Post COVID-19: A Study on Academic Challenges of Higher Education Sector with Special Reference to the Select Affiliated Colleges of Mangalore University

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ARTICLE DETAILS	ABSTRACT
Research Paper	COVID-19\Novel Corona Virus is a kind of pandemic viral infection widely spread all across the regions of the world causing effects on human lives and economic activities miserably. To overcome the excessive transmission of deadly virus among the people, Indian Government had imposed National Lockdown which consequently hampered the routine operations of all sectors of the economy. Higher Education Sector is one of which has seriously affected due to this pandemic. The use of technology (ICT) has been sought extensively during this unexpected situation for the smooth flow of teaching-learning process in the country. The Post COVID-19 scenario has brought out several challenges and obstacles to the education sector in relation to effectiveness of virtual education over conventional methodology on the students and its effortless operation by the Educators. New issues and hindrances have been evolved in Educational Institutions owing to the evil crisis created by the epidemic. All sort of problems developed by Corona needs to be tackled cautiously by the Higher Educational Institutions\ Concerned Higher Authority. In regard to this, this Research Paper has been designed to bring out and understand the issues and challenges of the

Higher Education Sector in post COVID-19 era with reference to the selected Affiliated Colleges of Mangalore University in Dakshina Kannada district. For the purpose of study, the data has been collected from 25 Educational Stakeholders (Respondents) associated with UG\PG Colleges of Mangalore University on convenience basis and summarised in conceptual/descriptive form.

INTRODUCTION:

Novel Corona Virus has become a global communicable disease, causing disastrous effects on the normal operations of entire world economy. The sudden outbreak of the pandemic has resulted in the critical damages to a growing country like India which has witnessed the evil impact of virus on its economic development. In order to combat the widespread of microbe among the human community, the Government of India had imposed **Nationwide Lockdown** from March to May 2020. The Higher Education Sector has suffered drastically due to the shutdown of **Universities** and **Colleges** in India. Higher education is recognized to be the potential significant sector playing a major role in generation of **employment opportunities** and in moulding **better citizens** for the future of our country. The unanticipated crisis brought out by the corona virus had led to the temporary prohibition on on-campus teaching where the students have been prevented to attend classroom teaching inside the colleges. The advancement of modern technology in the field of education has paved the way for integration of **Teaching** and **ICT tools.**

The Higher Education is currently experiencing the age of technological exposure in terms of digitalisation of teaching-learning process. The introduction of **ICT** has made revolutionary changes in education reaching vast range of students all across the regions of India. The post **COVID-19** has led to the emergence of new normal condition where numerous challenges have been identified in respect of **teaching pedagogy\methodology.** The online teaching has failed to attribute a complete success on smooth flow of learning activities as some ratio of learners could not able to access internet due to different issues and problems. The unusual condition of pandemic has sought the importance of **blended teaching approach** by stressing on the merge of conventional and modern teaching methods. The higher educational institutions need to find out alternative solutions to the hardships caused by **COVID-**

19. The Government too needs to play a major role to help the colleges and teachers to overcome from all the obstacles faced by them amidst **COVID 19.**

OBJECTIVES:

- To study and determine the **contemporary challenges** and **emerging issues** experienced by the higher educational institutes during and post **COVID-19** period.
- To understand the effectiveness of different modes of teaching practices adopted by the Educators after **COVID 19** eruption.
- To offer **valuable suggestions** to mitigate the hindrances of HEI's brought out by the contagion epidemic.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

To undertake a research survey on contemporary challenges of higher education after pandemic, the requisite and relevant information have been collected from 25 teaching faculty serving in UG/PG colleges of Mangalore University through **telephonic survey/oral discussion** and condensed concisely to throw light on obstacles identified in the domain of **HEI's** since the period of **COVID-19** dissemination. To support the views of respondents in connection to this current issue, various other data has been drawn from secondary sources like journals and websites etc.

EMERGING CHALLENGES TO HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR IN POST COVID-19 AGE:

Virtual tutoring has become the default mode of education during the times of lockdown. The students of India had been driven out from their learning centres owing to the closure of all educational institutions. The Teaching Professionals were restricted to their homes to facilitate education via digital means. The college students had undergone job stress and developed examination anxiety on account of uncertainty and psychological impact created by home lockdown and corona. The post **COVID** period had realised the significance of online teaching over offline way of education. Several challenges and issues were encountered due to the excessive dependence on **E-Learning** by the learners.

The electronic teaching has failed to reach vast section of the pupils in view of network problem, poor financial background, technical glitches, lack of resources, poor technical proficiency in operation etc. The immediate and quick implementation of virtual education as per the guidelines of **UGC** in

universities and colleges had become herculean task since the access to internet\smart phones is still limited in rural areas compared to urban\city regions. The students hailing from remote background areas face more issues to get connected and adjusted to this non-offline teaching. The lack of direct **face to face interaction** with the students in online platform does not permit the faculty to have **discussions, mentoring activities** and **provide motivation** etc.to help them to achieve their life goals/objectives.

The second wave of dreaded viral infection has terribly influenced the whole education structure yet again by relying heavily on digital techniques in most of the states of India. The occurrence of waves in series pushed the students and colleges to experience the unusual pressure. The postponement of examinations critically affected the minds of youth generation by reaching to the point of loss of interest on studies and academic curriculum. Besides, the college management/universities are finding difficulty to meet unexpected expenses as most of them face the obstacle of cash flows due to temporary stoppage of day-today operations and low enrolment rate etc.

SUGGESTIONS:

➢ The students belonging to backward classes\rural areas and financially low background should be encouraged to attend the virtual classes through the supply of requisite **smart phones** and such other **E-Resources** by the **university\college management.**

➢ **State Government** needs to ensure **full network facility,** all across the regions of the state including the remote places which enables the students of these zones to participate in online classes regularly without any interruptions.

➢ The **Central Government\UGC** is required to extend the financial assistance to higher educational centres to tackle all sorts of problems generated by pandemic to ensure **equity, access and quality** in education in the midst of worst hit epidemic.

➢ The **Indian Universities** should take necessary steps for the effective implementation of **NEP-2020** at the institute level to resolve the issues originated after **COVID.**

CONCLUSION:

The transmission of **COVID-19** virus had given rise to several hindrances to the routine operations of tutoring and learning process. The Lockdown imposed by the Government has hampered the smooth conductance of educational activity. The post **COVID-19** period has made teaching methodology a complex one to some extent where cent percent traditional teaching could not be possible which

consequently urged for the blending of conventional teaching with virtual lecturing. Owing to the unfavourable current situation, the Teachers have to rely upon hosting of classes electronically which require technical proficiency among them and co-operation from the students as well. Certain segment of lecturers is still struggling to maintain the same depth of engagement with students as like they could have in physical classrooms. To sum up, the challenges imposed by **COVID 19** on higher education has become acute and the **Government/UGC** needs to come up with different schemes for the improvement of quality of **online education** and provide necessary safety measures to the students and teachers in physical classrooms as well.

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