

Protecting Academic
Interest of Students During
COVID-19 Pandemic
Sharing Best Practices



Association of Indian Universities, New Delhi

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FOREWORD

In only a few months, the corona virus pandemic has upended the higher education system across the world. Millions of students were sent on compelled isolation to stay in the safety of their homes. The universities and its teachers are grappling with enforced online teaching, which some are enjoying and some are not. But one thing which everyone understood is that COVID-19 lockdown will prove as a watershed for higher education bringing newer models of delivery of higher education into the vogue which will define the higher education of future. This shift would entail a new model of universities for which we have to start preparing now. In India, so far the educational institutions are closed but soon they will be reopened. Some universities have already their plans for the year and some are still under planning stage. At this juncture, when the universities are in transition, the initiative of AIU to bring out the publication, 'Protecting Academic Interest of Students During COVID-19 Pandemic : Sharing Best Practices' is commendable.

The Book contains write-ups on best practices shared by many Indian universities and some overseas universities. These write-ups underscore the impact and implications of technology and innovation on higher education both, for today and for the future when the biological crisis of this deadly corona virus gets over. The best practices shared by the universities have not only covered many possibilities of

effective tech-enabled teaching learning processes but also other dimensions like Assessment and Evaluation; Online Placement and most importantly, the measures taken by the universities to deal with the emotional distress of students caused due to deprivation of social side of their university education. Some of the universities which have served the COVID-19 victims have proudly mentioned about their initiatives. The best practices featured in this book are a positive proof that we can leverage technology to protect academic interests of our greatest assets ie. the students.

Overall, the book provides a blue print for the policy makers as well as practitioners of higher education to impart ceaseless higher education to the students even during crises like COVID-19. While there are many books on sharing best practices, the unique feature which makes it different from others is refreshing optimism perspective which they give for the future of higher education .

Truly, this book inspires us to be optimistic and make the universities better places for our present and future generation students.

Tej Partap
President, AIU



PREFACE

The year 2020 will leave an indelible mark in the history of mankind due to the uncertainties caused by the Corona Virus Pandemic leading to the emergence of a 'New Normal'. The Virus has literally 'gone viral' across the continents along the pathways of trade, commerce, health, education and what not. It has locked all of us down in our countries, in our cities and in our homes. The end of the pandemic does not seem to be anywhere near, as the virus is continuing to infect more and more people everyday. There are no indications that the situation is going to regain the pre-covid normal even after this phase passes away. We therefore, have to learn to live with the virus.

The devastating effects of the lockdown on the world economy are felt virtually in all spheres of life. One of the sectors which is worst hit by the virus is the higher education sector where the students and staff are confined in their homes and educational transaction among them is completely dependent on technology. The capacity of diverse Higher Education Institutions, especially in rural and remote areas, in adopting and adapting technology is leading to further divide and complexities. Many institutions do not have the required paraphernalia like devices, networking, connectivity with adequate bandwidth etc. for imparting online education. While some universities have strong online systems, many universities are struggling under the weight of the demands leading to uncertainty and unpredictability in continuity of higher education in the institutions. The Indian higher education system laden with diversities and extremities of different kinds -- geographical, economical and social are the most affected in this VUCA world. However, it is heartening to see that the Indian universities are trying their best in

demonstrating their best capabilities in a very meticulous way to tackle the situation.

Opportunities to find deeper powers within ourselves come when life seems most challenging. History has taught us how disruptions are frightening at the beginning but how they transform into something better at the end. We have also seen that many a time, disruptors have become the shapers of history. It is therefore, our responsibility to shape the world taking clues from the positive and negative aspects of disruption while using new technologies that have subsequently taken hold of our lives. Our educational institutions have to transform themselves into virtual Institutions offering admission, teaching, conducting practicum, assessment, and declaring results through online mode. We can even have virtual sports through ICT. There are possibilities galore. Lest they are explored with prudence and caution.

Seven is the number of completeness and perfection (both physical and spiritual). It derives much of its meaning from being tied directly to nature's creation of all things. There are 7 oceans, 7 continents, 7 colours in rainbow, 7 sound notes, 7 directions, 7 days in a week, 7 deadly sins, 7 virtues, 7 classical planets and so on. The number 7 is much more prevalent in nature than most of us realize. The number 7 is equally pious for all cultures, traditions and religions. In India, marriage is solemnized only when the couple takes seven steps together along with seven promises to each other. This is called Saptapadi. The bond between the students and the university is equally pious and significant. In view of this, a seven pronged strategy is proposed for the universities to marry the "New Normal"

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and to protect the academic interest of the students during and after COVID-19. This will also ensure a positive bond between the university and the students vis a vis society. The steps involved are presented here.

I Step: Strengthening of Infrastructure

Strengthening of infrastructure needs to be done in terms of:

(a) Information Technology (IT) Equipment: The revolution that COVID-19 had brought in may set many new norms and several new trends in the world. Online education may become the new way of imparting education. For online teaching-learning and various other activities including e-governance, management, assessment and evaluation, student counseling, recreation etc., IT Devices, Network, Wi-Fi, Connectivity with adequate Bandwidth and such other things which can facilitate smooth, fast and comfortable functioning need to be arranged.

(b) Physical Infrastructure: Consequent to social distancing which is an essential preventive step which both students as well as university need to take once campuses are physically opened, many things may require new look. The architecture of classrooms in universities, colleges and schools may need changes in view of physical distancing. May be new desks, new chairs have to be designed. Extra spaces and furniture need to be created to allow physical distancing of students especially in common places like classrooms, library, hostels, mess, toilets, recreation activities etc. including facilities for sanitizations, distribution of masks and maintenance of hygiene.

(c) Digital infrastructure: Offering just online education may not be sufficient for completing whole syllabus of a course. In such condition, a blended learning approach or flipped classroom model with combination of Open

Education Resources (OERs), MOOCs etc along with online content will be required. The universities need to identify OERs in advance and provide links to the students in advance to help them to start the new academic session without hiccups. .

II Step: Capacity Building of Teachers

Online teaching is highly specialized and scientific. It is not the same as traditional face to face classroom teaching. It requires different kind of teaching skills and orientation to technology and platforms being used. The teachers need to be thorough with theory and practicum of online teaching. In India, the number of teachers trained to teach online is almost negligible. Compelling all the teachers to teach online without providing training is unprofessional and unethical. It is therefore, essential for the institutions to offer training to the teachers before they adopt online teaching permanently. For effective training of teachers to teach online and to develop online resources for the students, many institutions offer specialized courses. A self-paced free course on how to become an online practitioner is arranged by AIU also in association with QASPIR which is available on AIU website.

III Step: Evaluate Various Online Platforms Available

Now a days, a large number of platforms are available for Online Teaching-Learning, Assessment and Evaluation and various other activities. Each university should therefore evaluate the suitability of the available platforms for their purpose and choose the ones which are best suited and cost effective. This process needs to be done well in advance so that when the academic session opens, the teachers as well as students are aware of available platforms in their university. A number of webinars on different platforms were also arranged by AIU to help the member universities.

IV Step: Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment and evaluation or examination system constitute the core of university education. The university should discuss in their Academic and Executive Councils on the alternate ways to assess and evaluate the students in a continuous manner, throughout the semester comprising of many ways like assignments, projects, activities, quizzes, face-to-face interviews, discussion forums, etc. The methodology to be used including the facility of using online proctored examination available on various platforms may be explored in advance.

V Step: Internships and Placements

The success of a university depends upon the employability of the students graduated from the university. Every university should ensure that online internships are available to the students along with the opportunities for online placements. The universities have to identify online platforms available for internships and placements of students and guide the students in using these platforms effectively.

VI Step: Collaborations

One of the threats apprehended from COVID-19 lockdown was its impact on collaborations and tie-ups particularly at international level. But it is increasingly being felt that both national and international collaborations can now be done effectively in a cost-effective manner through virtual mode. The universities can invite overseas/Indian professors from reputed institutions for online teaching and research at almost minimal costs. The ways to go ahead in collaboration should be explored effectively.

VII Step: Counselling of Students

During COVID-19 Pandemic, the students are under compelled isolation. They are forced to stay at home

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which makes them miss the campus life. The university should ensure that the students do not miss campus life by organising online cultural events and other programmes relating to youth affairs. This phase may be quite distressing for many students due to uncertainty and unpredictability of situation. In this scenario, it becomes the responsibility of the universities to guide the students and prepare them for new norms and complexities. It has to provide personal, psychological, academic and professional counselling to the students and nurture personal qualities such as breadth of mind, courage, self reliance, flexibility, adaptability, and resilience in students so that they understand the complexities, deal with them, cope with them and respond to them in a healthy way. This constitutes the most important task of the universities.

Association of Indian Universities, a ninety five year old organization has withstood many a crisis and has always come out successfully with much brighter colours. This time also we are making all efforts to re-energise AIU in this grim period of COVID-19. As a matter of fact, we have never let AIU to get into lock down in real sense of term. We are continuously active with one activity or the other to keep the spirit of AIU vibrant. We have organized several webinars and collaborated in the webinars organized by several national and international organizations.

In the meantime, through media and various other sources, we were hearing about the efforts of universities to continue their activities so that the academic interests of students is protected. It is heartening to see that our universities have taken it upon themselves to combat the COVID challenge and minimize its impact on students through online platforms, SWAYAM, Remote Digital Teaching Tool (RDTT), e-PG Pathshala, NDLI and such others. Each university has adopted unique set of strategies

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to effectively communicate with the students and to keep them engaged. Every university is having its own best practices to realize this onerous task in best possible way. This gave an idea to us at AIU to provide a common platform to the universities to share their best practices so that the best practices adopted by one university can be emulated by others if they are more advantageous to the university and the students. Secondly, a compendium of best practices during this crisis may prove to be a very useful document for the future generations to help them to cope up with the similar situations should they arise in future.

Emboldened by these ideas, we have set in to bring out this compendium entitled ‘Protecting Academic Interest of Students During Corona Pandemic: Sharing Best Practices’ wherein we can indicate the multiple ways adopted by the universities through various strategies, action plans, innovative methods for engaging the student community, and continue their assessment and evaluation with the aim of protecting the interests of our students. We have identified three core areas, Gainfully engaging the student community, Assessment and Evaluation and Online placements-- for collecting the best practices of universities.

Cooperation and enthusiasm of the universities to share their initiatives has enabled us to present this compendium to you all. Now this is an international document which will reach out to the universities in India as well as other countries. We express our gratitude to all the contributors to this compendium.

Hope this document will act as a guiding light for all of us.

Pankaj Mittal

Sistla Rama Devi Pani

ACHARYA NAGARJUNA UNIVERSITY, GUNTUR

Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur was established in 1976 and has completed four and half decades of its existence. There have been many problems, difficulties and teething problems in its onward march but in course of time, the University has successfully overcome most of the initial problems and is moving forward with determination, enthusiasm and hope. From the corridors of a local polytechnic college in Nallapadu to the imposing buildings in Nagarjuna Nagar, the road was very long.

Sacrifice, service and commitment marked the growth of Acharya Nagarjuna University. In this COVID-19 Scenario also Acharya Nagarjuna University has made many efforts towards 'Protecting the academic interest of students'. Seeing high demand for continuity of higher education during the lockdown phase as well, to take care of academic needs of students, the University has ensured that the quality of education offered at various levels is also maintained at high level. The University has been striving to maintain high academic standards during these difficult situations also. A brief of the efforts made are presented here.

