

## THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON EDUCATION: EFFICIENCY AND CHALLENGES OF ONLINE LEARNING

DR. WALTER HUGH PARKER<sup>1</sup> AND PRITHA BASU<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor in French, SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Ramapuram, Chennai, India

Email: [walterhp4@gmail.com](mailto:walterhp4@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor in French, SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Ramapuram, Chennai, India

Email: [prithabasu2011@gmail.com](mailto:prithabasu2011@gmail.com)

---

### ABSTRACT

*This paper gives an overview of the advantages and challenges in the use of the internet and technology as online learning is replacing face-to-face interaction in the teaching-learning process today, as a method to continue learning amidst the Covid-19 pandemic. As the popularity of online learning grows, many colleges and universities are now offering big classes online. For effective teaching and learning, such a discourse may pose administrative and pedagogical issues. The majority of online classes rely on text-based communication and content. Online classes may lack a student-centric approach and active learning environments, despite the benefits of text-based content and asynchronous written assignments and discussions. Furthermore, providing timely and meaningful feedback to students can be difficult and time-consuming for online course teachers. While tackling the pedagogical issues of large online classes, instructional strategies that rely on collaborative online tools and mobile applications can assist increase student engagement and active learning. This study looks at the advantages and downsides of online learning in the Covid-19 era, as well as potential remedies to the issues.*

**Keywords:** online learning, online education, online teaching-learning, distance learning, internet connectivity, technology, mobile app, Covid-19, pedagogical challenge, effective learning

### INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The internet, mobile phones, and technology have all become intertwined with life as we know it in today's world. Whether it's for communication, getting information, or enjoyment, internet connectivity can go a long way. The first web browser was developed in the 1990s, and the way people communicate has evolved dramatically since then. Then came the trend of owning a computer and having access to the internet in order to make life easier in a variety of ways. It is undeniable that machines have made life easier for humans. Due to the Covid-19 epidemic, the question of where we would be without it has emerged today. To avoid a large gathering of people and to adopt social distancing in order to prevent human-to-human transmission of the Covid-19 virus, schooling has gradually become fully online. This paper aims to discuss the fact that most educational institutions have resorted to online activities or classes to ensure that the teaching-learning process continues unhindered.

But there is so much to take into consideration in the case of a completely online educational system. Before we resort to online classes or activities we must first consider the following aspects: (1) Do we have a reliable source of internet? (2) What do we prioritise? Do we prioritise our own teaching strategies or the satisfaction of the stakeholders? Or are we taking advantage of it? (3) Do we study the institutions' demographics? (4) Is every institution open to suggestions about the challenges of a proper environment and resources to be used in an online teaching-learning scenario, the lack of which can cause a lot of anxiety and stress to both the teachers and learners? (5) What are suggestions to orient students towards effective learning in online classes?

This article aims to provide some answers to these questions and some solutions to the challenges faced online with practical implications for teaching and learning.

### METHODOLOGY

While the Covid-19 disruption has worsened since the Covid-19 pandemic, the impact on educational institutions has been significant. In-person learning became history in learning institutions when methods to protect and prevent Covid-19, including social distancing and lockdowns, were imposed. As a result, the learning process moved online, allowing students to complete their studies while keeping to Covid-19 guidelines. Since the number of Covid-19

## **Proceedings of DHE approved One Day National Seminar on Role of Digitization during COVID-19**

cases is increasing, most universities have resorted to online learning as a solution to overcome Covid-19 limits and reduce time wasting, according to Friedman (2020). However, subsequent research has found that online learning has been hampered as a result of Covid-19, which has had a negative impact on students' performance. To minimise negative effects on students' performance, these problems must be solved in order to maximise the efficiency of online learning owing to the pandemic. The only way to do that is to take into consideration both the benefits and difficulties faced in the online teaching-learning process and follow the solutions proposed in the findings and analysis, in order to facilitate learning in the inevitability of the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Students should use digital devices connected remotely to access an instructor who teaches via the internet in order to participate in online learning. As a result, no in-person contact between students and instructors are allowed in online learning. Various stakeholders, including students, educators, advocates, and policymakers, have questioned the nature and organisation of this learning as a result of Covid-19. For example, 77 percent of college students believe that online or remote learning is worse than in-person learning because of the multiple problems that come with it (Friedman, 2020). Technical issues, distractions, and poor time management, low motivation, difficulty understanding course expectations, lack of in-person interactions, difficulties adapting to unfamiliar technology, and increased uncertainty about the future are just a few of the well-documented challenges of distance learning (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020).

