



COVID 19 Pandemic Impact on High School Students: A Study

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ABSTRACT

The education system of any country revolves around the academic performance of students. The COVID-19 pandemic came as the scenario changer particularly in education pattern. The voracious disease affected billions of learners because the education pattern turned to online from board chalk pattern. In this paper, the effects of COVID-19 on mental health of students is discussed, focus has also been made on the remedies against this mental stress. One positive aspect is that COVID-19 pandemic produced an opportunity for introduction digital learning. The study on the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on teaching and learning across the world concluded that suitable pedagogy and platform for different class levels need to be explored further in case of developing countries. It also helped for online learning and teaching of various papers.

KEYWORDS: COVID-19, Pandemic, High School Students, Change in Education Pattern.

INTRODUCTION

No one would have guessed that a virus-like COVID-19 would come and without differentiating, it will alter the lifestyle of people. The COVID-19 impact was everywhere, which resulted in the closure of Schools and other educational institutions. Initially, most governments have decided to temporarily close the schools to reduce the impact of COVID-19. Later it was reopened for a few grades, which increased the number of infection rates and then closed again. Teachers are failing to maintain the habit of discipline and decorum among students in online classes. Due to the COVID-19 lockdown, some social and cultural activities are being missed.

The impact of COVID-19 on students' life is good and also bad. The good things are that students have time to spend with family and also save time. But the bad thing is online classes, where students have health issues. Also, these online classes are a matter of no concern for families who can afford a gadget such as a laptop or a smartphone along with the internet to make their children attend online classes through various platforms.

However, it is a matter of concern for a large section of students who attend government schools and colleges. The parents of these children are not able to afford



technology and hence the result is too bad for them. Their entire year has been wasted. The life and future of these weaker sections of students are not good and there are no indications even now as to when things will return to normal and the schools will continue running their normal classes.

Schools, colleges, and universities had been shut down, exams had been cancelled, and online classes had been running in that need of the hour and it harmed the personal lives of students and their education life. Today, the environment of schools and colleges has transformed into such a scenario that we never thought of before. The biggest impact of COVID-19 was on students life.

Education boards of various levels have been adopting different measures so that the education system flows smoothly. Three years before, the lockdown was announced which was thought to be for two weeks or a month maximum, but days were converted into weeks and weeks started growing into months and boards declared the results based on the performance of students in the school. They completely nullified the need to conduct the examination which was postponed.

Not conducting board exams or declaring results based on the performance of students in the school had never happened in history and it was the most heartbreaking step in students' life.

The impact of the COVID-19 shutdown on regular classes in schools or colleges gave birth to the dire need to adopt online classes as an alternative. In Student's life during a pandemic that a lack of knowledge, skills and devices, irrelevance and issues with system access.

Every class whether it was a nursery or the classes for a post-graduation degree was running online through ZOOM or Google Classroom. The education system by introducing that alternative tried hard to not let the pandemic impact the lives of students but it did not happen as students were getting affected. Classroom teaching was not limited to only theories but online teaching had too. The overall development of students had been hampering definitely.

NEED OF RESEARCH

There is significant relation between education methods and socio-economic condition and attitude of students. A number of other factors like residential locality of the students, gender, age, school and class room environment and many more also affect Academic performance or achievement of a student is very much influenced by numerous factors like socio-economic status of the parents. It is education which determines an individual's occupation, income, status or position in the society. High school education in India is considered critical for their future studies and endeavours.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Literature search in the relevant subject field is necessary for any scientific investigation. Review of related literature enables the investigator to have information about similar studies carried out earlier. The researcher has also carried out prior art search for the



present study. While searching the prior art, the researcher has consulted relevant review papers, research articles and information available on websites. It is observed that a few studies were carried out in order to ascertain the academic performance, study habit and attitude in students due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Muirhead, W. (2000) studied on admits that online education is new in schools and can be considered for enhancing traditional schools and home-schooling. Qi, W. has made a case study on collaborative environment for distance teaching and learning and reviewed existing platforms as well and Baiyere et al. has made a project enabling and facilitating collaborative teaching in information systems and found that virtual environment should be suitable for other courses as well. Another study was done on a case of English language teaching and learning using the virtual distance learning environment and came to the result that Virtual environments allow students to create a world that encompasses anything they can dream up. Interaction, simulation, and collaboration enable learning in the interactive environment (Mnyanyi et al., 2009; Thamarana, S., 2016).

