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Students Awareness about Online classes during the Pandemic of Covid 19 with Special Reference to Affiliated Colleges of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli

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Abstract:

“Purpose of education is to moralise and socialise the people,” said Dr B. R. Ambedkar. The role of education in the holistic development of a society is immeasurable because good education shapes people right from their childhood and thus the entire society. That’s why every developed civilisation had given keen importance to education in any form. The way people get educated is a reflection of the culture of that period. It has travelled through rock carvings, manuscripts, papers and today it has reached our smartphones due to the Covid’19 Pandemic situation. So, the researcher attempted to study the College Students Awareness about Online classes during the Covid’19 Pandemic situation.

Key Words: College Students Awareness, Online classes, Covid’19 Pandemic situation.

1.Introduction:

The coronavirus disease-2019 (Covid'19) pandemic is a worldwide health crisis that was reported in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. As per the report of the World Health Organization, Covid'19 has reached 213 countries and territories, including India. The publics get infected by close contact with one another of about 6 feet distance through breathing droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks. To ensure the distance measure among the peoples, social or physical distancing is the only appropriate way to control the Covid'19. The educational institutes around the world have been temporarily closed to contain the spread of the Covid'19 pandemics. The closure of educational institutes is impacting over 91% of the world's student population.

The purpose of life is education. This may look exaggerated, but there is no other way to explain the importance of education than this. There is a couplet in Tamizh which means "letters and numbers are two eyes of man". This shows the importance given to education by mankind. But as an unprecedented event came in our way, that is the covid-19 pandemic. The present era is known for its digital technology. Several multimedia and technological tools are available, which have shortened the distance among the people far from each other. On online teaching and learning for delivering the content in the absence of physical classrooms. colleges have started the online classes using technological platforms, such as Zoom, Google Hangouts and Microsoft Teams. Not only the above platforms, but some of them are also using Google Suite and YouTube videos to make online classes as engaging as offline ones.

2. Profile of sample unit

a. Manonmaniam Sundaranar University (MSU)

Manonmaniam Sundaranar University is a dynamic institution of higher learning, set in a rural milieu of southern Tamil Nadu, with a campus spread of 550 acres. The University was established by the Government of Tamil Nadu as a teaching-cum-affiliating University on 7th September 1990 to cater to the long-felt needs of the people of the four southernmost districts of Tamil Nadu viz., Tirunelveli, Tenkasi, Thoothukudi, and Kanyakumari. It is named after the renowned Tamil Poet scholar, Professor P. Sundaram Pillai (1855-1897), the author of the famous verse drama Manonmaniam. It is his poem that has become "Tamil Thaa Vazhthu" the official

invocation song sung in all functions in Tamilnadu. The motto of the University is “Reaching the Unreached”. Around 2400 students are studying in this institution directly. The University has under its jurisdiction 91 affiliated Colleges, 6 University Colleges and 3 Constituent Colleges, about 1,20,000 students in regular mode and 40,000 students in distance mode.

b. Sri Sarada College for Women, Sarada Nagar, V.M. Chatram. Tirunelveli.

Swami Chidbhavandha, the great saint, seer and savant founded Sri Ramakrishna Tapovanam at Tirupparairathurai near Tiruchirappalli, on the banks of river Cauvery, with the object of propagating moral and spiritual values and promoting value-based education, particularly among women. Driven by the vision of Swami Chidbhavanda, Sri Ramakrishna Tapovannam runs 40 Schools and 7 Colleges all of which are known for discipline and academic excellence. Among the 7 colleges run by the Tapovanam, Sri Sarada College for women, Tirunelveli was started in 1986 and is affiliated to the Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli.

c. Sri Ram Nallamani Yadava college, Kodikurichi.

