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## Editorial

### **COVID 19 and its impact on education**

*“Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will.”*

– Mahatma Gandhi

The COVID-19 outbreak that began in early 2020 had a very serious impact in India and abroad. The Indian government, like the rest of the world, has had to take the necessary strict measures to ensure the safety of people's lives. The draconian measures that governments have had to take following the outbreak of COVID-19 are severely impacting the economy, especially the electronics, pharmaceutical, logistics and education sectors. All educational institutions had to be closed to protect the lives of students. All formal classes have been suspended and exams postponed indefinitely.

All educational institutions including higher educational institutions, are gradually moving away from formal teaching and learning processes in physical classrooms to online teaching and learning environments. At this juncture, institutions had to face and overcome various challenges such as, the effectiveness of virtual learning in comparison to physical mode of learning, country's current digital infrastructure/ mobile network coverage of the whole country including remote localities, affordability of digital appliances and services by the parents of the learners, etc.

Many universities around the world have fully digitized their operations, recognizing the greatest need of the moment. The question during this difficult time is not whether online teaching methods can deliver quality education, but how to enable academic institutions to adopt online learning on such a large scale. Maintaining quality education in educational institutions is another challenge during this crisis. The use of 'virtual learning environments' is not limited to well-structured information spaces, but as content management becomes a major issue for all teachers involved in virtual learning environments, this Standards are becoming more and more important.

Governments and other agencies have made several arrangements to continue teaching, learning, and other educational activities. SWAYAM is one of the easiest-to-use platforms for MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses). Swayamprabha is another ICT initiative of the Indian government that offers 32 DTH TV channels with educational content 24 hours a day.

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National Digital Library, e-PG Pathshala are other government initiatives to promote e-learning for students. For hands-on learning, the government, in collaboration with IIT Bombay, has launched e-Yantra, which is creating a lab for embedded systems training.

The higher education institutions are reinventing different methods and approaches for effective knowledge delivery and assessment systems to sustain academic activity during such a critical time. In light of the fact that many universities have had to postpone final examinations for the past year and a half, continuous evaluation of student performance is given priority and considered essential for evaluating learning outcomes.

Hemanta Kr. Baruah

Editor

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