

## **Does COVID -19 Changed Education Forever?**

**Nuzhat Sultana**  
**Chief Editor IJP**

Covid-19 is arguably an event that has changed many things for Humans such as social interactions etc. The most important change that the Covid-19 made in this century was that it changed the mode of instruction/teaching from in-person to remote or online. Countries around the globe had no idea what was about to hit them and once the pandemic started gaining momentum governments could see no other option but to close down everything. Everything started closing down from markets to offices, schools, and universities. After the closure of educational institutes throughout the world, there was a need to resume educational activities and the only option available was to conduct online classes. Indeed, it was unprecedented globally in the educational sector for students in more than 130 countries to be out of school or university at the same time(1, 2)\_Even before the pandemic started "there was already high growth and adoption in education technology, with global education technology investments reaching US\$18.66 billion in 2019 and the overall market for online education projected to reach \$350 Billion by 2025. Whether it is language apps, virtual tutoring, video conferencing tools, or online learning software, there has been a significant surge in usage since COVID-19."(3) . Now coming to the important question of whether online teaching is effective or not we will take a look at some researchers conducted in this short span of time during the pandemic. Some researchers show that students retain 25-60% more as compared to 8-10% in a class room(4).Students learn faster by re reading, skipping or by going back as they choose. Another aspect of online teaching was that teachers recorded their lectures and shared them with their students who could watch and re-watch the lectures and master the content. A study found out that students found recorded lectures very helpful in their academic progress (5). On the other hand, there are some problems with online teaching as there are with almost everything. The main problem with online teaching is internet connectivity issues and access to technology. Students from different socio-economic

backgrounds have different levels of access to technology which creates a hurdle for students from low-income families to participate in online learning. Situation is even worse for those who take courses that cannot be taught online. In addition, students may be uncertain about assessment procedures for online assignments and projects, and will suffer when they do not have an internet facility to participate in the evaluation process, and this could adversely affect their grade averages. For example in Switzerland, Norway, and Austria 95% of students have a computer for their schoolwork, while only 34% in Indonesia do(3). This gap may be more widespread in Pakistan but we do not have sufficient data to comment on this. Another important factor for online learning was the housing situations in which students were living. For instance, students living in toxic households had a hard time studying from home as compared to the students whose housing situations were good. Before Covid-19 teachers and students in elementary and secondary schools were in experienced regarding online teaching(6).Structured environment is also require for learning as kids are more easily distracted so effectiveness varies amongst age group. Online education is inadequate for practical learning. Spontaneous student-to-student and student-to-teacher interactions are also lost in online learning. This highlights the necessity to enhance the role of technologies' capabilities in terms of their methods of communication in supporting interaction among students and delivering a quality educational experience. Overall, online teaching will be effective if governments around the world start investing in educational technology. Government should start providing laptops and good internet connections among other things to the underprivileged class, online learning will improve for people from all socio-economic backgrounds. Otherwise many people will be left behind and online teaching will only benefit a select few. It is clear that pandemic has greatly disturb the education system that was already losing its

relevance. Could the move to online learning be catalyst to create a new more effective method of education. What has been made clear through this pandemic is the importance of disseminating knowledge across borders and all parts of society. If online learning technology can play a role here, it is incumbent upon all of us to explore its full potential.

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