Sri Ram Nallamani Yadava College of Arts and Science, situated on the verdurous, fertile and magnificent foothills of the Western Ghat near Tenkasi, is run by the management of Sri Ram Nallamani Yadava Educational Society. The college stands as a pillar of support to the rural youth who are badly in need of facilities for the prosecution of higher studies. The college is a coeducational institution approved by the Government of Tamil Nadu and affiliated with Manonmaniam Sundaranar University. The sprawling campus of the college spreading over an area of about 150 acres is pollution-free providing the best of conditions for higher studies. The college is an ISO 9001-2008 certified institution, a hallmark of its standing. The college has a rich assortment of courses opening up avenues of opportunities for students. There are as many as 25 courses (11 undergraduate courses, 5 postgraduate courses and 4 research courses) offering quality education helping the students to grow up in the knowledge and moral values. The holistic approach knowledge and mature in morality and uprightness. The students who have their education here are equipped with all the skills to come out tops in the competitive world of today.

d. KR college of arts and science, Kovilpatti taluk

The K. R. College of Arts & Science was established by the benevolent philanthropist Thiru K. Ramasamy, the Chairman of National Educational and Charitable Trust, Kovilpatti. This trust was established in 1984-1985 under the Chairmanship of Thiru K. Ramasamy. The first educational institution that originated from the trust was National Engineering College. The Chairman decided to start a self-financing Arts & Science College in the style and name of K. R. College of Arts & Science (Co-Education). The College is being constructed in the land of 10 acres and 5.5 cents in Kovilpatti on the National High ways NH7 at a distance of about 4KM from Kovilpatti town, amidst good surroundings in the rural area. This institution aims to impart higher education to economically poor students in the vicinity of Kovilpatti. The Government of Tamil Nadu has granted permission to start this Co-Educational institution in the year 1997-1998 vide its Order No. MS. 315 dated 13.06.1997. The Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli has granted affiliation to this college vide its Letter No. MSU/ CD/ Fresh-Aff/ 97-98 dated 22-08-1997. The College started functioning on 29-08-1997. Now, our college has completed 2 decades of academic service to rural students.

e. Annai Velankanni College, Tholayavattam Vilavancode Taluk

Annai Velankanni College, Tholayavattam, Kanyakumari District is established and administrated by the Friends of Kottar Society (Reg. No. 9/1980). It is a Christian Minority Institution under the religious jurisdiction of the Latin Catholic diocese of Kuzhithurai. The College is primarily intended to provide educational opportunities mainly for the social and educational advancement of the Latin Catholics of the region following the rights of the minority community guaranteed under the Constitution of India(Act.30), without, however, denying educational opportunities to any other people, based on sex, religion, caste, community or region. The Annai Velankanni College aims to train students to high academic standards to prepare them for the role of future leaders imbued with a spirit of dedication to the service of their fellow men and women and the welfare of the country, particularly of the rural and underdeveloped areas. The emphasis, therefore, is laid to conducting job oriented and other courses relevant to micro as well as macro-level needs, and as per norms of University.

3. Review of Literature

Xu and Jaggars (2011) To understand student performance in the typical online course within a given sector, it would be most useful to compare a large and representative set of online courses against a similar set of face-to-face courses. Thus far, only one study has done so: Using a dataset including hundreds of course sections from 23 colleges in Virginia's community college system, the researchers found that students fared significantly worse in online courses in terms of both course persistence and end-of-course grades. However, the study was limited to entry-level English and math courses in community colleges in one state, raising the question of whether the results apply to other academic subjects and other state contexts. Moreover, although Xu and Jaggars controlled for a wide array of student, course, and institutional characteristics using multilevel propensity score matching, they could not control for unobserved influences on students' course selection, such as employment status, actual working hours, educational motivation, and academic capacity. Thus, the results could have remained subject to selection bias. Indeed, using an endogenous switching model.

Bao (2020) was perhaps the first to describe how universities were moving from classroom-based education to online education because of the raging pandemic. Researchers have tried to understand the viewpoint of students on online education during the COVID-19 pandemic using empirical studies in India

Carroll & Conboy, (2020) The pandemic forced various organizations to suddenly modify their workflow strategies and adopt new technologies. In most cases, these organizations did not get enough time to reflect upon how the new strategies and the associated technologies should be introduced and integrated into their existing setup. Universities around the world were no exception.