The syllabi for II & IV Semesters or concerned courses under University Colleges of Sciences, Arts, Commerce and Law are being taken up for completion through various online modes. Mid-semester examinations were conducted and study material was given to the students. The students are now under the preparation for examinations.

Regarding the University Colleges of Engineering and Technology, Pharmaceutical Sciences, Architecture and Planning and Physical Education and Sports Sciences; the on line classes are being conducted since the initiation of lockdown through various online platforms like Zoom etc. The syllabi for II, III and IV year students were completed. On line classes are going on for the first-year students. Students are being given study material as PDFs through WhatsApp. Teachers are also sending audio-video lecture files to the students for developing interest in subjects. Teachers are also sending the links of online lectures, informing the weekly schedule to the students and are following it stringently. For assessment, students are being asked to submit their handwritten assignments as scanned PDF copies to the e-mail of the particular

subject teacher. The faculty is also planning to conduct viva-voce for completion of project work and research work of the students online.

The University is providing opportunity to learn online certification courses from through different platforms to gain knowledge from global Universities. Both the Students and Faculty of the University have been given access to improve the skills on par with international level to fill the gap between industry and academia.

University has conducted awareness and sensitization programmes to understand COVID-19 appropriate behavior on behalf of NSS wing of the University in many of the affiliated colleges. Complete sanitization of all the Academic and Administrative buildings and Hostels is done with the help of NDRF wing regularly.

The administration and teaching staff of Acharya Nagarjuna University is leaving no stone unturned to gainfully engaging the student community in view of the completion of their academic terms without any loss.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. Raja Sekhar Patteti, Vice Chancellor of Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur-522510 (Andhra Pradesh). These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Prof. Raja Sekhar Patteti, Vice Chancellor of Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur and Dr. K. Sunita, Officer on Special Duty, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributors only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.nagarjunauiversity.ac.in, E-mail : nu_vc@yahoo.co.in

ALAGAPPA UNIVERSITY, KARAIKUDI

The recent rise in epidemics and pandemics due to COVID-19 necessitates that we must be ready with alternative modes in delivery of quality education whenever and wherever the traditional and in-person modes of education are not possible. Considering the transformational move, the existing platforms and ongoing ICT based facilities have been optimized in providing quality education for all. In this regard, the University took all efforts in strengthening its Digital Infrastructure, developed online teaching platform and tools, arranged training programmes to faculty members in content creation, including creation of coursework, digital repository and reliable backup mechanism for disseminating e-content to students. The faculty members have also been given training and orientation on online assessment and examinations. Besides teaching and learning processes Online, all meetings with faculty members, administrators of the University and Affiliated Colleges, Distance Education Co-ordinators are being carried out in this University campus through Online. Alagappa University has laid with strong foundation for online administration and instigated online culture among its stakeholders.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Alagappa University has not ceased its academic, research and extension activities due to COVID-19 lockdown. Academic, research and extension functions of the University were conducted in full swing during the lockdown period. Alagappa University Online Platform (ALUOP) has been strengthened and fully utilized during COVID-19 lockdown period in order to facilitate online teaching, learning and evaluation to the Regular and Distance Education Students. The outcomes are;

- All Regular students are facilitated to attend online classes by the Faculty members.
- Provisions made were to conduct PCP classes for the Distance Education students.
- Internal tests have been conducted through online.
- 198 Webinars were organized by inviting 121 National and International experts.

- Two online short-term Skill Training programmes of 7-days each have been organized. Around 2,200 participants across the Country have attended.
- Many Webinars / Lectures / Conferences were conducted through online during COVID-19 lockdown period (Table-1).

Table -1 Webinars / Lectures / Conferences through Online during COVID-19 Lockdown Period

Sl. No.	Category of Events	No. of Events	No. of Beneficiaries
1	Webinars	198	10,500
2	Lecture Series	46	9,000
3	Virtual Conferences	6	900
4	Faculty Development Programmes	3	350
5	Certificate Programmes	5	2,200
6	Discussion Series	5	450

Apart from that, Two Week Online Capacity Building Programme under UGC STRIDE Component – I Scheme was organized. The Vice Chancellor has convened frequent meetings with Deans, Head of Departments, Programme Coordinators of Distance Education and the Principals of Affiliated / Constituent Colleges through Video Conference:

Research Activities Undertaken during COVID-19 Pandemic

Alagappa University conducted research activities for identifying the lethality of SARS-CoV-2 at genome level, via identifying its gene code nature types (S type or L Type) and also identifying its mutating tendency (A, B and C types). These insights are studied extensively from the proteome to the atom levels for analyzing the drug targets of SARS-CoV-2 and its reactions mechanisms. Through genome analysis, almost 16 drug targets of SARS-CoV-2 are identified and the university is working to find the suitable drug candidates for inhibition of Entry-mechanism, Capping-Mechanism and replication-mechanism. For attaining the goal of strong potential candidates for COVID-19 inhibitors, the University stands top in the computational power based solutions for solving the disease drug targets, and especially in COVID-19, four research papers from high peer reviewed journals have been published and extending those works towards the experimental test and with live viral test.

Alagappa University has already initiated the international research collaboration with Institute of Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry, Prague, Czech Republic, Federal University of Rio de Janeiro State (UNIRIO), Brazil and Prof. Hua Li, Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Wuhan, China and reputed national collaborations with IISc, IITs, BHU, etc. Research scholars are encouraged to work from home and university need-based scholars were provided selective permission with proper safety measures to access the University equipment for performing research. The University submitted 4 research papers on COVID-19 to reputed high impact SCI Journals which are under Review. It also submitted 9 Proposals on COVID-19 to various funding agencies and few more are under preparation:

1. Drug repurposing strategies for the identification of potent drugs against the treatment of COVID-19 (DST-SERB Short-term CRG on COVID-19)
2. Computational Prediction of potent drugs and epitope-based peptide vaccine against SARS-CoV-2 (DST-SERB Short-term CRG on COVID-19)
3. Development of transition state mimics for COVID-19 RDRP enzyme reaction mechanism blockers using computational & experimental approach (DST-SERB CRG on COVID-19)
4. Development of MTases interruption in RNA binding activity using computational and experimental approaches for the inhibition of COVID-19 (DST-SERB CRG on COVID-19)
5. Host and viral proteome analysis to understand the mechanism of rapid spread and low mortality rate of 2019 nCoV2 infections (DST-SERB)
6. Risk and role of antihypertensive drugs: ACE inhibitors and AT1R domain associated with COVID-19 (DST-SERB)
7. Drug repurposing approach for the development of novel antiviral nanodrugs against COVID-19 through the in silico and in vitro analyses (DST-SERB)
8. Yogic breathing driven herbal steam inhalation: An immunotherapy against COVID-19 (DST-SATYAM)
9. Re-routing agricultural supply chain measures for the COVID-19 Pandemic (ICSSR)

Faculty members delivered several lectures through webinars to thousands of students from various countries. The University has arranged to supply Viral Transport Medium to the Deputy Director of Health Services, Sivagangai, Tamil Nadu for laboratory testing on regular basis upon request.

Extension Activities Undertaken at the Campus during COVID-19

1. Dr. A. Aananthi, Assistant Professor cum Medical Officer is appointed as Nodal officer for COVID-19.
2. The Registrar is reporting updates on hostel students to the state Government daily.
3. Conducted COVID-19 Awareness programme with all students and staff on 18.02.2020 (in association with District Collector-Sivaganga).
4. Contributed one-day salary amount of Rs.15 lakhs to the Chief Minister Relief fund.
5. Maintaining Social Distancing (1 metre distance) by all in the campus.
6. Purchased units and being used to take thermal test daily to all in the campus.
7. Produced Sanitizer at our own Laboratory (Industrial Chemistry) and provided for use at all gates and workplace.
8. Produced over 4000 facemasks at our own Skill Development unit and distributed to all employees.
9. Developed mechanical and sensor based sanitizer dispensers by Skill Development Students.
10. Disinfection at all office buildings and Academic blocks every week (Saturday).
11. Arranged to register Aarogya Setu App by all staff for safety and updates.
12. Distributed Kaba Sura water as immuniser to employees at regular intervals (supported by our NSS unit).
13. Distributed free groceries to needy through sponsorship (Alumni of Alagappa University Model school as well as Alagappa College of Engineering and Technology).
14. Provided transport facility (University vehicle) to select employees for undertaking emergency works (particularly with Finance section).

15. Arranged to get e-pass for select employees by online process.
16. Government communications have been sent through Circulars from time to time (lockdown, safety measures, self-declaration).
17. Work From Home (WFH) implemented. Eligible staff were sanctioned necessary permission.
18. AY 2020-21 admission process by Online mode is on for University Departments, Distance Education, Constituent College-Paramakudi.
19. Conducted retirement functions / other meetings with limited (around 20) attendance as per SOPs advised.
20. Conducted many online meetings (200+ programmes conducted through ALUOP).
21. With Admin Association, distributed Siddha medicines to many.
22. With District Youth Red Cross sponsor, distributed Zinc and vitamin-C tablets to our staff.
23. Personal meetings by visitors with officials discouraged, but encouraged to contact through Phone and emails.

Support Extended to General Public, District Administration, Police Department

1. Provided our AMHSc school premises for vegetable marketing by General Public.
2. Provided our Model Constituent College (AUMCCAS-Paramakudi) premises for Quarantine as well as Isolation ward purposes by District Health Department.
3. Provided Accommodation to Govt Hospital Professionals at our Campus for stay.
4. Arranged to provide our Alumni Garden space to Police staff for yoga practice (every Sunday).
5. Arranged to provide our ICT built-Seminar Hall to Government Police Department for ICT Training to Police Staff (from 03.08.2020 to 10.08.2020).
6. Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Club and NSS teams of Alagappa University arranged various welfare measures and acted as 'Corona Warriors' to restrain the contagion, COVID-19.
 - Door-to-Door awareness by NSS volunteers in Karaikudi and adopted Villages (Beneficiary~6,000).

- WhatsApp network created by our NSS team throughout Tamil Nadu for Information and updates (Beneficiary~10,000).
- Installed Arogya Setu App / IVRS system (Beneficiary~3000).
- Circulated awareness posters on COVID-19 and its management by our NSS volunteers.
- Provided assistance to public in maintaining social distancing and hygiene in local markets.
- Distributed Kabasura Kudineer to the public.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. N Rajendran, Vice Chancellor of Alagappa University, Karaikudi, Sivaganga-630 003 (Tamil Nadu). These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Dr. N Rajendran, Vice Chancellor of Alagappa University, Karaikudi, Sivaganga, Tamil Nadu. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.alagappauniversity.ac.in, E-mail : vicechancelloralu@gmail.com

AMITY UNIVERSITY JHARKHAND, RANCHI

Amity University, Jharkhand (AUJ), Ranchi understands the importance of all-round development of students and thus, has accepted the challenges posed by lockdown in entirety in the helm of its academic and co-curricular activities. The report is an attempt to give an account of the Academic / Co-curricular Activities / Quality Control Mechanism / Personality Orientation / Awareness towards surroundings / Opportunities amidst Lockdown and Défense against Possible Threats, etc. for Amity University, Jharkhand (AUJ). The following steps were taken by AUJ to protect the academic interest of the students during COVID-19.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Daily Online Classes

With the declaration of lockdown, Amity University Jharkhand (AUJ) resorted to online interactive classes using MS Teams and its own ERP Amizone for scheduling of classes and disseminating information about scheduled classes amongst students and faculties. The classes were being scheduled from 9:10 AM to 5:30 PM, Monday to Saturday. Due care was taken to have a gap of at least one hour between two consecutive classes of 50 Minutes each, keeping in mind, the stress on eyes due to constantly viewing on Laptop or Mobile Screen. During the classes, students were made to understand the topic and class notes/ handouts, etc were being shared with them. Even though, very few technical glitches or poor network problems were encountered, IT support team was able to win over the problems and thereby ensured minimal loss. The team of all Program Leaders, Coordinators, Registrar, Director and Vice Chancellor were continuously supervising the online classes. The attendance, IT related issues, etc are understood and analysed hourly to ascertain the quality of academic delivery.

