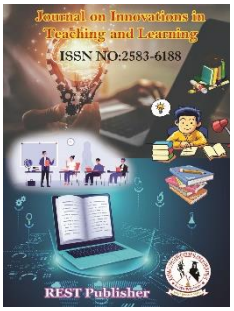
Journal on Innovations in Teaching and Learning

Vol: 2(1), March 2023

REST Publisher; ISSN: 2583-6188 (Online)

Website: http://restpublisher.com/journals/jitl/

DOI: https://doi.org/10.46632/jitl/2/1/1



Impact of Covid-19 on Education Across the World

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Abstract. *The Coronavirus pandemic has significantly disrupted various sectors across the world. The education sector is one of them. Due to Covid-19 the government across the world temporarily started shutting down schools and colleges. As the days pass by with no immediate solution to stop the outbreak of Covid-19, school and university closures will not only have a short-term impact on the continuity of learning for more than 285 million young learners in India but also engender far-reaching economic and societal consequences. This paper provides an overview of the impact of Covid-19 on education across the world, examining how it has affected different stages of education, from pre-school to tertiary level. The paper highlights the challenges faced by educators, students, and parents, including school closures, remote learning, and increased inequality. Additionally, the paper discusses the measures implemented by different countries to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on education, including the use of technology, revised curriculum, and blended learning. The paper concludes that Covid-19 has brought significant changes to the education system, which will have lasting effects on the future of education worldwide.*

Keywords: *Blended Learning, Covid-19, Education, Online Education, Remote Learning*

1. INTRODUCTION

Coronavirus a type of common virus that infects humans, typically leading to an upper respiratory infection (URI) (Stoppler, 2019). The name "coronavirus" is derived from Latin corona, meaning "crown" or "wreath". The name was coined by June Almeida and David Tyrrell who first observed and studied human coronaviruses. In December 2019, a pneumonia outbreak was reported in Wuhan, China. On 31 December 2019, the outbreak was traced to a novel strain of coronavirus, which was given the interim name 2019-nCoV by the World Health Organization (WHO) [8]. The paper also explores the potential long-term effects of the pandemic on the future of education. By analyzing the impact of Covid-19 on education, this paper aims to provide insights and recommendations for policymakers, educators, and other stakeholders to support education systems during times of crisis and beyond.

2. IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected educational systems worldwide, leading to the near-total closures of schools, universities, and colleges. As of 18 May 2020, approximately 1.725 billion learners are currently affected due to school closures in response to the pandemic. According to UNICEF monitoring, 156 countries are currently implementing nationwide closures and 29 are implementing local closures, impacting about 98.5 percent of the world's student population. 8 countries' schools are currently open. On 23 March 2020, Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) released a statement announcing the cancellation of Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge O Level, Cambridge International AS & A Level, Cambridge AICE Diploma, and Cambridge Pre-U examinations for the May/June 2020 series across all countries. International Baccalaureate exams have also been cancelled [1]. In addition, Advanced Placement Exams, SAT administrations, and ACT administrations have been moved online and canceled. School closures impact not only students, teachers, and families. But have far-reaching economic and societal consequences. School closures in response to COVID-19 have shed light on various social and economic issues, including student debt, digital learning, food insecurity, and homelessness, as well as access to childcare, health care, internet, and disability services. In response to school closures, UNESCO recommended the use of distance learning programs and open educational applications and platforms that schools and teachers can use to reach learners remotely and limit the disruption of education. On 26 January, China instituted measures to contain the COVID-19 outbreak which included extending the Spring Festival holiday to contain the outbreak. Universities and schools around the country closed. By 20 March, over 70% of the world's learners were impacted by closures, with 124 country-wide school closures [4]. In India on 16 March, India declared

a countrywide lockdown of schools and colleges. On 19 March, the University Grants Commission asked universities to postpone exams. The board exams conducted by CBSE and ICSE boards have also been postponed.

COVID -19 impact the education system as follows:

Distance learning and online learning: Online learning has become a critical lifeline for education, as institutions seek to minimize the potential for community transmission Technology can enable teachers and students to access specialized materials well beyond textbooks, in multiple formats, and in ways that can bridge time and space. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many schools began conducting classes via videotelephony software such as Zoom. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development has created the framework to guide an education response to the COVID-19 Pandemic for distance learning [2].

Unequal access to technology: There is also a negative impact of COVID-19 on education. Lack of access to technology or fast, reliable internet access can prevent students in rural areas and from disadvantaged families. Lack of access to technology or good internet connectivity is an obstacle to continued learning, especially for students from disadvantaged families.

Unavailability of Libraries: To aid in slowing the transmission of COVID-19, hundreds of libraries have temporarily closed. In the United States, numerous major cities announced public library closures, including Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, and New York City, affecting 221 libraries. For students without internet at home, this increases the difficulty of keeping up with distance learning.

