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Pandemic and Online Education: The Psychological Effects of Online Education on Students

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ABSTRACT

Covid-19 has influenced how human exists within a society. Nobody would have ever thought that a virus like this would change our lives forever. It has changed every aspect of a normal person's life. Our social life, our physical health, and most important our emotional wellbeing have all changed with the beginning of a pandemic.

On 11 March 2020, World Health Organisation declared Covid-19 a Worldwide Pandemic. Surviving with a virus-like Corona has not been an easy one. A child who was told to not use a phone until his/her teenage years is now kept in front of phones and laptops because of online education. Online education has not been an easy task even though after 1.5 years people have started to adapt it rather complaining about it. Students, Parents, and Teachers have all adapted to the new learning system: Online Education.

This research will focus on how effective online education is according to students' parents and teachers all under one format. Technology, in general, has many pros and cons and it is very clear when we talk about online education that, if it was not so good technology, it would be very difficult to deal with the recent covid-19 times.

We will look at a closer view of how online education has affected different sections of society in many different ways.

Keywords - Online Education, Psychology, Psychological Effects, Covid-19, Pandemic, Students.

I. INTRODUCTION

Covid-19 was declared a Pandemic on March 11, 2020.² brought some of the major changes in the system of education in India and worldwide. Because Coronavirus was declared as a pandemic it affected educational systems worldwide leading to widespread closures of schools and colleges in many parts of the world.³ Technology is a key component of education in the

¹ Author is a student at St. Xavier's University, Ahmedabad, India.

² World Health Organisation. (2021). *World Health Organisation*. <https://www.who.int/>.

³ Onyema, E., Eucheria, N., Obafemi, F., Sen, S., Atonye, F., Sharma, A., Alsayed, A. (2020). Impact of Coronavirus Pandemic on Education. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 11(13),105-121.

21st Century. The increasing use of it has modified teachers' methods of traditional teaching to a very flexible and easily accessible approach in this Pandemic Times. Online Education has become so common that children studying in the nursery also have to compulsorily study on phones and laptops. Parents of such small children would not have imagined this as the future of their child. Teachers on the other hand have changed their teaching styles to make children understand. Times such as this make us realize the importance of meeting someone personally. For Instance, we get to know about their body language, their facial expressions tell us how attentive the person is when we meet in person. Online education has restricted all such forms because of which children are not able to concentrate because home is not a place to study for so many hours and on the other hand teachers are unable to get whether children have understood the topic well or not. Online education / E-Learning is learning done by studying at home using computers and courses provided on the internet. But in recent times, various schools in India have also started uploading content online on their respective portals or even YouTube.

Giving and taking online exams has also not been an easy task for both children and teachers. Major issues of concentration and lack of motivation have been found in children. Both subjective and objective exams are important to evaluate but since everything is online, most of the schools and colleges in India ask more objective questions than subjective questions.

(A) Research Objectives

The main objectives of this research are:

- 1) To know which medium is more preferable: Online or offline education among students, parents, and teachers.
- 2) To know the psychological effects of online education in India.
- 3) To assess whether or not online education will have long-lasting effects even after the pandemic gets over.

(B) Research Questions

The main questions that this research focuses on are:

- 1) How has the Pandemic affected the education system in India?
- 2) How people of different age groups are facing different problems when it comes to online education.

(C) Methodology

The study was carried out in India. Multiple methods of social research were utilized. A Non-controlled environment was kept in mind while giving the test to the respondents. A questionnaire was prepared to collect the relevant data. A total of 75 respondents from all over India belonging to varied age groups and gender were sent the questionnaire online on a random basis. The questionnaire aimed at determining two points, how students/parents/teachers have changed their way of pattern of learning or teaching and how either online or offline education is better than the other. It was a structured questionnaire with primarily closed-ended questions; however, some questions were open to all the possible answers of what the respondent thought. Books, online journals, and credible articles from newspapers and the internet were also used for the research project.