Weekly Progress Report by Academic Coordinators

Academic Coordinators were assigned to track classes on daily basis and keep an eye on requisite frequency of classes and number(s) of sessions held. The frequency of classes was regulated every week, in order to ensure that none of the course is lagging behind or has got a frequency beyond the acceptable

limit. On the debit side, some of the courses were lagging behind due to late start of those courses and eventually ended up with high frequency of those classes in last two /three weeks of academic semester.

Research Papers by Students

During the lockdown period from April, 2020 to second week of July, 2020 students under the guidance of Head of the Institute and the faculty members of AUJ have worked on 58 quality research papers which have been either accepted or published in Conference proceedings or Scopus/UGC Care listed journals.

Online Academic Competitions

To motivate students to be creative, and to showcase their hidden talents, online competitions on slogan writing, poster making and essay writing were competition was held. 60 participants had sent the entries and the best three in each category was awarded e-certificate.

Special Lectures

‘Day of Belongingness’ was celebrated by organizing a discourse of Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Ji on Blending Modernity with Tradition, and a Special Lecture by Dr. G. Satheesh Reddy, Chairman, Defence Research and Development Organisation and Secretary, Department of Defence R&D, Government of India on ‘Innovation during COVID-19’. The webinar provided a great opportunity to thousands of Amitians from India and across the globe to rejoice and further strengthen the bond of love and togetherness through the virtual platform this year as the world is grappling with social distancing amidst this growing pandemic.

Online Cultural Events

Amity University Jharkhand is organizing a series of cultural competitions like Dance, Poetry, Painting, etc where the students will be capturing the photograph/videos and sending online. The competition is named as ‘*Indoor Kalakaar*’. This will enable the students to explore their hidden talents and also help in overall development and involve them in nurturing their hobby/passion.

Online Amity Youth Forum, 2020

Online Amity Youth Forum 2020 (AYF-2020) organized a series of online events from May 8-11, 2020 for student engagement in activities which tests

their competitive abilities, creativity, innovativeness and other higher order cognitive skills that made them think out of the box. AYF-2020 was a perfect platform for all young students of universities from all over the country, to display their talent and participate in various competitions, technical, cultural, literary, art and theatre. It was an experience to remember and an opportunity to form new bonds while celebrating our cherished cultures, heritage and values. More than 100 grueling online competitions were conducted to stay connected with students so that they do not suffer the feeling of anxiety, confusion and isolation.

Yoga and Meditation Workshops

Amity University Jharkhand in association with the heartfulness team organized a 'Yoga and Meditation Workshop' for the students, faculty, and staff of Amity University, Jharkhand in a program titled- 'Heartful Living'. Meditation will keep good physical health and good psychological wellbeing to achieve peace and happiness. To promote positive health among students and faculty, online yoga classes are being organized every day in the morning. Yoga and Meditation can be beneficial to enhance immunity and can be practiced to prevent and manage COVID-19 or any other high risk diseases. Yoga and Meditation is not only helpful in building immunity system but also keep us away from the stress and anxiety. Thereafter a few *asanas* were taught by the yoga instructor followed by a 10 minutes meditation session.

Conducting Motivational and Inspirational Guest Lecture through Online Portal

Various experts from widespread domain are delivering motivational lectures for the students to overcome any kind of stress and keep their spirits high.

Conducting Virtual Fun-based Activities

Fun-Based activities like Online Puzzle/Quiz/Antakshari/, etc. are being done by the mentor's every day for recreation of the students. This enables to reduce the stress amongst the students and build a strong relation with their class mates and mentors.

Conduction of Regular Virtual Mentor-mentee Meetings

Online mentor-mentee meetings are being conducted by the University. The class mentors are interacting through Microsoft Teams with their mentees to

understand and tackle any kind of stress amongst their mentees. This was a regular offline feature, which has been extended to online space as well specially required at this hour of crisis. We have reached out even to their parents and extended our services to the extent possible. Most cases need soft counseling and confidence building.

Amity Counseling Service

Students can contact the newly formed Committee of Experts at Head Office with representatives from all universities. The professional Counseling Committee consists of Psychologists and faculty for Communication Skill and Meditation clearly to understand any serious case reported and discuss their detailed concerns with them at any point of time from anywhere including their homes. Counselors have been appointed to respond to the incoming calls on the Toll Free Helpline Number from students during the day and as well as night.

Personalized Meets of Vice Chancellor with all Class and Faculty Representatives

The Vice Chancellor himself conducts daily informal meeting with the Class Representatives and discusses academic, emotional, personal or psychological issues. Crisis situation intervention is provided instantly wherever required. e.g. He made the gaps after two consecutive classes compulsory to make students relax between sessions. He has been conducting regular meetings with Faculty Representatives also for various university requirements.

Media Appearances and AUJ Scholars' Contribution

The BA(J&MC) students along with Faculties of Media Committee, AUJ, contributed in ensuring media appearance of the activities of the University.

CONCLUSIVE REMARKS

AUJ has put the best of its endeavour to ensure that Scholastic and Co-curricular activities were not compromised despite all odds. The transparency is maintained throughout the activities and its communication has been smooth between Government's agencies such as MoE/RUSA/UGC and between the Quality Control Department of University's Chancellor's Office. University is committed to bring manifold qualitative change in the state of Jharkhand and set higher benchmarks every subsequent day. The dialogues between parents

and university authorities or the reports coming in media, talk very high about the performance of the University and reinforce their deep faith and trust with all the best of expectation from the Amity Education Group in general and Amity University Jharkhand in particular. University has done its best to re-establish the fact that Amity Education Group is zero tolerant when it comes to ensuring quality education in all circumstances and situations.

Though, a few non-significant shortcomings were witnessed while operating online classes for the entire educational activities, over all the university's progress report reflects a positive value. Amity University stands committed and inspired to live the dreams of its Founder President to translate best of thoughts of India into action and its best of actions for making India once again the centre of knowledge for the world.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof (Dr) R K Jha, Vice Chancellor of Amity University Jharkhand, Ranchi- 834002 (Jharkhand). These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Prof (Dr) R K Jha, Vice Chancellor of Amity University Jharkhand, Ranchi. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.amity.edu/ranchi, E-mail: vc@rnc.amity.edu

AMITY UNIVERSITY, KOLKATA

Amity University, Kolkata was established in 2015 vide the Amity University Act, 2014 (West Bengal Act, XXIV of 2014). It is the eighth university to be established by the Amity Education Group. Within a span of five years, the University has leaped into the number one position amongst private universities in the state of West Bengal (Education world Ranking 2020-21). The vision of Amity University of 'Building the nation and the society through providing total, integrated and trans-cultural quality education and to be the global front runner in value education and nurturing talent in which Modernity Blends with Tradition' transpires in its efforts of maintaining excellence in all its spheres, be it academics, research, or welfare of its student. The corona pandemic was a novel situation with no precedence in recent past on how to tackle it. Immediate steps to stop its spread led to nationwide closure of schools, colleges and universities and suspension of physical classes. But the university took no time to accept this unique challenge and continue its efforts to protect the welfare of its students. A number of steps were taken to ensure that academic calendar was not hampered and students do not feel themselves in any vacuum.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Briefing Sessions

While online lectures gradually became a norm, the change from real to virtual had some challenges. The university was quick in adapting to online delivery of classes, because of its rich infrastructure. The process was new to faculty and students both, so briefing sessions were made to ensure this change was smooth.

Recording of the Sessions

To counter the issues of network connection, as well as monitoring the active participation of the students during online lectures, they were recorded by the faculty, and accessible to students through their own portal for later viewing too.

24 x7 Technical Support

All round efforts were made by the faculty of IT Department to ensure smooth conduct of classes. The IT department provided remote troubleshoot facility to faculty in event of any technical snag in their office laptops.

Online Access to Journal

In order to ensure that students do not miss on their research activities online access was ensured for journals from Taylor & Francis, Oxford University Press and IEEE Explore, etc.

Virtual Laboratories

Temporary closure of the campus also meant closure of the labs. However, the institutes facilitated the students by providing virtual labs to students. The virtual labs facilitated students to cover the practicum aspects in domains of IT, mass communication, architecture, physical sciences, language, etc.

Webinars

Webinars are being conducted on daily basis to ensure that learning never stopped. As the formal classes ended by last week of April, 2020; webinars were conducted by different institutes of Amity University, where eminent industry experts and academicians from across the world shared their expertise. Conducted over reliable web platforms, these webinars were attended by students of the whole Amity education group across the world. There were series of guest lectures, which saw beyond capacity registrations and were live telecast on YouTube. Amity University takes pride in hosting not one but three Nobel laureates in these series of lectures including (His holiness Dalai Lama, Professor Muhammad Yunus and Shri. Kailash Satyarthi).

Lectures by International Speakers

There were a series of guest lectures by renowned international Industry experts and senior Professors from Universities abroad in domains of Management, Architecture, Engineering, Hospitality, Mass Communication, Social Sciences to name a few and still continuing. Students use the opportunity to interact with these international speakers and gain new insights.

24x7 Counseling Helpline

24x7 counseling helpline was started to help the students cope with the academic, personal and any other stress. Already in effect in other campuses for past several years, the service was initiated at Amity University Kolkata considering the psychological impact of the situation. The service will continue as a regular and permanent service of the university to help its students improve their emotional well being and guide them in times of distress.

Online Yoga Classes for Mental and Physical Well Being

To safeguard the physical and mental wellbeing of students, online yoga classes were also scheduled for students, where trained yoga professionals taught the nuances of yoga to students as well as faculty.

Club Activities

The corona pandemic could not beat the spirit of the students who utilized the web platforms not only for academics but also to pursue their club activities. All the clubs of the university had been active in successfully organizing different events online like quiz, debates, dance and drama, photography, culinary skills to name a few. The efforts ensured that student did not felt any dull moment during the lockdown period.

Parents Interaction Forum

It is a proud practice being followed at Amity University which gives a scope to share feedback and discuss progress of students with their respective parents. The practice continued during the lockdown period also using online platforms. Because of the prevailing situations majority of parents expressed their concern about the resolution of the situation and were patiently attended by respective mentors.

Online Summer Internship Projects

Every year, the students undertake summer internship projects in odd semesters. This gives a very valuable learning experience to students to have hands on experience of the industry and meet their potential employers. Due to the lockdown situation the number of internships secured by students through the industry interaction cell got limited to certain extent, but this challenge was turned into another opportunity, when the industry interaction cell secured online internship opportunities for many students. Other students had option to opt for online research projects and assignments.

Non Teaching Credit Courses

Non teaching credit courses are integral part of the curriculum for all university programs. The courses gives the student a free hand to explore and apply theoretical inputs into practical, to research their ideas, and study real cases within prescribed guidelines under expert supervision of the faculty. The pandemic situation gave a window to the students to start early on the courses,

and benefit from the time they saved at home. Online platform is in use where students can interact directly with faculty to update their progress and get feedback.