Unequal access to educational resources: Lack of limitations and exceptions to copyright can also have an impact on the ability of students to access the textbooks and materials they need to study. Several initiatives were taken to grant that students and teachers can have access to open educational resources or understand copyright limitations. The International Council for Open and Distance Education issued a special website to provide webinars, tips for online teaching, and resources for teachers [5]. In New Zealand, a group of publishers agreed to allow for virtual public readings of their materials from libraries and classrooms. A similar agreement took place in Australia, where the Australian Publishers Association, the Australian Library and Information Association, and the Australian Society of Authors agreed on a set of exceptional measures to allow libraries to provide educational content [3]. The Australian organization AMCOS agreed to give a gratis license for all their music sheets to all schools across Australia. An advocacy organization in the Netherlands launched a website to allow teachers to use free-licensed music and video for their classes. The Maricopa Millions OER Project launched a special emergency fund for building open educational resources.

Student learning outcomes: School closures negatively impact student learning outcomes. Schooling provides essential learning and when schools close, children and youth are deprived of opportunities for growth and development. The disadvantages are disproportionate for underprivileged learners who tend to have fewer educational opportunities beyond school. When schools close, parents are often asked to facilitate the learning of children at home and can struggle to perform this task. This is especially true for parents with limited education and resources [6]. Students gain slower during school closures than during a business-as-usual academic year. Kindergarten children in the U.S will loss 67% of their literacy ability during the COVID-19 school closures.

Increase rate of dropout: Student drop-out rates tend to increase as an effect of school closures due to the challenge of ensuring all students return to school once school closures end. This is especially true of protracted closures. Disadvantaged, at-risk, or homeless children are more likely not to return to school after the closures are ended, and the effect will often be a life-long disadvantage from lost opportunities. Schools are also hubs of social activity and human interaction. When schools are closed, many children and youth miss out on social contact that is essential to learning and development [7].

Assessments: The closure of schools, colleges, and universities not only interrupts the teaching for students around the world; the closure also coincides with a key assessment period and many exams have been postponed or cancelled. Internal assessments are perhaps thought to be less important, and many have been simply cancelled. But their point is to give information about the child's progress to families and teachers. The loss of this information delays the recognition of both high potential and learning difficulties and can have harmful long-term consequences for the child [9].

3. RECOMMENDATIONS OF UNESCO

UNESCO (2020) gave the recommendation for education.

1. Examine the readiness and choose the most relevant tools: Decide on the use of high-technology and low-technology solutions based on the reliability of local power supplies, internet connectivity, and digital skills of teachers and students. This could range from integrated digital learning platforms, video lessons, MOOCs, to broadcasting through radios and TVs.
2. Ensure inclusion of the distance learning programs: Implement measures to ensure that students including those with disabilities or from low-income backgrounds have access to distance learning programs if only a limited number of them have access to digital devices. Consider temporarily decentralizing such devices from computer labs to families and supporting them with internet connectivity.
3. Protect data privacy and data security: Assess data security when uploading data or educational resources to web spaces, as well as when sharing them with other organizations or individuals. Ensure that the use of applications and platforms does not violate students' data privacy.

4. Prioritize solutions to address psychosocial challenges before teaching: Mobilize available tools to connect schools, parents, teachers, and students with each other. Create communities to ensure regular human interactions, enable social caring measures, and address possible psychosocial challenges that students may face when they are isolated.
5. Plan the study schedule of the distance learning programs: Organize discussions with stakeholders to examine the possible duration of school closures and decide whether the distance learning program should focus on teaching new knowledge or enhance students' knowledge of prior lessons. Plan the schedule depending about the affected zones, level of studies, needs of student's needs, and availability of parents. Choose the appropriate learning methodologies based on the status of school closures and home-based quarantines. Avoid learning methodologies that require face-to-face communication [10].
6. Provide support to teachers and parents on the use of digital tools: Organize brief training or orientation sessions for teachers and parents as well if monitoring and facilitation are needed. Help teachers to prepare the basic settings such as solutions to the use of internet data if they are required to provide live streaming of lessons.
7. Blend appropriate approaches and limit the number of applications and platforms: Blend tools or media that are available for most students, both for synchronous communication and lessons and for asynchronous learning. Avoid overloading students and parents by asking them to download and test too many applications or platforms.
8. Develop distance learning rules and monitor students' learning process: Define the rules with parents and students on distance learning. Design formative questions, tests, or exercises to monitor closely students' learning process. Try to use tools to support the submission of students' feedback and avoid overloading parents by requesting them to scan and send students' feedback.
9. Define the duration of distance learning units based on students' self-regulation skills: Keep a coherent timing according to the level of the students' self-regulation and metacognitive abilities especially for live-streaming classes. Preferably, the unit for primary school students should not be more than 20 minutes, and no longer than 40 minutes for secondary school students.
10. Create communities and enhance connection: Create communities of teachers, parents, and school managers to address the sense of loneliness or helplessness, facilitate sharing of experience and discussion on coping strategies when facing learning difficulties.

4. CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, we can conclude that Covid-19 greatly affected the education system. Due to covid -19 formal education has become nonformal education. But technology cannot replace formal education. Even when school closures are temporary, it carries high social and economic costs. The disruptions they cause affect people across communities, but their impact is more severe for disadvantaged children and their families including interrupted learning, compromised nutrition, childcare problems, and consequent economic cost to families who cannot work. According to OECD (2020), school performance hinges critically on maintaining close relationships with teachers. School closures place burdens on schools as parents and officials redirect children to schools that are open.

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