Zhu & Liu, (2020). There existed substantial infrastructure for online education in many countries before the pandemic. However, no university was ready for a complete shift to online education. Empirical studies have found that students feel that they learn better in physical classrooms than through online education. Students miss the help they receive from their peers in classrooms and

laboratories and access to the library. Nevertheless, students feel that online education helped them to continue their study during the pandemic. Universities are now using innovative strategies to ensure the continuity of education for their students.

Balasubramanian. P & Shahnaz P (2021) University teachers are now delivering course content through various platforms. Professors are using online educational platforms, videoconferencing software, and social media to teach their courses. Online educational platforms, like Google Classroom and Blackboard, allow professors to share notes and multimedia resources related to their courses with students. The online educational platforms also allow students to turn in their assignments and professors to keep track of the progress of the students. Videoconferencing tools, like Google Meet, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams, help in organizing online lectures and discussion sessions. Such tools typically support slideshows and a chatbox. They are also disseminating course material through their websites and their learning management system. Additionally, professors are taking the help of virtual laboratories to teach science courses.

4. Statement of Problem

Education is the backbone of a society and thus the means of education occupies an important place in the development of society. It must be designed in such a way that no student is left behind. The Covid'19 pandemic forced the colleges to shut down their campuses indefinitely and move their educational activities onto online platforms. The colleges were not prepared for such a transition and their online teaching-learning process evolved gradually. The researcher conducted a survey in which asked undergraduate and postgraduate students selected from the affiliated colleges of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, about their awareness about the online classes and their opinion on different aspects of online education during the ongoing pandemic. The present study is to analyse the Students Awareness about Online classes during the Pandemic of Covid'19 With Special Reference to Affiliated Colleges of Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli.

5. Objectives of the study

- To analyse the students' outlook about the online class of colleges affiliated with Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli.
- To identify the problems of the students concerning the online classes.

6. Null and Alternative Hypotheses

H₀: The profile variables of students do not influence their outlook about the online class of colleges affiliated with Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli.

H₁ The profile variables of students influence their outlook about the online class of colleges affiliated with Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli.

7. Scope of the study

Covid'19, as a global pandemic, has called for social distancing. It has made people mandatory to sit indoor and sitting idle indoor may lead to mental stress. Hence to keep students engaged and free from mental stress, online learning can play an important role. Online learning is the best solution during this pandemic situation. Teachers can use virtual classrooms to teach from home with all necessary tools which make the online sessions as effective as traditional ones. The present study is to analyse students' outlook about the online class of colleges affiliated with Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli.

8. Methodology

To study the college students 'awareness of online teaching and learning during the pandemic of Covid'19. the online questionnaires were developed by using Google forms. The prepared questionnaire link was sent to students via e-mails, WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter for an online survey. The link of the online survey was e-mail verified to avoid multiple responses by a single respondent. The survey was carried out in a period of 10 Am 2nd May 2021 to 5 pm 6th May 2021. and 169 peoples respond to the online survey as per the following table 1. The data collected from the online survey was used for further analysis.

Table 1

Sl.No	Name of Sample Unit	Questionnaires Sent	Response Received	Response Rate
1.	Sri Sarada College for Women	50	45	84.50 %
2.	Sri Ram Nallamani Yadava college	50	43	
3.	KR college of arts and science	50	41	
4.	Annai Velankanni College	50	40	
Total		200	169	

9. Limitations

- Manonmaniam Sundaranar University jurisdiction covers Tirunelveli, Tenkasi, Thoothukudi and Kanyakumari, the researcher selected one college from each district.
- Generally, survey results depend upon the truthfulness of the responses from the respondents.

10. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 2
Age of the Respondents

Sl.No	Age of the Respondents	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1.	< 20 years	39	23.08
2.	20 – 22 years	79	46.75
3.	>22 years	51	30.18
Total		169	100

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 2 and fig 1 disclose the age-wise classification of respondents selected for the study. It knows that a maximum of 79 respondents (46.75 per cent) belonged to the age of 20 – 22 years followed by 51 respondents (30.18 per cent) >22 years and only 39 respondents (23.08 per cent) come under the category of < 20 years.