II. ONLINE EDUCATION IN INDIA

Education Globally is one of the most important sectors to witness revolutionary changes in recent times. This is primarily because the Whole world including India has faced a digital revolution which was more or less very much needed looking at the ongoing situation in India and the World. According to Federal Student Aid, an office of the U.S. Department of Education, it was noted that U.S. Students can be affected either directly because of the outbreak itself or because of the indirect effects of remote learning.⁴

One year into the Covid-19 pandemic, close to half the world's students are still affected by partial or full school closures and over 100 million additional children are going to fall below the minimum proficiency level in reading because of the ongoing situation.⁵ The typical Indian classroom was once characterized by students sitting through an hour-long session, wherein most of the time teacher used to teach without visual presentations. The use of Cloud Computing applications has increased the volume, velocity, and/or variety in data that is been generated every minute around the world from various services and applications.⁶ Schools and Colleges are increasingly adopting digital education through various online meeting platforms like google meet, zoom, WebEx, blackboard, Microsoft Teams, and many others.⁷ According

⁴ Office of Postsecondary Education. (2020, March 4). *Guidance for interruptions of study related to Coronavirus*. https://www.eou.edu/coronavirus/files/2020/03/COVID_19-EA-Guidance-for-interruptions-of-study-related-to-Coronavirus-COVID-19.pdf

⁵ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2021). *Education: From disruption to recovery*. <https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse>

⁶ Alashhab, Z., Anbar, M., Singh, M., Leau, Y., Al-Sai, Z., Alhayja'a, S. (2021). Impact of coronavirus pandemic crisis on technologies and cloud computing applications. *Journal of Electronic Science and Technology*, 19, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jnlest.2020.100059>

⁷ Muthuprasad, T., Aiswarya, S., Aditya, K., Jha, G. (2021). Students' perception and preference for online education in India during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Social Sciences and Humanities Open*, 3, 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2020.100101>

to the study, there has been a huge spike in the number of users if zoom in at the time of the Pandemic. As it is said that everything in the world has advantages and disadvantages, Online education also has advantages and disadvantages. While at times it becomes easier for teachers to show visual animations and graphics, sometimes it becomes difficult explaining particular topics.⁸

(A) A Shift From Offline To Online Education System In India- Data Analysis

In the following topic, we shall be discussing different points of view of the online education system from students, parents, and teachers.

1. STUDENTS

When a survey was taken on a random basis of students of different age groups and different classes following observations were made:

Table.1 Shows that data of students who are studying Online

Question	Response	Percentage (%)
Are you satisfied with the online education necessitated by the pandemic?	Yes	19
	No	38.1
	Maybe	42.9
Do you find it difficult to cope up with the syllabus?	Yes	42.9
	No	23.8
	Sometimes	33.3

⁸ Gond, R., Gupta, R. (2017). A study on Digital Education in India: Scope and Challenges of an Indian Society. *Anveshana's International Journal of Research in Regional Studies, Law, Social Sciences, Journalism and Management Practices*, 2(3),12-18. <http://publications.anveshanaindia.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/A-STUDY-ON-DIGITAL-EDUCATION-IN-INDIA-SCOPE-AND-CHALLENGES-OF-AN-INDIAN-SOCIETY-2.pdf>

How has social media helped you during these tough times?	It has helped me make new friends and widen my circle.	33.3
	Social media is comforting as it is easier for me to connect virtually than in person.	26.2
	It is the same (pre-and post-pandemic)	38.1
	It has not helped me at all	2.4
What do you feel the most from the following when it comes to being serious about your studies?	I procrastinate and don't usually pay attention to my studies unless exams are approaching	71.4
	I have a timetable that I follow diligently	28.6
Do you want the pre-pandemic system to resume soon or are you comfortable with the current situation?	Yes, it should resume	85.7
	No, I am comfortable with online education	14.3