Due to Covid-19, technical concerns have posed a substantial impediment to online learning. Despite the fact that the technology is lauded for being successful and efficient in conducting online learning, findings from numerous case studies and students suggest otherwise. Several students have reported technological difficulties when taking online classes during the Covid-19 (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020). Experts have acknowledged this concern, stating that the internet world is prone to technical glitches. During live videoconferencing, for example, students may witness an abrupt shutdown of their laptops. As a result, the student who was affected by the abrupt shutdown may be asked to restart the device while the remainder of the class continues (Friedman, 2020). After turning on the computer, getting and catching up with others is a lengthy process that causes a student to abandon the course. Connecting to an online class, for example, necessitates strong internet access in order to communicate with others in real time. Students sometimes have intermittent Wi-Fi connections, making it difficult for them to attend class on a regular basis. In short, technical concerns are a major barrier to remote learning that must be addressed immediately during the Covid-19 period.

Furthermore, due to Covid-19, distractions and poor time management are a serious problem with online study. Because students cannot meet at school, most online learning is done from home as a result of the restrictions posed by the pandemic. When students are at home, however, they face several distractions, particularly when juggling house responsibilities and learning assignments (Friedman, 2020). Other disruptions could come from parents and younger siblings who may require the attention of other family members without consenting to online learning. Time management has also become difficult for many students due to increased chores at home, such as maintaining the cleanliness and hygiene in the house. On the other hand, it has been claimed that keeping motivated during online learning is difficult. The appeal of getting started with coursework is lost on the majority of students. Others may believe that studying at home is not the greatest setting. As a result, many students struggle to develop the perspective that home is a place where they may study. As a result, students may struggle to focus on online classes.

Furthermore, many students taking online courses have found it difficult to grasp course expectations in the online mode. Students have started some classes before most institutions closed. As a result, many students are perplexed by the abrupt move to online learning and are unable to pinpoint where they left off (Aliyyah et al., 2020). As a result, it's been challenging to understand the course's goals and requirements. As a result, the majority of students remain off-topic, causing them to struggle to understand the course. To finish the course, some classes require students to do practical lessons or final group presentations (Friedman, 2020). Often, the two strategies have assisted students in determining the course's end or completion. Distance learning, on the other hand, has made it harder for students to attend practical classes and provide group presentations. On the other hand, since instructors cannot maintain the attention of students for a long time in the online mode, the lack of in-person contact has been a possible obstacle for distant learning (Baticulon et al., 2021). Some classes, such as music, might benefit from face-to-face interaction between students and professors. Finally, in contrast to real labs, digitally recorded labs cause other students to miss

## **Proceedings of DHE approved One Day National Seminar on Role of Digitization during COVID-19**

important steps. As a result, this problem may have an impact on students' ability to work as engineers, musicians, or nurses.

Finally, with distance learning, adjusting to foreign technologies has been a huge challenge. Previously, not all students and instructors are able to communicate with others using digital devices and technologies. The restrictions posed by the pandemic, on the other hand, have driven most of them to experiment with new technologies like Zoom and Skype. They can use these digital tools to access online lessons (Dhawan, 2020). As a result, because the gadgets are so important, individuals who are unfamiliar with them must learn how to use them before commencing the lectures. As a result, time management is a major concern, and catching up with the rest is challenging.