Fig 1
Age of the Respondents

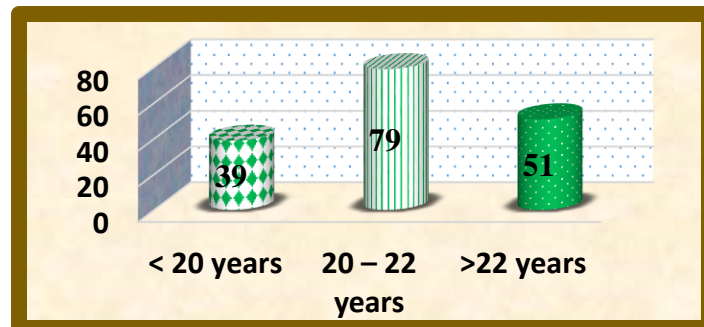


Table 3
Gender of the Respondents

Sl.No	Gender Status of the Respondents	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Male	77	45.56
2.	Female	92	54.44
Total		169	100

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 3 reveals the gender-wise classification of the respondents selected for the study. It is understood that more than one half (54.44 per cent) of the respondents are female whereas 77 (45.56 per cent) of the respondents are male.

Fig 2

Gender of the Respondents

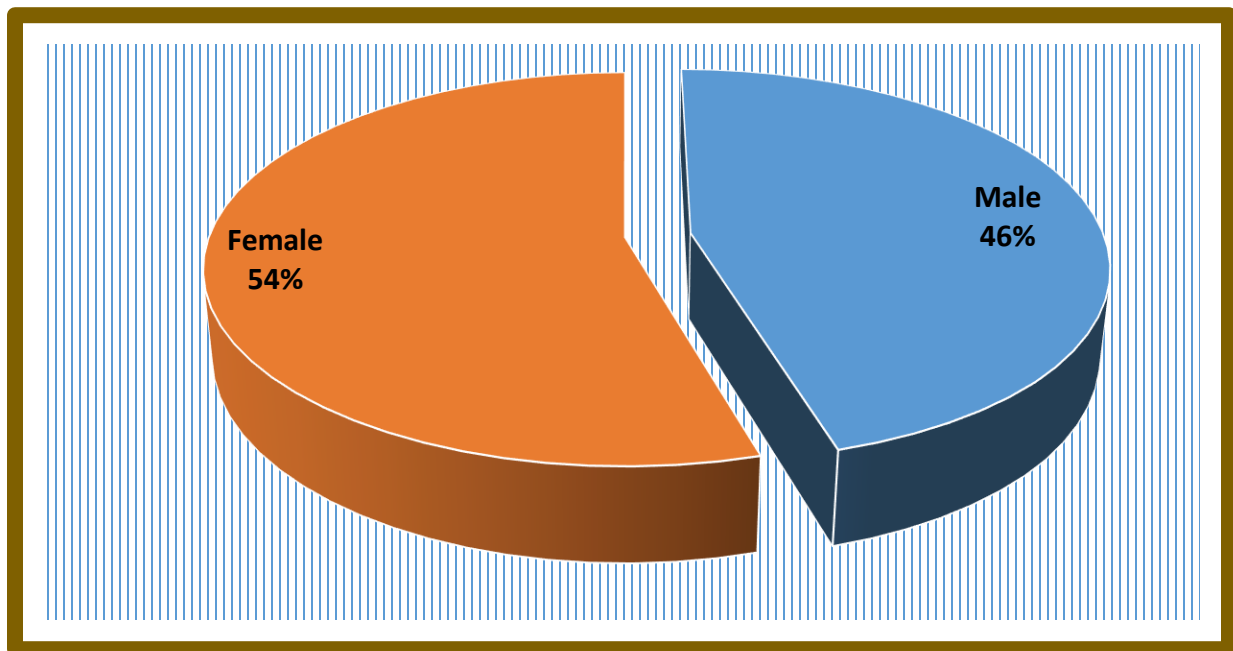


Table 4
Major Subject Wise Classification

Sl.No	Subject Wise Classification	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Science	57	33.73
2.	Commerce	64	37.87
3.	Humanities	48	28.40
Total		169	100

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 4 portrays the major subject-wise classification of respondents. It is found that a maximum of 64 respondents (37.87 per cent) studying commerce, 57 respondents (33.73 per cent) Science and 48 respondents (28.40 per cent) studying humanities.