Table one shows the data of different students from India who are studying either in school or in college. It is seen from the above data that most of the students are not sure whether they are satisfied with the online education 38.1 % of students are not satisfied with it and due to some of the other reasons, 19% of students are satisfied with the ongoing situation. While everything

has become online, social interaction has become a major concern for these students. For about 33.35 of students, it was easier to make new friends online and were comfortable making new friends online than on a one-on-one basis. As it is always said that one needs a good studious environment to study and for which schools have always been an important factor. Studying online has made students procrastinate a lot than having a timetable that is followed uniformly. Home Doesn't give that type of physical environment due to which it is becoming more and more difficult for them to study. When it was asked if they want the pre-pandemic system to resume about 85.7% agreed to it whereas 14.3% are comfortable having online education. Both categories might have their reasons to prove the point. Offline educations give much more opportunities than what an online education system does and on the other hand, there is nothing more comforting than studying from home. With these responses, we might be able to conclude that even though many people are not sure whether they are satisfied with the ongoing situation, they are facing problems also for example procrastination.

Table 2 shows the responses of students when asked various questions regarding Online Education in India

Question	Response	Percentage (%)
Do you find it difficult to feel motivated to study in the case of online education?	Yes	69
	No	31
Do you miss having extra-curricular activities on campus?	Do you miss having extra-curricular activities on campus?	92.9
	No, I do my other favorite activities at home	7.1
Do you feel that studying online would impact your career choices or progression in	Yes	69

the future?	No	31
How do you feel about online exams?	I feel anxious and stressed as I often do not study for the whole semester due to a lack of motivation, and then everything gets piled up	40.5
	I feel it is easy to give online exams	33.3
	Online and offline exams are the same for me	26.2

The above table shows different opinions on motivation, extra-curricular activities, career choices, and online exams. While 69% of students found it difficult to stay motivated for such a long time, about 31% of students did not face any such issues. Extra-Curricular activity participation enables students to master new skills and explore different roles outside of the classroom setting⁹. Extra-curricular activities on campus are one of the most exciting parts of offline campus which students are missing. This is because about 92.9% of students are missing on-campus extra-curricular activities. About 69% of students think that their view towards certain careers has widened and it might affect their own choice. Even though Offline education is much better, many new employment opportunities have increased in these one and a half years which is all because of the world turning online. With more procrastination and lack of willingness to study 40.5% of students are facing it difficult to give online exams because of the unnecessary last-minute stress and anxiety. With the introduction of Online Education, academic plans and question paper styles have become easier for the students; so, because of this reason, there are 33.3% of students find it easy to give online exams.

2. PARENTS

⁹ Wilson, N. (2009). *Impact of Extracurricular Activities on Students*. The University of Wisconsin-Stout. <https://minds.wisconsin.edu/bitstream/handle/1793/43405/2009wilsonn.pdf?sequence=1>

Table 3 shows the responses of the parents whose children are studying online

Question	Response	Percentage (%)
Are you satisfied with the online education system?	Yes	33.3
	No	41.7
	Maybe	25
By rating on a scale from 1 to 5, please specify how much do you think is the attention paid by your child towards online classes? (On this scale, the Highest is 5 and the lowest is 1)	1	0
	2	16.7
	3	58.3
	4	16.7
	5	8.3
Do you feel social Interaction would become difficult among students as a result of the pandemic?	Yes	100
	No	0
Most of the students are missing the extra-curricular activities which happen on campus. Do you feel it will affect the development of your child and that of other students?	Yes	100
	No	0

Do you think the lack of motivation to study has increased amongst most of the students worldwide?	Yes	75
	No	25