A Robust Mentor Mentee System

Mentor mentee system is integral part of Amity Philosophy where students are under able guidance of allotted faculty mentors. The pandemic though restricted face to face contact, but the mentors have been available all the time through online platform to guide their mentees regarding their doubts and concerns.

PLACEMENT ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

The period when most people talked about the financial impact of the pandemic and economic downfall; the Industry Interaction Cell (IIC) of the university silently worked on its placement activities, preparing students for online pre-placement training on personal interviews and grooming sessions. Industry experts in different domains were invited for guest lectures, instilling confidence in students. The sessions have been a regular feature of Amity University and continued on virtual platform during lockdown.

CONCLUSION

The corona pandemic could only restrict physical movement of people. It was a challenge turned into opportunity, where faculty and students tested their resilience, learned new methods of learning, turning Virtual into Real.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. D. Chattopadhyay, Vice Chancellor of Amity University, Kolkata-700 156 (West Bengal). These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Prof. D. Chattopadhyay, Vice Chancellor of Amity University, Kolkata. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.amity.edu, E-mail : vc@kol.amity.edu

AMITY UNIVERSITY, NOIDA

The Year 2020 will be remembered for one of the major setbacks brought in history of mankind in the form of COVID-19 Pandemic where everyone is fighting against the small but powerful Corona virus. Everything had come to a halt with imposed lockdown to prevent the disease from spreading. Residents of almost all countries are fighting with this virus at their individual levels and thus everyone has become a warrior. Some such as health professionals are frontline warriors for serving the health needs, some are defense personnel for maintaining the peace even at the remotest area of the map, some are media personnel who are providing us all updates in the form of news, online updates, etc. Overall, COVID-19 has tremendous effected all spheres of life. In this scenario, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which were targeted to minimize the problems in this universe to make the planet livable for generations to come are the only panacea. But during the lockdown, even the persuasion of these goals were affected. Table-1 illustrates the effect of COVID-19 on some of the major Sustainable Development Goals.

Table-1 Effect of COVID-19 on SDGs

SN	SDGs	Effect
1	Climate Action	Reduced commitments for environmental protection and preservation
2	Quality Education	Educational institutions are closed, no face to face teaching-learning
3	Sustainable cities and communities	Slum areas are affected more due to high population density
4	Work and economic growth	Suspended economic activities, unemployment
5	Affordable and clean energy	Disrupted access
6	Clean water and sanitation	Inadequate supply and disrupted access
7	Peace, justice and stronger infrastructure	Conflicts and intolerance
8	No poverty	Increased poverty due to no or low income
9	Zero hunger	Disrupted supply of food
10	Good health and well-being	Devasted health conditions

It is evident from Table -1 that there is no Sustainable Development Goals which remained unaffected by this global pandemic. It clearly shows that the number of professions, areas and domains which are getting affected by this pandemic is endless. One of them is educational sector. Since the onset of COVID-19 lockdown in India was in the month of March, academic activities

particularly examinations, promotions to the next class, etc. suffered. Many of entrance exams, internal exams, job interviews, placements and other components have been postponed.

This has also brought the regular teaching-learning process on halt. No classes were going on in any educational institution whether it is a school or any higher educational institutions. The bodies governing the school education; CBSE and ICSE have declared promotion of students up to class VIII without conducting any examination. Agencies governing higher education; UGC, NCTE, AICTE, etc. have planned for different options for keeping the momentum of education in process.

Keeping this momentum on, Amity University Uttar Pradesh (AUUP), Noida also worked on maintaining no academic loss principle. Amity University practiced many innovative ventures for maintaining the academic standards. It has started online classes from the very first day of suspension of classes. Amity University made use of software; MS Teams for conducting classes, holding meetings, yoga sessions, mentor-mentee meetings and online evaluative practices. These online sessions received very good feedback from every stakeholder be it students, parents or higher authorities. Students are regularly attending all classes on time which are published according to ongoing timetable. They are getting online guidance on their research work as well. Apart from their regular classes, they are also engaged in attending various other sessions also. They are continuously attended by their respective mentors for discussing their problems.

Amity University has initiated a very strong base for reaching out the next level educational status i.e. Education 4.0. by utilizing MS Teams, the university has proved that even in the absence of regular face to face teaching-learning process, students will not have any academic loss. Amity Institute of Behavioural and Allied Sciences (AIBAS) also implemented the same practices. The students of this institute are prospective teachers who will shape the future of the country. By keeping this thing in mind, our prospective teachers are also learning the use of technology in teaching-learning process. By actively engaging in online educational or academic practices, they are getting aware of the scope and techniques of becoming techno-savvy teachers of 21st century. It is also in the line of fourth Sustainable Developmental Goals (SDG-4) where our education system should ensure equity and equality. It also helps in maintaining inclusion

in classrooms. These online classes help students to learn at their own pace because they are recorded and are available on the same platform. Thus, anyone can access them at their own ease. Some domains where AIBAS is practicing online mode of teaching-learning process are presented here.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Regular Classes

AIBAS is conducting online classes everyday by following a set timetable. Each class is termed as ‘Team’ on MS Teams with the name of its course. All students are joined in the respective team and are connected to their subject teacher and classmates as well. Teacher teaching the respective subject starts meeting on defined time and all students can join and learn. It provides option for having video-lectures as well. Teachers can share their documents with class which serves as screen during live class for students. By this way, students are not only learning the topic but they are easily clarifying their doubts, sharing their own views as well. Not only this, students can also write their doubts or questions in chat option available there.

Apart from these online classes, students also have option to access their classes after the live classes. All classes are getting recorded and are uploaded on the same team. This also enhances the effectiveness of learning because in face to face teaching, there is no provision of attending or listening the same lecture again. But this practice makes students more focused on their learning patterns. In this way, MS Teams is getting used for carrying out online classes both in synchronized and asynchronous mode.

Providing Reading Materials

Apart from regular teaching-learning process, we are continuously providing our students supportive reading materials. They can be uploaded on Teams in the form of any document, any link or any live video or discussion. Students can access them anytime and can learn from them. In addition to this, students can also submit their assignments here which can be evaluated by the respective teacher. Thus, students are continuously engaged in their learning process.

Evaluation

Not only teaching-learning process, AIBAS is also using online learning in evaluation and assessment. Students are giving online presentations, submitting

assignments in the form of e-portfolios, participating in online discussions and quiz. All of them are available on MS Teams. Students are asked to submit their research work as well in online version. Teachers are evaluating those assignments and giving their feedback.

Yoga Sessions

Active mind resides in active and healthy body. Keeping this in mind, we are also conducting online sessions of Yoga in morning for students and teachers. Everyone is attending these sessions in morning for keeping their body fit and fine. Many newspapers articles have appreciated this practice at Amity. This is an attempt for bringing overall development of child even at their home.

Mentor-Mentee Meetings

We also have a provision of addressing the problems of our students i.e. mentees on various issues in the form of mentor-mentee meetings. This is a usual practice at Amity and same is being carried on in online mode as well. There is a separate Team for all mentees and respective mentor. They have regular online meetings to discuss on various issues like COVID-19 in last meeting. Mentors suggest some remedial measures with respect to specified problem of their mentees. This activity helps in maintaining a healthy relationship between teachers and students, even with their parents sometimes.

Faculty/Staff Meetings

There are many issues which need to be discussed with various authorities. Utilizing online media here also, we are conducting regular faculty meetings with their respective HOIs and HOIs with higher authorities. This maintains a continuity in work and an easy flow of information right from the top to bottom. All these meetings are not for general public to attend but only selected members can attend. They are also recorded for any future reference.

Admission Procedure

In the admission time, online mode enables us to have unaffected admission process. Candidates who are seeking admission in various courses are getting evaluated in online mode by their recorded video or live skype sessions. Faculty and other authorities are evaluating these videos and sessions for giving their reviews and recommendations. Thus, teaching-learning process and all the other activities at campus are going on time without any delay.

Webinars

Amity University is also making use of Cisco Webex and Microsoft Teams for conducting webinars, guest lectures, celebrity talk and workshops from eminent personnel from education industry. Webinars are properly recorded and provide a good online discussion forum for speaker and audience. Everyday a number of webinars are being conducted related to different domains. It is also conducting the monthly class representative meetings in which the problems of the students are discussed. In this way, during this pandemic such meetings not only helped to solve the problems in the groups involved in it but further such meetings strengthened them to take their own decisions in solving various types of problems.

Institution is also conducting IQAC meetings through the Microsoft Teams to bring the quality in teaching –learning and evaluations and also for developing the strategies for the future in such situation continues. It is also conducting community awareness related activities through online and off line mode. Students and teachers are constantly helping various agencies in writing e- contents, and developing videos to educate.

All online activities conducted at Amity University are monitored regularly for maintaining error free continuum of academic and research work. The next step for reaching the other milestone is to conduct online examinations. Though all national bodies have suspended exams up to certain level, Amity University went for it. For this, several options were tested for their feasibility and relevance with learners. Thus, with this ongoing spread of Coronavirus, we are also trying to spread our wings in terms of online learning and evaluation.

Measures to Protect Learners' Academic Interest

Higher education is characterized by undergraduate, graduate, postgraduate and doctorate students. Making them tech-savvy is somewhat easy and feasible because of their previously acquired computer skills. But in today's time of crisis, another domain which has been affected is school education. Schools are considered as to be second home for pre-school children when they enter directly from home to school. It provides a variety of learning experiences to its students. Right from the beginning of teaching them on how to stand still during National Anthem to how to face interviews, school teachers teach them everything. They have to make them global in all respect, so that during the

tough times as today's crisis, they will be able to survive and exist. Thus, certain measures should be taken into account for learners of all levels to enhance their capability and to maintain their interest in academics. Being from teaching fraternity, we should practice some innovative and interesting practices for the same. They can be as follows:

- a. Utilizing the leisure time of the students by providing them some craft or project work which they can complete at their home. For example; making any product from waste material for school going children and collecting articles on any issue for higher education.
- b. Connecting regularly with their parents for maintaining a healthy relationship and for getting information about their wards' performance at home. It will also motivate children to actively participate in their studies and to perform well.
- c. Organizing game-based activities for them in order to increase their interest and for making them physically sound and mentally alert.
- d. Organizing group discussions for children to improve their knowledge about current affairs and also to improve their speaking skills.
- e. This is a good time to identify the hidden talents of the students. Teachers can ask them to perform any activity based on their interest and talents from their home. It will also help parents to know the talents of their children.
- f. Teachers can utilize this time to engage their students in health and physical activities. They can ask their students to record a video of their performance and share with others for reviews.
- g. Students can be involved in improving their photography skills, drawing skills and all other skills which usually do not get assessed in regular teaching-learning process.

Thus, these activities can be organized and conducted online to maintain the continuity in teaching-learning process. It will not only help children of all age groups to explore their hidden interests and capabilities but also help teachers to know their learners in more defined and comprehensive manner.