Table 5
Residential Area of Respondents

Sl.No	Residential Area Wise Classification	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Rural	46	27.22
2.	Semi-Urban	72	42.60
3.	Urban	51	30.18
Total		169	100

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 5 specifies the area from which the respondents are going to the college. It is understood that a maximum of 72 respondents (42.60 per cent) from the semi-urban area followed by 30.18 per cent from urban and only 46 respondents (27.22 per cent) from the rural area.

Table 6
Family Income of Respondents (Yearly)

Sl.No	Family Income of Respondents	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1.	< ` 100000	49	28.99
2.	`100000 – 300000	55	32.54
3.	`300000 – 500000	38	22.49
4.	> `500000	27	15.98
Total		169	100

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 6 divulges the yearly family income of the respondents. It is known that a maximum of 55 respondents (32.54 per cent) belonged to the income category of `100000 – 300000, 28.99 per cent below ` 100000, 22.49 per cent `300000 – 500000 and 27 respondents (15.98 per cent) have the yearly family income of ` 500000 and above.

Table 7
Devise used for Online classes

Sl.No	Devise used for Online classes	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Laptop	37	21.89
2.	Desktop / Personal Computer	42	24.85
3.	Smartphone	90	53.25
Total		169	100

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 7 depicts devices used by the respondents for online classes. It is clear that a majority portion of the students (53.25 per cent) using smartphones for attending online classes, 24.85 per cent used Desktop / Personal Computer and only 37 respondents (21.89 respondents) use laptops for online classes.

Table 8
Students Opinion about Online Classes

Sl.No	Statements	Yes	No Opinion	No	Mean	Rank
1.	Online Learning encourages more productive use of time	99	47	23	3.899	VI
2.	Felt happy due to the Utilisation of time in attending online classes during the lockdown period.	109	49	11	4.160	I
3.	It has greater access to experts/specialists	106	47	16	4.065	III
4.	Cost-effective technology is quite affordable	69	51	49	3.237	VIII
5.	Online class/conference session can be saved in website for future reference	96	54	19	3.911	V
6.	online examination software which may help for conducting online examinations.	88	61	20	3.805	VII
7.	Very useful to some emergency service	96	55	18	3.923	IV
8.	Useful to women and physically handicapped learners who can learn at home	103	59	7	4.136	II

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 8 shows the mean score ranking of students' opinion towards the effectiveness of online classes. The first rank given the statement "Felt happy due to Utilisation of time in attending online classes during the lockdown period" with a mean score of 4.160, second rank allotted to the variable "Useful to women and physically handicapped learners who can learn at home" with the

mean score of 4.136, third rank for the variable “It has greater access to experts/specialists” and last rank for the statement “Cost-effective technology is quite affordable”.

Table 9
Hentry Garrett’s Ranking

Sl.no	Particulars	Garrett’s scores	Rank
	Problems		
1	Unaffordability to buy necessary devices	10820	I
2	Do not receive prior information on online class	10565	III
3	Feel lonely and unable to share feelings with peers	10570	II
4	Poor video and audio quality	10555	IV
5	Not familiar with Web-based interactions	9950	VI
6.	Interrupted power supply	10165	V
7.	Weak or non-existent internet connectivity	9860	VII

(Source: Primary Data)

Table 9 reveals Hentry Garrett’s score Ranking of the problems faced by the college students to attend the online classes. The most important problem is “Unaffordability to buy necessary devices” the first rank is given to the statement with Garrett’s score of 10820 points, the next important problem “the students are feeling lonely and unable to share feelings with peers” with Garrett’s score of 10570 points, third rank allotted for the statement “Do not receive prior information on online class” fourth rank for “Poor video and audio quality” fifth rank to the statement “Interrupted power supply” the sixth rank to the variable “Not familiar with Web-based interactions” and last rank for the statement “ Weak or non-existent internet connectivity” with Garrett’s score of 9860 points.