The above table shows the responses of the parents whose children are studying online since the pandemic started. From the above table, it can be reported that about 41.7% of parents are not satisfied with the online education system that their children are doing. About 33.3% are yet satisfied with the ongoing situation also. This might be because their children won't be facing and issues that may harm their development and learning process. While there are 25% of parents who are not sure whether they are satisfied or not. It is interesting to note that there are about 58.3% of parents who think their child/children are paying attention at the time but there are times when they are not. The online system has somewhat limited social interaction which was very often earlier. Due to which 100% of parents think that social interaction would become difficult as a result of the pandemic. With the ongoing pandemic, offline schools and colleges are closed due to which on-campus experiences have been something which is missed by students, Due to which even 100% of parents feel that it will hinder the development of the child. As stated earlier, school and college environments play a very important role. At home studies are at times difficult for both; students and parents due to which 75% of parents think that lack of motivation to study has increased among students worldwide.

Table 4 states the responses of parents in certain areas of online studies

Question	Response	Percentage (%)
Do you feel online exams should be stricter for the betterment of your child?	Yes	58.3
	No	41.7
Do you feel lack of concentration will become a major concern among students?	Yes	83.3

	No	16.7
Do you want the pre-pandemic educational system to resume soon for the betterment of your child?	Yes	100
	No	0

From the above table, we can infer that about 58.3% of parents feel that online exams should be stricter for the betterment of the child. With so many distractions at home, about 83.3% of parents feel that lack of concentration will become a major issue among students as a result of the pandemic. This might affect the development, future, and career of students due to which tension among parents regarding this issue will become a major issue in the future. About 100% of parents feel that the pre-pandemic educational system should resume for the betterment of the child due to many issues.

3. TEACHERS

Table 5 shows the responses of teachers who are teaching online

Question	Response	Percentage (%)
Do you think there are changes in annual academic planning for students of all age groups after education was turned online?	Yes	81.3
	No	18.8
On a scale of 1 to 5, how efficient do you think online education is? (On this scale, the Highest is 5 and the lowest is 1)	1	0
	2	6.3
	3	81.3

	4	12.5
	5	0
Do you think children will have concentration problems post-pandemic?	Yes	81.3
	No	18.8
Do you feel children are less motivated to study in online classes as against offline classes?	Yes, they are less motivated to study	81.3
	No, the level of motivation among students has not changed despite the pandemic	18.8
Do you want the pre-pandemic educational system and procedures to resume in the future?	Yes	81.3
	No	18.8
Do you feel that studying online would impact the career choices or progression of students in the future?	Yes	75
	No	25

When we look at the above table, it can easily come to notice that education before and after a pandemic has many changes internally as well. When it was asked to the teachers who are currently teaching students online, there were about 81.3% of teachers stated that there are changes in annual academic planning for the students. This is because the medium has

completely changed over the last 1.5 years. There are about 6.3% of teachers who gave a 2-rating (on the scale) to the efficiency of the online education system whereas 81.3% gave 3 ratings (on the scale) and 12.5% of teachers gave 4 ratings (on the scale) to the efficiency. When it was asked about various problems in students that might increase with the onset of the online education system, there were different results altogether. Earlier when we talked about the concentration problems to parents; they agreed that they will have problems similarly 81.3% of teachers also agree that children will have more concentration problems. There are about 81.3% of teachers who feel that less motivation to study online has also increased among the system. About 75% of teachers feel that their career choices in the future also might change. This is because many new fields have come forward in the system.

Certain improvements were suggested by the teachers for the betterment of students. The few points suggested are as follows:

- 1) A better hybrid system of the education system was suggested.
- 2) CCE Module for assessment evaluation for school-going students should be brought back to secure good marks.
- 3) As far as the online education system continues, the syllabus for all grades except board grades should be reduced so that less burden on students is imposed.
- 4) Students should be given exposure to digital platforms to expand their scope of learning and not be limited to social interaction and entertainment purposes only.
- 5) Since it becomes difficult for some students to cope up with the hard subjects when it is online, more subject choices should be introduced so that students can explore a wide range of areas.