CONCLUSION

COVID-19 is pandemic of this century which affected everyone. All countries are fighting against it in all possible manner in all possible ways. All professionals of all industries are performing their best to fight against it and teachers are one amongst them. Education is the strongest bone of any country's economy, so we should try to strengthen this bone by practicing all innovations which can take our country to the next level. Creating the awareness among society and designing new tools of learning is the need of hour in present situation.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. Balvinder Shukla, Vice Chancellor of Amity University, Nodia-201313. These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Dr. Harish Kumar, Head, Amity Institute of Behavioural & Allied Sciences, Faculty of Education, Amity University, Noida and Dr. Neha Gupta, Assistant Professor, Amity Institute of Behavioural and Allied Science, Faculty of Education, Amity University, Noida. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributors only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website:www.auup.amity.edu, E-mail :vcaup@amity.edu

ASSAM DON BOSCO UNIVERSITY, SONAPUR

The Assam Don Bosco University, Sonapur has been set up as a response to the felt educational needs of the people of North-East India and offers relevant study programmes with a focus on research and social commitment through the Schools of Technology, Humanities and Social Sciences, Life Sciences, Applied Sciences, Commerce and Management. The University Centre for Online and Distance Education (CODE), called DBU Global, offers a variety of study programmes in Management and Information Technology. Currently the University offers 19 graduate programmes, 18 postgraduate programmes, 23 doctoral programmes and 11 programmes under CODE. The University has also entered into a number of collaborative agreements with universities from around the world for student and staff exchange programmes and for joint research studies.

In the wake of the crisis faced by the teachers and the students of the University due to the global pandemic caused by the novel corona virus infection, COVID-19, Assam Don Bosco University adapted to face the challenge of the crisis, and provide resilient academic environment. An Online Teaching and Learning Strategy framework was developed for providing active and personalized education for all the students to complete the University curriculum planned for this academic session.

The University gives utmost importance to holistic development of students beyond classroom through co-curricular, extra-curricular and field based activities, which are well planned ahead and are made available in the academic Calendar. Already, the University has a provision for few programmes where students are allowed to obtain credits for the MOOCs courses undergone. The University also has in place a repository of online video lectures, e-books, e-journals from various reputed agencies and is made available to be used by teaching members, students and research scholars. However, to meet the need of the hour, the university has come up with the teaching best practices to be captured in the form of a framework so that later, it may be standardized as an interactive web-based material and be developed into sophisticated course-management software.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Online Teaching and Learning

During the period of Lockdown, the university had set out to achieve three major goals so as to provide uninterrupted educational service. They are :

Completion of Curriculum: To engage students actively with online lectures, video lectures, study materials, project works, dissertation thesis work, tests and assignments.

Extra Support for Learning: To encourage students to join online courses, remedial classes, online webinars, seminars and internships.

Counselling: To constantly communicate with the students in order to lessen their mental stress and to make them active in academic learning.

In order to achieve the goals setup, the *Online Teaching and Learning Strategy* framework was developed which involved:

1. Methods of Teaching
2. Engaging Students in Learning
3. Types of Assignments
4. Modes of Evaluation
5. Support during COVID-19
6. Feedback on student participation and teaching-learning experience

Methods of Teaching

Various methods were adopted for teaching different theory based courses as well as lab based courses by the faculty members of all the departments in the University.

Theory based Courses

- The platform of Google classroom used for the optimum utilization of teaching.
- Programme and course-wise WhatsApp groups created for doubt clearance session.
- University ERP used to share notes and research articles.
- Google forms used to organize various assessment tests and Google Sheet used to share the scores.

- Audio lectures in MP3 files given out.
- Slides prepared on the basis of the texts and lectures shared to facilitate critical explanations.
- Core texts and notes circulated.
- E-resources such as research articles shared.
- Relevant online videos from YouTube, Self-made YouTube Lectures, vidya-mitra, e-pgpathshala, NPTEL shared.
- Skype Classes
- The lectures delivered through various platforms are in simple language and conversational style to give the students appropriate understanding of the subject and the concepts.

Laboratory-based Courses: For the lab based courses the method adopted for teaching was with help of online videos of Virtual laboratories.

Engaging Students in Learning

- **Providing access to course materials within the University:** Course materials were made available through University's ERP Portal - ADBU ERP portal, YouTube and other online videos created by teachers.
- **Use of an array of online platforms provided by MoE, UGC and external agencies:** Course contents were shared through NPTEL video lectures, SWAYAM Online Courses, National Digital Library, Shodhganga, e-Shodh-Sindu, Virtual laboratories, etc.
- **Use of real-time text-based communication spaces:** Google class rooms, Google meet, Teamlink, Zoom app, Google hangouts, Piazza, etc.
- **Asynchronous group and individual messaging:** Audio and video calls (sometimes conference calls), WhatsApp class room groups were used for interaction between students and faculty for discussions and doubt clearing.
- **Real-time interactive events:** Students were encouraged to contact through departmental Facebook page and emails.

Feedback on Student Participation and Teaching-learning Experience

Feedback on Student Participation is given in Table-1.

Table-1 Feedback on Student Participation

Mode of Delivery of Content	Percentage Beneficiaries
Uploaded videos	100% students opted to watch
Google meet, Zoom classes, Tealink, Piazza	65% -100% attended (some students had network issues)
Study material, Lecture notes and PowerPoint presentations shared on Google classroom, Google hangouts, personal mails, WhatsApp	100% shared by teachers to students
Assignment shared on Google classroom, through mails	100% students participated
Virtual laboratories	100% students participated for those available
Hands on Experiments –Wet Labs	Not available

Teaching-learning Experience

The overall experience on Teaching-learning shared by Teachers and students include the following:

- During this time of crisis, the online teaching and learning experience enabled much flexibility in issues of time and place for both teachers as well as students.
- Both teachers and students got opportunity to explore new and innovative online resources.
- Online classroom platforms were found to be effective in giving assignments and sharing of study materials.
- For the laboratory courses, students got to learn about some of the advanced instruments via simulations.
- Some departments lacked full participation. Slow or bad internet connectivity became a hurdle in online teaching especially for students from rural sector with poor connectivity.
- Virtual labs courses were available only for a few laboratory courses.

Recommendations

Following recommendations were brought up by the students and teachers for improving the online teaching and learning :

- Greater consistency in academic practice that builds on accumulated knowledge about improving quality.
- Necessary infrastructure will have to be provided to the teachers and students to ensure assessments without any plagiarism. Besides, data is expensive, and it may not be economically convenient either for the faculty or for the students to continue in this manner.
- Inclusion of a common strategy to record students' attendance, centralized evaluation strategy.
- Provide motivation to students - finding incentives for students to participate actively, providing some synchronous events to maintain their interest and enthusiasm, supporting them in taking responsibility for their learning.
- Improve online learning experience for general, discipline specific courses and laboratory courses which lead to different types of engagement and learning.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Types of Assignments

1. Individual assignment sent through mails.
2. Online Assignments - circulated via Google Form.
 - a. The pattern of assessment in the form of objective and essay type questions.
 - b. Upload images of handwritten answers.
3. Interactive course materials used where students are self-assessed.
4. Onlinemock tests and quizzes.
5. Video assignments— The students were asked to submit video assignment of 5 mins on the assigned topic.

Modes of Evaluation

Non-formal Evaluation

- a. Assessments based on the responses of the students to the online face to face lectures.
- b. Discussions on certain topics were shared beforehand by teachers and online evaluation was carried out.

- c. After watching the NPTEL videos, students are asked to send in their self-evaluated assignments. The students are made to watch the videos again the second time and resend again after adding the missed points of their self-evaluated first round of assignment. Finally both are compared and evaluated by the teachers.

Formal Evaluation

- a. Evaluation of individualised test papers to assess the level of understanding of online lecture and notes.
- b. The video presentations were evaluated and the scores along with certain remarks for improvement were given using Google Sheet.
- c. Evaluation is also done through video assignment. The students were asked to submit video assignment of 5 mins on the assigned topic.
- d. The long answers were evaluated and the marks along with some comments were added in the Google Classroom itself.
- e. One of the criteria for evaluation was to include, references used by the students to complete the assignment.

Laboratory Courses and Project Work Evaluation

- a. Based on the available videos for certain lab courses, tasks are assigned and online presentation, viva voce were conducted.
- b. Regular progress on completion of Project work by students was followed by assigned Project supervisors.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT DURING COVID-19

All official notifications related to COVID-19 given by the University, Government, UGC, WHO, etc. were circulated on time and updated in the University's Website. The Department of Psychology and Counseling of the University, having faculty strength of 3 Clinical Psychologists, 3 Counseling Psychologists/ Psychotherapists and a Special Education Trainer (Ph.D) promoting mental wellness are actively involved in providing mental health services beyond the campus apart from being available for own staff and students. Collaborating with our Alumni who are excellent practitioners in reputed platforms, M.Sc. final year students and Faculty Members, the

Department is providing tele-counseling through DHARA HELPLINE, receiving calls from the COVID-19 frontliners' fraternity. The tele-counselors have also attended training and discussion sessions on tele-psychology and tele-counseling hosted by Global Pandemic Response Forum under eminent psychologists and psychiatrists like Mythili Hazarika, Lita Hazarika, Sushil Agarwal, Suniti Baruah, Barnali Das and many other experts. Currently there are 15 counselors who provide individual and community psychological services to both in house and outside.

Apart from providing psychological support, students and staff are encouraged to carry out continuous efforts in Research and Innovation to come up with solutions. A Website cum dashboard covid19assam.in has been launched that features latest news articles, related to COVID-19 in Assam. The website gives information on the status of the pandemic, Testing Centres, Home Quarantine Tracker and a Symptoms Checker. The website is specially meant for the people of Assam, and so can be viewed in English or in Assamese for the benefit of the common people of the State.

Some departments have taken initiatives to circulate and discuss new research findings, new scientific papers and articles published on COVID-19 structure, mode of transmission, potential drugs, etc. with the students.

CONCLUSION

Assam Don Bosco University made concerted efforts by providing opportunities for both teachers and students to make learning more effective and relevant for protecting academic Interest of students during Corona Pandemic. It may be useful to conduct indepth-study to have robust course-management system in place as catering to educational learning and teaching experience varies from programme to programme.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Fr. Dr Stephen Mavelly, Assam Don Bosco University, Sonapur- 782402 (Assam). These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Dr. Nissi Paul S., Deputy Registrar, Assam Don Bosco University, Sonapur, Assam. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.dbuniversity.ac.in, E-mail : mavelly@dbuniversity.ac.in

AURO UNIVERSITY OF HOSPITALITY AND MANAGEMENT, SURAT

As COVID-19 hit India, 1,000 odd universities and other institutes had to re-invent the way education was imparted. Distance education became the mainstream. The pandemic introduced a new pedagogy, based on digital learning! Based out of Surat, AURO University decided to turn this adversity into an opportunity – to lead the way in transformation of learning facilitation.

Founded in 2011, AURO stands on robust pillars of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother's Indian philosophy of integral education that transforms learners into future leaders. Rising to the occasion was natural for everyone at AURO as the ability to transform and hence align to the rapidly changing times lies at the core of this philosophy. The University has seven Schools – School of Business, School of Hospitality, School of Law, School of Information and Technology, School of Design, School of Journalism and Mass Communication and School of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences and the newly established School of Sciences.

The pandemic changed the way we perceive 'teaching' and 'learning'. It opened up new possibilities and opportunities. The Government of Gujarat declared the lockdown on March 16th, 2020 and this led to newer challenges. But as Socrates' famous dictum goes, "The unexamined life is not worth living." The University decided to examine the challenge and found out an opportunity to re-invent.

Our goals were very clear: Keep the students and faculty members safe, continue teaching to support learning, keep the students engaged meaningfully at home and keep them active to avoid psychological duress in these depressing times.

With the state-of-the-art learning systems already in place at AURO, experimenting with and realigning to learning demands even in the time of technological disruption was never an issue. Teaching process at AURO underwent a seamless transition from physical classroom to an online one, from March 24, 2020. The real and the virtual class-room merged and the virtual has become the new norm ever since.