Table 10

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects					
Dependent Variable: Students Opinion about Online Classes					
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1724.680 ^a	31	55.635	223.431	.000
Intercept	579.602	1	579.602	2407.876	.000
Age	8.138	8	1.017	4.085	.000
Gender	5.667	5	1.133	4.552	.001
Subject	1.132	6	1.189	3.758	.004
Residence	2.365	5	1.652	3.256	.000
Error	34.113	137	.249		
Total	14580.000	169			
Corrected Total	1758.793	168			
a. R Squared = .981 (Adjusted R Squared = .976)					

Table 10 reveals the univariate test between the dependent variable, Students Opinion about Online Classes and the independent variables demographic profile of respondents. R Squared = .981 (Adjusted R Squared = .976), “F” value of independent variables is 4.085, 4.552, 3.758 and 3.256 for age, gender, subject and residential area of respondents respectively. The “R” value shows good convergent and the corresponding significance values of independent variables are less than 0.05 at a 95 per cent confidence level. Hence it is concluded that there is a significant association between the demographic profile of respondents and their opinion towards the online classes.

11. Findings

→ The researcher found that a maximum of 79 respondents (46.75 per cent) belonged to the age of 20 – 22 years followed by 51 respondents (30.18 per cent) >22 years and only 39 respondents (23.08 per cent) come under the category of < 20 years.

- It is understood that more than one half (54.44 per cent) of the respondents are female whereas 77 (45.56 per cent) of the respondents are male.
- It is found that a maximum of 64 respondents (37.87 per cent) studying commerce, 57 respondents (33.73 per cent) Science and 48 respondents (28.40 per cent) studying humanities.
- It is implicit that a maximum of 72 respondents (42.60 per cent) from the semi-urban area followed by 30.18 per cent from urban and only 46 respondents (27.22 per cent) from the rural area.
- It is known that a maximum of 55 respondents (32.54 per cent) belonged to the income category of `100000 – 300000, 28.99 per cent below `100000, 22.49 per cent `300000 – 500000 and 27 respondents (15.98 per cent) have the yearly family income of `500000 and above.
- It is clear that a majority portion of the students (53.25 per cent) using smartphones for attending online classes, 24.85 per cent used Desktop / Personal Computer and only 37 respondents (21.89 respondents) use laptops for online classes.
- The first rank given the statement “Felt happy due to Utilisation of time in attending online classes during the lockdown period” with a mean score of 4.160, second rank allotted to the variable “Useful to women and physically handicapped learners who can learn at home” with the mean score of 4.136, and third rank for the variable “It has greater access to experts/specialists”
- The most important problem is “Unaffordability to buy necessary devices” the first rank is given to the statement with Garrett’s score of 10820 points, the next important problem “the students are feeling lonely and unable to share feelings with peers” with Garrett’s score of 10570 points and third rank allotted for the statement “Do not receive prior information on online class”
- . The “R” value shows good convergent and the corresponding significance values of independent variables are less than 0.05 at a 95 per cent confidence level, hence it is concluded that there is a significant association between the demographic profile of respondents and their opinion towards the online classes conducted by colleges.

12. Suggestions

- Cost-effective technology for online classes should be quite affordable to poor students.
- The college authorities should arrange training for students in Web-based interactions.
- The head of the department or the concerned teacher should give prior information/schedule about the online class.
- The video and audio quality should well clear to attract the students.
- The students are properly attending the online classes without fail.

13. Conclusion

This time is very crucial as we are going through the global health emergency of Covid'19. Due to the unavailability of medicine and vaccine to treat the Covid'19, physical distancing is only a preventive way to control this disease. India is a country of 1.3 billion populations where voluntary physical distancing is a very tough task and due to this, so the authorities have decided on country lockdown. During the lockdown, education institutes were closed and consequently, the loss in education was observed in this period. Online teaching and learning are an attempt to overcome the educational loss, but online classes cannot be accessed by all students due to the unavailability of smartphones, laptops and mobile network to each student, especially poor families and remote areas. Moreover, online teaching and learning are not providing the proper face reading and interface between teacher and students or among the students. Additionally, students of poor families feel deprived of the right to education, which is their fundamental right according to the Indian constitution.

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