Toquero (2020) studied on Challenges and Opportunities for Higher Education amid the COVID-19 Pandemic. The Covid-19 affected higher educational institutions not just in Wuhan, China where the virus originated but all other higher educational institutions in 188 countries as of April 06, 2020. Educational countermeasures are taken to continue educating the students despite the COVID-19 predicaments. Based on the author's experiences, research, observations in the academe, COVID-19 guidelines, and the need for alternative solutions, this article introduces how higher education is affected and how it can respond to future challenges. This article recommends to educational institutions to produce studies to proliferate and document the impact of the pandemic to the educational system. There is also a greater need for educational institutions to strengthen the practices in the curriculum and make it more responsive to the learning needs of the students even beyond the conventional classrooms.

Germann et al. (2019) discussed the opportunities to close the schools during the pandemic influenza to stop the spreading and duration of possible lockdowns before the vaccines are implemented. Faherty, L. J. et al. worked on the topic of school and its official's preparedness during a pandemic that included the physical re-arrangement of classes, limiting group works movement of students in class and creating opportunities for distance learning for missing days, but not the weeks or months as it is happening in 2020. Ash et al have supposed that distance learning can be supported by technologies such as the internet, phone, radio, TV or phone messaging, or email communication during the Flu Crisis. The interactive videoconferencing system design was proposed and implemented in elementary schools in Greece. It was found that IVC "plays a significant role in supporting collaborative synchronous learning activities at a distance"

Sarwer (2019) undertaken study on secondary school students' academic anxiety and achievement in English and indicated that study is intended to discover students' academic anxiety and achievement in English in relation to certain demographic variables. Also, the impact of academic anxiety on achievement in English of secondary school students is estimated. Total sample in the present study is 1007. Academic anxiety tool by Singh and Gupta (2011) and achievement in English test develop by researcher himself were used for data collection. Results of the present study revealed significant differences in academic



anxiety of secondary school students with regard to their gender, type of school, and place of living. Further, the study also revealed that academic anxiety contributed negligibly, and has negative impact on student's achievement in English.

Uscher-Pines et al. (2018) studied on "During an evolving influenza pandemic, community mitigation strategies, such as social distancing, can slow down virus transmission in schools and surrounding communities. To date, research on school practices to promote social distancing in primary and secondary schools has focused on prolonged school closure, with little attention paid to the identification and feasibility of other more sustainable interventions" the study concludes that information is too few for the schools to develop the social distance policies and procedures and additional research is needed.

Effects of COVID-19 on Children

Fear and Anxiety

One the most stressful aspects of the current situation is *not knowing*. It is not known who has been or will be infected. We don't know who might be a carrier, spreading the virus to others without even knowing it. We don't know what the long-term effects of this pandemic will be.

Facing so many unknown situations heightens anxiety. Some amount of fear and worry is a normal reaction to this abnormal situation. Due to anxiety, students can't concentrate on studies and it is disrupting their mental peace.

Psychological Effects

In last three years, they have attended online classes but, in many cases, they have just made physical presence in these classes. They think that online classes are only for the namesake, they have not studied at all in last three years. Exam pattern were also of MCQ type and examination was online, they have taken help of google to pass these examinations and scored very good grades, but now when they are actually need to give offline examination, they are not psychologically prepared for it.

Lack of Peers

It has become compulsion of all to stay at home and to refrain from mixing with other people, this resulted in distance between peers. Children could not meet with their friends and could not share their feeling which they need to at this tender age. They presume the things in their hearts and became lonely. All the time they spent in mobiles and TVs, this also has affected their physical health. The time they need to spend playing on grounds was spent in online activities.