But AURO took a different path and did not stop at webinars and digital lectures but made students also work on online projects, a breathtaking arts exhibition (<https://aurolockdowngaller.wixsite.com/website>), writing reflections journal, blog writing, story writing and many other activities continue even today.

The 'doing' aspect of education is catered to vertically and horizontally, and in so doing, AURO University has retained and even heightened its focus on the experiential knowledge. It takes pride in the way students respond to new ideas and many a times they take a lead in displaying their artistic merit. It not only reflects the indomitable spirit of our students and faculty members, but also points to the fact that best Universities in the world are those, which are able to align and update itself with the change of time.

AURO University, in a very short span of time, has successfully highlighted and practiced the iconic quotients of vitality, creativity, physicality, and spirituality. The same spirit continues, albeit in an online mode. Below is a detailed report of the teaching, academic events and pedagogical innovations done during the lockdown period.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Online Classes

Total Teaching During Lockdown

A total number of over 5100 hours of online teaching was conducted during the lockdown period. Considering the sudden disruption brought about by the pandemic, it is of great significance that the number of teaching hours assigned to each module were not compromised, but in fact improved!

Auro University used online learning platforms and tools such as Coursera, SWAYAM, EdX, YouTube, MIT Open courseware, webinars, and invited online, interactive talks. Additionally, the Virtual Learning Environment and Learning Management System were already at place so they provided the scaffolding to distribute learning resources, evaluate students' performance in class, internal assessments and end term exam and integrate with the University system.

- Even courses in Hospitality and Design, which mostly consist of practical classes left an impressive mark, for they continued through virtual platform in designing innovative online classes and guided students to prepare the assigned tasks such as food preparation and artworks at home.
- Culinary and bakery exploration done by the School of Hospitality Management students were posted regularly on social media through pictures and videos.

- School of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences students prepared an online artwork on the theme of COVID-19, which received good appreciation when it was put up on Facebook.
- It also started an online Global Learning Series with a view to cater to the MoE's initiative on BHARAT PADHE ONLINE, which provided an opportunity to students to interact with leading figures from different parts of the world.
- School of Law students came up with well-researched papers, Group Projects, Assignment, Case Study, Case-analysis and online quiz to make the learning more interesting.
- Going a step ahead, School of Journalism students made several short films including those on the theme of "Life in COVID-19 Times", which generated a lot of interest. And provided video editing support to others schools in preparing and circulating their own videos.
- School of Information and Technology students continued with their software learning programs at home.

Teaching and Communication Support

Each School followed the regular time-table, except for a few changes to accommodate connectivity issues. The model of School of Business is representative enough to understand how all the schools functioned:

- All the faculty members were oriented to the changes so that all of them can get involved in the process.
- A WhatsApp group was formed for coordinating the classes. Daily reports of the classes held were sent to the Dean's (Academic) office by the end of the day.
- A monthly report of the total teaching hours done by each School, was also sent to the Registrar's office for record and documentation.
- Each School held Program Review meeting, which was attended by all the faculty member and the Class Representatives to take up any difficulty faced due to the online teaching.
- Minute attention was paid to the smooth conduct of the classes and to maintain the satisfaction level of students and parents.

Though it was a daunting task for few members, not very tech savvy, to overcome the disruption and cater to the needs of students, it was decided that rather than forcing one software for all, we would use what was convenient. The best available platforms like Zoom, Google Meet, Cisco Webex, Google Classroom were used. At the same time, faculty members were readily available to their students on phone and WhatsApp to clear any doubts.

The 'doing' aspect of AURO's learning methodology proved useful and it was reflected in the way students outdid their teachers in the 'technology department' and were very well adapted for the crisis. Multiple channels of communication had to be adopted as some students had moved with their families to their interior areas of towns and villages, where internet was scarce.

Teaching was competently backed up by the rich library of the University. To pursue research and learning from home, the University library, with its already existing rich resources and digital platform, gave access to users with thousands of eBooks, journals, databases. Access to rare books were also shared through the INFLIBNET to the users.

All academic resources are always available to students online in Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) which is in place at Auro University (<http://vle.aurouniversity.ac.in/>). Students can view the reservoir of curated learning material like presentations, e-books, videos and other learning materials. They can also upload their assignments on the same platform. This advanced preparedness of the university ensured that faculty and students remain connected from remote areas despite the pandemic crisis.

124 Webinars for Reaching Out

The University decided to disseminate learning to common people in this tough times. Webinars, marketed well on social media, helped it to reach students and go beyond them as well. A total number of 124 webinars were organized by AURO University during the lockdown period. Each School did its best and to get aboard the best resource persons from India and abroad.

- School of Information and Technology led with mammoth number of webinars 30.
- It was followed by the School of Business with 21.

- School of Journalism and Mass Communication held 13 webinars and a 3-day training program to teach mobile video editing to all the students of the University so that they can express their creativity with videos.
- School of Hospitality hosted 13 webinars.
- School of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences with 11.
- School of Design with 8 and School of Law with 10.
- Centres such as Sri Aurobindo Integral Life Centre (SAILC) and Physical Education, organized 06 and 05 respectively.

The webinars saw the presence of scholars, writers, thinkers of great eminence, ranging from the University of Oxford (UK), University of Idaho (USA), Trinity College Dublin (Ireland), University of Sydney (Australia), University of Southern Denmark, University of Aarhus (Denmark), University of Linnaeus, Stockholm University (Sweden), and University of Rome tor Vergata (Italy). See the link for the list of greatly appreciated webinars organized by the University: <https://aurouniversity.edu.in/webinar/>

It also featured entrepreneurs from companies such as AMUL (<https://www.facebook.com/AuroUniversityIndia/videos/1603017656514727/>) and SAPIO Consultant.

International Conferences and Workshops

Four International Conference and Workshops for Faculty members and students, which were attended by 34 International Luminaries from the field of Academics, Theatre, Music, Literature, Business and Philosophy among other allied areas.

They include Former Under Secretary General of the United Nations and Lok Sabha member Dr Shashi Tharoor, Prof Pramod Nayar (President Award winner for the Best research in Humanities, 2018) from Central University of Hyderabad, Prof Janet Wilson from University of Northampton, internationally renowned writer, Tabish Khair (Denmark), Discovery Channel documentary maker, Prof Douglas Vakoch, Prof Elisabeta Marino from University of Tor Vergata Italy, Prof Kim Do Young from Jamia Milia Islamia to name a few.

They appreciated the setup of Information Technology Infrastructure support from Cisco and Microsoft provided by the University during the various

events. The link to the Conference is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RPYVoI-Gxcs> The popularity of the conferences organized by AURO University can be gauged from the fact that it generated plenty of views on the University's YouTube channel.

To touch upon one of the most vital and disconcerting issue arising due to the pandemic, the School of Business organized a Online Talks on 'Impact of Corona on Indian Economy'. The talk was delivered by the famous Indian economist, Prof Vaidyanathan (Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RkubK7Se4dI>) and 'Market Outlook and Investment Strategy' (Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jZjKo10oy0k>).

- Among several other webinars organized by the School of Business, worth mentioning are 'Cognitive Neuroscience of Emotional Branding and Subliminal Messaging' (Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zHElkyVs_eQ) and 'Women Warriors: Roles and Contributions -During and Post COVID-19. (Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k5lX16HHUcs>)
- Staying motivated during Coronavirus can be difficult especially when there is a lot of uncertainty, confusion and panic. As we all work in a remote mode, most of us feel it extra challenging to engage work and sometimes feel less positive. Hence, to motive and cheer up all in these hard times, a short video on Covid Awareness was made by the Legal Aid and Community Development Centre of the School of Law's students. (Link:https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=2981249658608344&id=1234990773234250)
- Physical well-being constitutes one of the important elements of learning at AURO University and it has always been taken care in the integral education that the University provides. To cater to the physical fitness of AURO family and members of the society, the University held online *Suryanamaskar Festival*, which was attended by 2,142 people from different corners of India. (Link:<https://docs.google.com/forms/>)
- The lockdown was undoubtedly a period of great uncertainty and hence stress level cannot be ignored. To ensure a stress free learning and living environment of students, their family members and faculty members too, the Sports Centre organized an awareness programme, *SMILE is*

the Mantra Against the COVID-19. (Link:<https://www.facebook.com/AuroUniversityIndia/photos/a.397091370355570/3126594457405234>)

- The Centre organized a National Level Quiz Contest, which received a great response and enthusiastic participation from across India. (Link: <https://forms.gle/uXCApCYs5kj4yTFGA>)
- An online session on 'Stay Active and Injury Free With Physiotherapy', was attended by 3,349 people. Further, the Physical department put up an excellent online conference on 'Sports Culture in India' on June 5th, 2020, which was attended by 3,250 people.

Students' Activities

The University's engagement of students in the doing aspect of knowledge creation continued during the lockdown. Students were given exciting opportunities to interact with international figures, curate journal reflections, poetry event, story competition, culinary competition. They also came up with two scintillating art exhibitions and acted as the MCs during the online international conference on "Imagining the Post-Coronavirus World" organised by the University in collaboration with the University of Linnaeus (Sweden), Scottish Centre for Tagore Studies, University of Edinburgh, and the University of Hyderabad.

It provided students to interact with Speakers from 5 continents and 20 countries. The conference was reached to 8,143 people, and got good attention in leading national newspapers. Another very interesting competition was conducted in collaboration with Monin and Madhushala School of Beverage. It was a Beverage Mixology Competition organized for the Students, Parents & Relatives of AURO University.

The competition required the participant to prepare a mocktail/smoothie/shake and send the picture to the organizer with a picture of participant with the drink. They also had to send the recipe of their drink. Top 20 participants were awarded certificate of appreciation. Top 8 participants got the chance of sending their drink video to the judges which were featured on the social networking pages. Top 3 participants were awarded by the gift hampers and online bartending certificate program by the organizers.

Online E-Theme Dinners Two Online E-Theme Dinners were also conducted during the lockdown.

1. **ZEN Theme Dinner 18th March, 2020** - Great Pan Asian flavors created by the School of Hospitality Management 4th Year Students. Students worked hard to create these virtual events. They came up with an idea of delivering entire package with all the raw material in a box, delivered at the door steps to be prepared from scratch at home and an online session was conducted by Zoom to teach the attendees.
2. **Online Mexican Theme Dinner 27th May, 2020** – Online Mexican culinary session for culinary enthusiasts and food lovers. A fine dine Mexican experience organized online by the School of Hospitality Management 4th Year Students.

Virtual interactions between the industry experts and the AURO Alumni were conducted for guiding the students regarding career options, (Facebook Live : <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1106053656418931>) and internship opportunities. School of Information and Technology organized timely webinars on 'How Content Writing can be a Part of Career Building' and 'Deep Dive Into The Front End Technologies'. (Link: <https://www.facebook.com/AuroUniversityIndia/videos/593098398291632/>)

During all the competitions the biggest challenge in front of the participants was COVID-19 because they had to give their best with limited ingredients and resources. It made the student's realize they can achieve happiness with small gestures of humanity, gratitude, courage and progress and also get the best out of them with whatever available resources they had during the period of crisis.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Innovations for Assessment and Evaluation of Online Learning

Online teaching brought newer challenges. Online assessment that would ensure sanctity of the exams and fair practice, while being conducted from students' homes, was a daunting task. But AURO University successfully conducted online examinations and assessment.

- The Examination office came up with the idea of structuring the End Term exam in three categories, all online though: Openbook, MCQs and

Short-Answer type format. This was successfully executed by the faculty members and matched up by the students, which resulted in a very smooth conduct of the examination.

