolution, which will stimulate the minds of the students and inspire them to bring a change in their respective fields. Gaining popularity worldwide, online education is nourishing a lot many inquisitive students, instead of giving in to the circumstances.

One of the opportunities to focus on the crisis is the virtual internships, which are allowing the students to go beyond their curriculum and learn about the practicality of their professions. Another value addition for the field of education and thus students is the way

universities are encouraging them to observe the current scenario and understand the need to automate. This will further allow them to digitalize their fields in the near future along with preparing them for any such situations. This practice will provide more confidence than panic in students.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The research design or methodology adopted in this study is descriptive and analytical in nature, the global outbreak of COVID-19 has seen unprecedented measures taken by nations to protect human life, The sample size for this study was determined by to keep economies afloat, and to ensure that education systems are still able to function and students can learn, higher education has been significantly disrupted as millions of students around the world are now studying remotely as campuses shut down in an attempt to help contain the virus. Many overseas students are in self-isolation away from family or have had to go back home. There is no clarity if overseas students will return next academic year or indeed how Covid 19 will impact on overall university recruitment and retention for next year, for students and faculty alike.

Solutions:

Majority of colleges and universities around the world integrate some form of online education into their coursework, moving all programs online may prove challenging. While some universities may already have strong online systems, smaller universities may struggle under the weight of the demand. University course creators should work closely with their IT departments to ensure their programs are able to be supported online.

Universities and colleges yet to implement changes to campuses in response to the novel coronavirus should take cues from others who have already taken action. They should analyses the steps already taken by other educators to understand what has worked, what hasn't worked and how to tackle the challenges they may face. With the spread of the disease expected to worsen before it gets better, administrators should take quick action to safeguard their campuses and students in preparation for potential closures.

Administrators should undertake simple measures to prevent the spread of the disease on their campuses. This should include instructing students on the appropriate protocols for hand washing, covering sneezes and coughs with their elbows, and self-isolating if they are experiencing flu or cold-like symptoms.

Educators should also be aware of students who have travelled extensively during the spring break, and remind those who have been abroad in heavily affected places to be mindful about returning to campus.

Universities should also ensure students and staff are protected while on campus. While Covid-19 is a high risk for those over 60, traditional-aged university students face relatively low risks from the disease. However in recent weeks, we have seen just how quickly the novel coronavirus can spread in areas with a high concentration of people – and university campuses are no exception.

CONCLUSIONS

The pandemic that has shuttered economies around the world has also battered education systems in developing and developed countries. The impact has been dramatic and transformative as educators scramble to put in place workable short-term solutions for remote teaching and learning, particularly in emerging markets, where students and universities are facing additional challenges related to finance and available infrastructure. Right now, video-conferencing apps like Zoom and Webex are throwing universities a lifeline. However, lecturers are still struggling to maintain the same depth of engagement with students they could have in a classroom setting. They need to find solutions — and fast — to avoid a dip in the quality of education they are providing.

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