Impact on Mental Health of Students

Students are missing out on a balance between study, work, and play and this is serious. Common health issues in students are: Students are getting signs of irritability and mood swings, Students are having anxiety and low mood, their dependence on video games and mobiles is worse. They are inclined towards emotional eating or excess eating to cope with emotions such as frustration, depression, stress, boredom, etc.



Bad impacts of social media can be seen resulting in negative feelings such as low confidence, envy, comparison, low self-esteem, body image issues, etc. They are isolating themselves and there is an increase in their anger outbursts, sitting at home all the time made them feel numb and they are suffering from low motivation.

As they have no other work to do, they are involved in gambling, sexting, watching pornography, etc. Students and their parents even are not able to recognize the symptoms of mental health issues. Whenever some different behavioral changes are seen in students, it is named 'bad mood' but it is more than that. It is really important for realizing the issue of mental health and its treatment.

Remedies to Overcome Psychological Effects

Eat good food: Human body works better and a human mind thinks better when he gets proper nourishment of healthy food. Hence to keep working nicely, students need to take healthy diet.

Meditation: Yoga and meditation keeps our mind under control. The negative thoughts that brings depression can be avoided through the way of meditation.

Get enough sleep: Tiredness brings irritation, anxiety and depression. When we are sleep deprived, we find it difficult to learn, listen, concentrate and solve problems. Without enough sleep, we are likely to have problems with memory, coordination and patience. It becomes harder to regulate our bodies, our attention and our emotions. That's why it is important to set and stick to regular bed and wake up times.

Exercise: There are lots of options for staying active while following guidelines for social distancing. It isn't hard to find online videos for traditional workout routines as well as yoga, dancing and martial arts. Going for a short walk or run outside provides a change of scenery and fresh air as well as exercise. A way to make exercising fun is to turn on whatever music you enjoy and dance around for a few minutes.

Students and their parents even are not able to recognize the symptoms of mental health issues. Whenever some different behavioral changes are seen in students, it is named 'bad mood' but it is more than that. It is really important for realizing the issue of mental health and its treatment. "Early diagnosis and treatment by professionals can make a significant difference. Treatment often involves medication prescribed by a psychiatrist and psychotherapy by a psychologist. These methodologies have shown a more demonstrable and positive impact. "Realistic expectations from parents and teachers, open communication, and assistance from peers, parents, and teachers can ease recovery.

The need for social connection is a social and psychological need for humans. In times of stress, every human being needs support and interaction with friends and family. Technology like texting, messaging apps, email and phones allow us to keep in touch with others without having to be face-to-face. Students are already familiar with these forms of communication and have been using them for some time. They make a point to reach out to others who may be isolated or unsupported in their current environment.



It is not good for parents, to ground teens from their phones and/or computers for more than one day at a time. It is completely appropriate to set limits on how much time your teen spends on their devices. It is also necessary to put restriction on use of technology for social purposes to certain times of the day or to require that a certain amount of academic work be completed before technology may be used for social purposes. It is also good to model the types of self-control you wish to see from your teen.

Pay attention to the effect social interactions have on you. If you notice that your interactions with someone leave you feeling more anxious, angry, worried, frightened or bad about yourself, consider limiting or suspending your interactions with that person.

CONCLUSION

Students who feel energetic should not think that they will not be infected. Some people don't see any symptoms but do get infected. Even though the disease has disappeared in India, people especially students should still take precautions. They should maintain social distance from their peers. Prolonged school closures are not the solution, it is time to reopen schools. It will take time to return to normal and change the psychology of students. Students who have become accustomed to online instruction and objective-type tests are slowly moving to offline instruction and descriptive tests.

The life of a student during this pandemic is so challenging. They affect life as students given a proper education improve people's understanding of the world around them. The life and future of these weaker sections of students are not good and there are no indications even now as to when things will return to normal and the schools will continue running their normal classes. Then, you can understand the impact of COVID-19 on mental issues and students' life.

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