- School of Information Technology faculty members coordinated with students from across the University for installation of “Offee” app and smooth conduct of exams.
- As a technical support for the students, a team of faculty members coordinated and got the app installed.
- The team also supported students to overcome any challenges faced during the online examination.
- For the purpose of the End Term exam, the University provided the best mode of assessment to its students. Auro University has given its students access to the LMS.
- As a part of assessments students have submitted their assignments, project work, synopsis, internship reports and open book examination in the already existing platform VLE (Virtual Learning Environment)

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. Rajan Welukar, Vice Chancellor of Auro University of Hospitality and Management, Surat-394510 (Gujarat). These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Prof. Rajan Welukar, Vice Chancellor of Auro University of Hospitality and Management, Surat, Gujarat. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.aurouniversity.edu.in, E-mail : vc@aurouniversity.edu.in

AWADHESH PRATAP SINGH UNIVERSITY, REWA

Children take in much more and with less labour through their ears than through their eyes. I do not remember having read any book from cover to cover with my boys. But I gave them, in my own language, all that I had digested from my readings of various books, and I dare say they are still carrying a recollection of it in their minds.

M.K. Gandhi

As the tentacles of COVID-19 spread over to India, from across continents with an initial note of caution, there was mixed environment of fear and caution throughout the country. People were familiar with the word epidemic but 'pandemic' was a bit unfamiliar. On March 14, 2020, Government of Madhya Pradesh called for closure of the universities and Colleges. University's examinations scheduled from March, 24 was to be postponed. Boys and Girls Hostels were vacated in pre-emption, before the Lockdown was pronounced by Hon. Prime Minister of India on 24th March, evening. As the information on pandemic started pouring in before, the University became conscious, organized demonstrations on 'wash-your-hands' amongst the inmates of hostels, faculty members, officers and the employees. On March, 20, with call of Hon'ble Prime Minister, NSS volunteers were directed to join in 'Janata curfew'. On March, 25, the University reached to a state of 'halt' prevailing all around, as it had stalled the physical academic session 2019-20 to an uncertainty.

INITIATIVES TAKEN BY THE UNIVERSITY

On March 26, 2020 Hon'ble Governor of Madhya Pradesh and Chancellor of the University (Late) Shree Lalji Tandon presided over the Meeting of the Vice Chancellors of State Universities on video conference.

In a new COVID-19 environment, he laid a number of guidelines on how to offer relief to stranded students, food and shelter to weaker sections, evolve and involve university teachers, students and entire fraternity in social e-messaging to prevent menace of COVID-19. After that the Awadhesh Pratap Singh University, Rewa geared up the process of forwarding messages on prevention of COVID-19 on three official Platforms: (i) Face Book linked to important official websites: Raj Bhavan, Ministry of Higher Education and Health,

Government of M.P., MoE, UGC, AICTE, NCTE and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India; ii. A Whatsapp group formed to network with Professors and Officers and iii. A Whatsapp group formed with Technical staff and Employees.

All Faculty members activated respective groups of students and alumni. Raj Bhavan portal was opened and data entry of number of messages sent on day-to-day basis was maintained. Principals of affiliated colleges networked with Dean, College Development Council and further expanded the canvas across the territory of the University, consisting of 07 districts: Rewa, Satna, Sidhi, Singrauli, Shahdol, Umariya and Anoopur. As the pandemic did not recognise discipline of boundaries, spread of preventive messages could breach demarcations to sail around any number of people. In all 10,43,860 e-messages were sent and up-loaded.

Hon'ble Chancellor, who initiated to proceed on social frontier never believed in 'tokenism', and in adoption of a cosmetic approach. He motivated us to use the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) as an effective tool, to carry out campaign in prevention consistently, especially involving students, the young ones. Secretary, Raj Bhavan, Shree Manohar Dube continued to call the Vice Chancellors, to appraise with and in seeking feedback and suggestions about next points to focus upon. University ICT Cell was given responsibility to draw messages and derive innovative ideas to offer a new format with tag line ' We have to win the war against COVID-19, All of us have to become the warriors in war' .Younger generation being IT savvy, were brought on a common platform to campaign. Faculty Members established their chain of command, waiting in the morning to float a new message via University Registrar. By evening, on common platform HoDs and Professor(s) In-charge were up-loading numbers, towards a further data entry on Raj Bhavan portal. M.P. Online, a State Enterprise collaborated to forward SMS, in limited words, as large number of students and users hailed from distant villages, where network or whatsapp facilities were not available. The University team with active participation of Registrar, Officers, Guest Faculty and Employees were discharging a new version of social responsibility, eternally. On a day, one HoD of a teaching department reported a big number of messages sent, as Vice Chancellor, I called on him same evening, with enthusiastic note he replied, with 30 years of experience his students across the Country were multiplying the network with own, to expand the campaign, exceptionally floated by the University. The fire was in the heart of every one.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Online Classes

Hon. Chancellor addressed Vice Chancellors further on April 01, in follow-up of COVID-19 prevention awareness campaign undertaken by State Universities. New guidelines were issued on academic front also, that online classes were to be organized in the universities to stimulate students during on-going lockdown in carriage of our primary responsibility, teaching and learning. On April 15, he further addressed via video conference, to mandatorily hold online classes in the University campus and Colleges for all PG and UG students.

In establishing the mechanism and governance of a new route of teaching, I held consultations with Professors and HoDs . It appeared, there had been initial, but reasonable reluctance on University's part for the reasons as under:-

- i) Non-existence of ICT infrastructure with APS University, Rewa;
- ii) All Faculty Members were not well acquainted with new mode of teaching online, except a few in Departments of Computer Science and allied subjects;
- iii) Non-possession of desired level of skill and e-teaching materials with many;
- iv) Most of the students were from weaker sections and hailed from rural areas; might not possess electronic gadgets to establish network;
- v) Prolonged closure of University Departments, own rooms, laboratories, library and support system during lockdown, whereas online classes were to be managed from home; and
- vi) However, options remained non-negotiable, had to come out with mandate and detail note(s). As Head of Academics, I made calls to a few of the Vice Chancellors in other States also. That how to proceed? Finally, could affirm that had to assert. On April 16, 2020 wrote a letter to the Deans, Head of the Departments, Principals, Professors, Director (Self-Supporting Programs) and Professor(s) In-charge that to organize and conduct online classes. That, two Committees were constituted, first, to oversee, manage operational parts, time tables in conduct of regular online classes and second, to monitor and manage the University website and its content. Teachers were encouraged to use self- prepared audio and video lectures, e-notes along with

question and answers. Virtual class room interactions, solution, problem with formulation remained in the centre, to make online classes interactive.

All Professors remained in communication with Guest Faculty to motivate them to mobilize students. Ph.D. supervisors were suggested to remain in contact. Principals of the Colleges were informed to organize online classes.

In a move to monitor copy-right issues to up-load e-content on University website, the Committee prepared a disclaimer clause. Faculty Members were advised to optimally use the e-initiatives of MoE and UGC like SWAYAM, MOOCS, e-PATHSHALA, SWAYAMPBABHA, etc. On Shodh Ganga, the University had already made it operational before January 28, 2020 Convocation. To resolve the concerns of the students, who could not join online classes for any reason, It was made clear that special contact classes be organised after lockdown eased out.

Follow-up

Moving on to accelerate academic activities, involving teachers and students to their basic role, now in an online mode, Raj Bhavan portal opened up on April 19, 2020, with follow-up mechanism a 7 Points Charter laid on to offer feed-back on day-to-day basis:

- (i) Number of Online Interactive classes held.
- (ii) Number of Video lectures posted on University website.
- (iii) Number of Audio lectures posted on University website.
- (iv) Number of PDFs posted on University website.
- (v) Number of PPTs posted on University website.
- (vi) Number of Research paper published during lockdown period on University website.
- (vii) Number of Time Table of each class posted on University website.

Unfolding Ten Commandments of Virtual Class Rooms

1. **Firmness:** Hon.Chancellor pronounced decision to hold online classes in all M.P. State Universities;
2. **Facilitation:** Standing Committee of Academic Council in its Meetings, adopted online classes as an additional tool of teaching;

3. **Instruction:** The Vice Chancellor opened two-way communication with Deans, HoDs, Professors, Principals, Director (Self-Supporting Programs) and Professor(s) In-charge to make online classes a reality;
4. **Time-table:** On University website, 40 time tables of University Teaching Departments' (UTD) courses, up-loaded on semester basis;
5. **Dash Board:** Virtual Class Rooms, Teaching Departments, Registry, Vice Chancellor's Desk all got seamlessly linked together, on real time basis for two-way communication;
6. **Assimilation:** One Assistant Registrar, with his technical team, feed-back and information received from 16 University Teaching Departments and Centres, used to compile and up-load it on Raj Bhavan portal, after review and approval;
7. **Tracking Delivery:** HoDs, Professor(s) In-charge and all Senior Professors been conscious to e-content and delivery mechanism, keeping team of Guest Faculty motivated to new stream of teaching and learning;
8. **Conversation:** Regular conversations were going on, directions passed on to keep online process of teaching to evolve in content, effectiveness and quality;
9. **7-Points Charter:** By evening, each Faculty member, to each class, to each program, to each Department up-loaded information on 7-Points proforma of Raj Bhavan; and
10. **Follow-up:** Day-to-day information posted on Raj Bhavan portal, in a cumulative manner with regular feedback and suggestions received.

Efficiency

As the weeks went on to an achievable level of professionalism and confidence, Faculty Members, functionaries were becoming assertive and innovative. On a day, a Professor of the University has shown me a long online lecture he video-recorded on a mobile at home for up-loading on University website. A future in-house central facility, on being developed in the University could deliver quality results.

An Academic Venture, holding 8,357 online classes in a Conventional University, has emerged out with three major attributes, to harness optimum level of Efficiency:

- (i) Width: Let all University Teaching Departments, Faculty Members and functionaries join together, evolve own online teaching methodology.
- (ii) Depth: Let all the Students net-worked together with Departments and Instructors, join virtual classes to share e-content actively.

- (iii) Resilience: Let two-way interactions continue to flow with ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ approach.

CONCLUSION

In an ICT Age, flow of information plays critical and strategic role. Leadership remains critical on being visionary and decisive about a conventional University, established in the year 1968, entered in a new phase of teaching and learning mechanism. Raj Bhavan remained interactive to the Vice Chancellors with higher socio-academic aspirations and directions. In a true manner, Late Shree Lalji Tandon, Hon'ble Chancellor could facilitate to establish a new ‘Vertical’ in hierarchy stream-lining it with the Vice Chancellor and entire University fraternity during lockdown.

That, in two-pronged strategy, University’s contribution to society towards prevention of COVID-19, were channelized intensively, with improvised online teaching and learning process during the session 2019-20. These initiatives inculcated an optimistic note and confidence amongst young ones and in entire University. The firmness, facilitation and follow-up remained critical to an innovative effort. A visionary leadership could harness enormous demographic potential of a conventional University.

“The golden mean, however, is not, like the mathematical mean, an exact average of two precisely calculable extremes; it fluctuates with the collateral circumstances of each situation, and discover itself only to mature and flexible reason. Excellence is an art won by training and habituation: we do not act rightly because we have virtue or excellence, but we rather have these because we have acted rightly; these virtues are formed in man by his doing the actions; we are what we repeatedly do.”