Uncertainty regarding the technological aspect, on the other hand, has harmed a large number of students enrolled in online courses as a result of Covid-19. Multiple students experience stress and anxiety as a result of the unusual changes from in-person to distant learning. Others may begin to doubt their ability to learn in the future if the condition persists (Friedman, 2020). Other students, in particular, have been compelled to leave classes or leave schools if their institutions support online courses. As a result, if students experience worry and tension as a result of online lessons, there is enormous concern regarding the education system's future and stability.

### **FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**

Some recommended solutions to the different obstacles associated with online learning due to Covid-19 include informing the instructor of any technical issues and creating a schedule to avoid distractions and manage time (Aliyyah et al., 2020). Informing the instructor about one's condition is critical since they will understand the condition of the students and look for ways to compensate, such as recording sessions and distributing them to students after a live session (Baticulon et al., 2021). As a result, students who had technical difficulties may be able to find time to review what others had learned while they were offline. Similarly, planning a timetable at home is essential for ensuring that significant daily activities, such as attending online classes and conducting personal research, are prioritised. As a result, pupils will be better able to manage their time and avoid distractions. Furthermore, to stay motivated to take online classes, students should take up a productive occupation while at home (Dhawan, 2020).

Mobile technology can assist students engage in authentic learning and the transfer of information and skills to real-life situations, while augmented reality applications can assist students participate in genuine learning and the transfer of knowledge and skills to real-life situations (Fritschi & Wolf, 2012). Furthermore, new technological solutions can enable just-in-time access to information as well as shared collaborative areas for students or teachers to collaborate on projects together. Students, on the other hand, should actively ask questions in order to fully comprehend the course expectations. As a result, they will have an easier time transitioning from in-person to online learning. Students will appreciate the relevance of distance learning during Covid-19 and increase their performance if the above strategies are implemented and consistently followed in the future.

### **CONCLUSION**

The research has revealed that the numerous obstacles that teachers and learners are encountering in the online learning process as a result of Covid-19 have answers that, if followed, can assist them in overcoming the issues. During online classes, for example, students frequently face technical difficulties. They must learn how to explain this to their teachers and how to obtain lecture recordings of the lessons in order to keep up with the rest of the class. We may use the insights in this article to overcome the numerous obstacles related with online learning, such as avoiding distractions, time management, and maximising the use of mobile technology. Even if the shift may be tough, adhering to the many alternatives discussed can aid in the effectiveness of online learning, which is unavoidable in the Covid-19 era, and profit from the various advantages it provides as compared to traditional teaching-learning techniques.

### **REFERENCES**

- Adedoyin, O. B., & Soykan, E. (2020). Covid-19 pandemic and online learning: the challenges and opportunities. *Interactive Learning Environments*, 1-13. <https://bit.ly/3esIzpB>
- Aliyyah, R. R., Rachmadtullah, R., Samsudin, A., Syaodih, E., Nurtanto, M., & Tambunan, A. R. S. (2020). The perceptions of primary school teachers of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic period: A case study in Indonesia. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies*, 7(2), 90-109. <https://bit.ly/3clvuvG>

### **Proceedings of DHE approved One Day National Seminar on Role of Digitization during COVID-19**

- Baticulon, R. E., Sy, J. J., Alberto, N. R. I., Baron, M. B. C., Mabulay, R. E. C., Rizada, L. G. T., ... & Reyes, J. C. B. (2021). Barriers to online learning in the time of COVID-19: A national survey of medical students in the Philippines. *Medical science educator*, 1-12. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s40670-021-01231-z>
- Dhawan, S. (2020). Online learning: A panacea in the time of the COVID-19 crisis. *Journal of Educational Technology Systems*, 49(1), 5-22. Dhawan, S. (2020). Online learning: A panacea in the time of the COVID-19 crisis. *Journal of Educational Technology Systems*, 49(1), 5-22.
- Friedman, J. (2020, May 20). The challenges of pivoting to online classes and how to tackle them. <https://www.usnews.com/education/best-colleges/articles/how-to-overcome-challenges-of-online-classes-du>
- Fritschi, J., & Wolf, M. A. (2012). Turning on mobile learning in North America: Illustrative initiatives and policy implications. UNESCO working paper series on mobile learning. Paris, France: UNESCO.