III. LEARNING THROUGH DIFFERENT ONLINE PLATFORMS: CASE STUDY OF YOUTUBE AND UDEMY

There are various platforms, which provide free information to students. These platforms are usually easily accessible through a normal internet connection. It has been said that the human brain processes images 60,000 times faster than text and 90% of information transmitted to the brain is through visuals.¹⁰ Video-Sharing has become very common across the globe wherein YouTube is said to be the most successful Video-sharing website with over 100 million videos being watched every day¹¹. YouTube channels are being widely used as a viable knowledge-

¹⁰ Brewer, T., Knight, D., Noiray G., Naik, H. (2019, May 6-9). *Digital Twin Technology in the Field Reclaims Offshore Resources*. Offshore Technology Conference, Houston, Texas. <https://doi.org/10.4043/29231-MS>

¹¹ Cheng X., Dale C., Liu J., (2008, June 2-4). *Statistics and Social Network of YouTube Videos*. International Workshop on Quality of Service, Enschede, Netherlands. 10.1109/IWQOS.2008.32

sharing platform where there is something for every student. With the ongoing online education, the use of such platforms has increased to an extent where an official teacher starts a YouTube channel and uploads the content over there¹². More of such learning is increasing and we can see that because google owned video-streaming services recorded 265 million monthly active users worldwide and over 1200 YouTube channels are of Indian Content Creators. This system has its pros and cons. When looked at from a wider perspective, Students can access more reliable information from any part of the world at any time. But at the same time, creating content related to studies, in general, requires one to have their identification in the industry and should have experience for the same. Some subjects are not taught in schools but are available on YouTube which gives a student a wide range of areas to explore. Such platforms have majorly attracted the students wherein they might use it wisely or might misuse the name of online education.¹³ Therefore, it becomes important to know what is correct and viable and what is not.

Another case of such a platform that has been widely used by the people in India and Worldwide is Udemy. According to the data, Udemy has seen 200% growth in India in April and May 2020 alone.¹⁴ The reason for the sudden growth of this platform is also because of rapid change in the world. Udemy is a platform that provides a wide range of courses from various educators around the world which is easily accepted by all ranges of society. Online learning is becoming a huge catalyzer for people and companies to help the adoption of this rapid change in the world. Udemy also provides training courses that can be used for employees of an office. The algorithm of Udemy only allows feasible data to the subscribers wherein no unrelated content is showcased, unlike YouTube. It is also a user-friendly website wherein one can review the course at their time and availability. There are Numerous online learning platforms in the market such as Coursera, Lynda, Skillshare that serve millions of people. Many universities such as Harvard and Stanford are also providing courses to these platforms.¹⁵ With such platforms emerging, learning online has become accessible to each and every section of society.

IV. CONCLUSION

With all other departments of the government turning online, the educational sector has also

¹² Srivastava, S. (2021, July 19). How educational videos are bridging the learning gap. *The Education Times*, 3.

¹³ Gandhi, S. (2021, July 5). Digitization is transforming the education sector. *The Education Times*, 2.

¹⁴ Udemy. (n.d.). *Online Courses – Learn Anything, On Your Schedule*. Retrieved 21 July 2021, from <https://www.udemy.com/>

¹⁵ Koksai, I. (n.d.). *The Rise of Online Learning*. Forbes. Retrieved 21 July 2021, from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/ilkerkoksai/2020/05/02/the-rise-of-online-learning/?sh=ee9a39772f3c>

seen a tremendous change with the onset of a virus that nobody ever imagined off. It has always been rightly said that, with difficult times, there comes a ray of hope; a path that shows positivity. When it comes to the education sector, technology has played a very important role due to which the online education system as the only mode of education has come into existence. A coin has two sides, a positive side which is for the winning team, and a negative side which is for the losing team. It is how we look at it. Similarly, if we say online education has been a good choice, it might be good and vice versa. If it was not for this system, many students across India might have faced issues that may hinder their future therefore no system is good or bad, it is how we as the public look at it.

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