Aristotle

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. Peeush R Agarwal, Vice Chancellor of Awadhesh Pratap Singh University, Rewa-486003 (MP). These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Dr. Peeush R Agarwal, Vice Chancellor of Awadhesh Pratap Singh University, Rewa (MP). The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.apsurewa.ac.in, E-mail : vcapsup@gmail.com

BHARATI VIDYAPEETH, PUNE

(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to unprecedented uncertainty for Universities and institutions of higher learning throughout the country. As a result, teaching and assessment were shifted to completely online mode for the remainder of the academic year. Students may reconsider their decisions of enrolling in higher education due the alarming situation. The top cause of concern for institutions is about enrolment and the unpredictability as to when campus life will resume. The University engaged in a contingency plan to ensure educational continuity. Some steps that have been taken as a response towards this include:

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

- Confidence building mechanisms aimed at the parents and the prospective candidates about the safety measures undertaken by the institution in terms of frequent sanitization of the campus, doctor on call, availability of sanitisers, contactless processes, regular check of staff members and students, compulsory wearing of masks, reminders regarding safety instructions to be followed. This The University also envisages to provide insurance for students.
- Guidelines regarding safety conduct for students at campus, which is made available at the website. The safety guidelines also comprise of content made available from WHO.
- Offered payment of fees through installments as income of parents may be affected due to the pandemic.
- Ensured personalized learning experience to current students during the pandemic situation so that a clear positive message is carried out by them as brand ambassadors of the institute. Faculty members are assigned small groups of students to be in constant touch and serve to clear any doubts/ requirements by the students. Hence, communities of faculty, students and their parents were created to address concerns and difficulties.
- Student to student touchpoints were developed through the conduct of webinars wherein prospective students were in contact with current students and alumni to answer queries and concerns.

- Created virtual engagement for prospective students offering all information online, virtual office hours wherein they could contact the staff, live video chats with faculty, engagement in social media with an ultimate aim of making them a part of the community.
- Online webinars by faculty on topics of interest and those that are in vogue so that prospective students realise the capabilities available and raise curiosity for deeper knowledge in the particular domain. This displays the institute's unique value proposition in career preparedness of the prospective students.
- Ongoing training for all those involved in admission related work regarding answering Frequently Asked Questions, to be compassionate and polite with parents and students and be prepared to answer questions clearly.
- Conduct of the entire admission process through computer based and online mode such as entrance tests, video based interviews, online admission process for counseling and fee payment.
- Communication of plan of action regarding initiation of teaching through online mode for the initial months to the prospective students. The necessary technology platform has been developed to support conduct of high quality online education.

Teaching and Assessments

Steps that have been taken to handle the Teaching and Assessments for current students include:

- Due to the outbreak and following government guidelines, the University suspended face to face teaching to protect health of students and staff. With its commitment to ensure that students complete their coursework in time and without disruptions, extensive use was made by implementation of in-house learning management system (moodle based) as part of remote learning that was in practice for several years in the University. Alternatively, open source digital learning solutions were also utilized for conduct of live online teaching and learning. The concern regarding quality of educational instruction through online mode was dealt with regular training of the faculty members.

- Oral examination and viva were conducted through video conferencing mode.
- Blended tools were utilized for teaching and learning both for synchronous and asynchronous learning.
- Online tests (MCQ), written test (through emails), based on Blooms Taxonomy were conducted for students as part of the evaluation process.

CONTRIBUTION TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

The University has a medical college and hospital at Pune, hence the hospital accepted COVID-19 patients and affordable treatment was provided with the help and expertise of its doctors and other medical staff. Some of the staff and students from the Nursing College also volunteered as Corona warriors by helping NGO's and government agencies in their fight against the pandemic and were resourceful to help spread the message of taking precautions and adhere to safety measures.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. M M Salunkhe, Vice Chancellor of Bharati Vidyapeeth (Deemed-To-Be University) Pune-411 030 (Maharashtra). These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Prof. M M Salunkhe, Vice Chancellor of Bharati Vidyapeeth (Deemed-To-Be University) Pune, Maharashtra. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.bvuniversity.edu.in, E-mail : manikrao.salunkhe@gmail.com

BIRLA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE, PILANI

A few months back, hardly had anybody imagined that our rambunctiously fast-paced world would come to a grinding halt like this. This outrageous outbreak has challenged our health care system, has somersaulted our economy, of course has put lives of billions across the globe in danger and has forced all organizations, including the academic institutions, to adapt and calibrate.

During this tumultuous time, BITS Pilani, like other renowned universities, has demonstrated exceptional resilience in ensuring a smooth completion of the academic calendar. We were amongst the first few universities in India to cancel the in-person classes and shift entirely to online mode of instruction following identical schedule for each course. This improvising initiative was deemed necessary keeping in view government guidelines and the safety of our students, faculty and staff members. It is because of our prompt and decisive action early on that till date all our campuses remain corona free. In the process, we also completed the teaching delivery exactly as per the original schedule on April, 29.

This report in your hand offers you an insight into the way the BITS Pilani administration, faculty, staff, and students have responded to COVID-19 and have remained steadfast, focused and creative in their approach. Essential services were ensured during this period across all our campuses; most institute tasks were continued and in some of them business was even better than usual. Faculty hiring processes, doctoral student milestone approvals, and all academic governance processes including Senate meetings, etc. were continued in the digital and online mode.

Sending a large number of students home as a preventive measure and moving to online classes was our first formal initiative. Starting from 20th March, we have been holding online classes, webinars, pre-submissions, PhD viva-voce examinations, Student Union and senate student member meetings and regular Campus Response Team (CRT) meetings to ensure a smooth completion of our academic and administrative responsibilities.

As mentioned, it is a concerted effort; together every single BITSian has responded to the call gracefully.

PROACTIVE MEASURES AT BITS PILANI, PILANI CAMPUS

Steps Taken from the First Week of March

- Health center of the institute alerted all the BITSians about the spread of the pandemic and advised everyone to be extra cautious if symptoms such as flu, cough and cold persisted after a journey.
- Reinforcing UGC's advisory, Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) measures were taken to contain the virus (March, 4-6).
- All the BITSians were advised to use personal protective equipment (PPE) such as masks and sanitizers as countermeasures against exposure to COVID-19 virus.
- Cancelled all institute-sponsored student events on campus.
- Students were asked to leave hostels in the next four days, and arrangements were made for safe evacuation and travel (March, 14-17).
- Made a transition to Work from Home.
- Formed a Campus Response Team (CRT) to extend help to the residents and to communicate guidelines in line with government directions.

Administrative Decisions for Students' Safety

Special Buses : Special buses to Jaipur, New Delhi and Loharu were arranged for all the FD & HD students to leave for homes. Transportation was arranged on all four days, from 14th March to 17th March .

Limited Mess Facilities : PhD students were given the option either to continue their research from their hostels or from homes. From 18th March, 2020, limited mess facilities have been provided for 197 PhD research scholars and faculty members.

Accommodation for Staff : 13 mess workers and several staff members have been provided with accommodation in the institute hostels to minimize movement and contact from people outside the campus.

Thermal Scanning : All the hostel superintendents and *chowkidars* have been deployed at the main gate (24 hours, shift-wise) for thermal scanning and sanitization of vehicles.

Campus Response Team (CRT) Activities

- A Campus Response Team (CRT) was constituted on 24th March, 2020 to look after the well-being of the campus residents.
- Arrangements for home delivery of grocery items, fruits and vegetables to all residents were made available by BITS Cooperative society.
- Comprehensive sanitization of the entire campus, from the main entrance to all offices, roads and staff housing have been taken up by Institute's Estate Management Unit, with the help of Vidya Vihar Nagar Palika.
- 60 sanitization workers and security personnel were provided with temporary housing on the campus to maintain high standards of cleanliness on the campus.

Medical Facilities

- Arrangements were made to provide masks, sanitizers and other required medicines to all the students while they were leaving for their homes.
- A medical surveillance team was deployed at the main entrance to screen people for signs of fever, cough, and other COVID-19 symptoms.
- Telephonic and e-mail-based consultations were initiated for the staff and faculty residing on the campus.
- An ambulance service (24X7) was arranged to take patients to the referral outside the campus safely
- At the chemist outlet counter, at the reception, and inside the consultation chamber, transparent plastic barriers were erected to protect the front-line force.
- An attendant was arranged exclusively to fetch medicines for outside so that people with comorbid issues were protected from being exposed to the virus.

The Campus Premises

- BITSians were provided with the required information as to how they could protect themselves, their friends, and family members.
- Only the main entrance gate remained open for the campus residents, essential service providers, and students during this lockdown period.

- Every person entering the campus premises needed to undergo a quick and routine health check.
- Campus residents were to remain strictly home-quarantined and maintain social-distancing.
- BITS Coop Akshay supplied groceries, fruits and vegetables at the doorstep of homes of residents at affordable prices.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Academic Initiatives

- Lectures/Tutorial classes were conducted through platforms such as Google Meet, Google Classroom and Zoom from 20th, March, 2020 to 29th, April, 2020 as per timetable of the Second Semester 2019-20.
- Instructors were advised to record their classes and share them for future reference by the students.
- The Instructor In-charges(s) (I/Cs) were asked to revisit their course evaluation schemes and submit their revised handouts for DCA's approval.
- Operational guidelines for the offering of Summer Term (2019-20) courses were prepared. Each Campus was asked to identify essential requirements to offer these courses, keeping in view the timely graduation of backlog students and dual degree students so that they become eligible for double semester PS (by offering a few discipline electives).
- Practice School 1 through online mode was operationalized from 17th May.
- Continuous webinars were organized by leading professionals from industry and, academia for the benefit of students on relevant topics. These webinars received overwhelming response from both students and faculty members.

Library Facilities

- The Pilani campus library responded on time to the situation and took several initiatives to ensure that the BITS Community are not inconvenienced in terms of getting information to meet their academic, research and project related needs.

- Library provided remote access to articles and e-books from reputed publishers such as Elsevier, Springer, IEEE, Taylor and Frances, IOP, Wiley, Pearson and EBSCO. For remote access platform such as Shibboleth and quot were installed in collaboration with INFLIBNET.
- A master list of 1662 e-books was procured from various reputed publishers and shared through Google Drive root link with students, research scholars and faculty members.
- The Library also organized a webinar on Web of Science and End Note in Research under User Awareness Program (UAP) on 1st May, 2020 for faculty members, research scholars and HD students.

Beyond the Classroom

With an urge to keep the intellectual ball rolling, the Student Alumni Relations Cell (SARC), BITS launched its weekly webinar series, PlugIn, on every Saturday exclusively for the BITS community. So far, the series has featured some of the globally acclaimed BITS alumni who are known for their pioneering work in various domains. Featured speakers include:

- Dr. Ramanan Laxminarayan, Director at Centre for Disease Dynamic, Economics and Policy (CDDEP) and Senior Research Scholar and Lecturer at Princeton University.
- Mr. Vishnu Chundi, Co-founder and CEO at AssetVault.
- Prof. Milind Tambe, (Professor of Computer Science at Harvard University and Director of 'AI for Social Good' at Google India.
- Mr. Amit Marathe, Director of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, Inseego Corp.
- Mr. Puvvala Yugandhar, who is currently the Head of Global Supply Chain and is also a Member of the Management Council at Dr. Reddy's Laboratories

Plugin has received tremendous amount of positive feedback from the participants.

Experience Sharing from Students and Faculty

Shagufta Gurmukhdas, ME Computer Science, CSIS Department

We were timely informed about going back to our homes for our safety. We were also kept updated on decisions about the remaining semester via emails. Besides, there were frequent emails about how we can take care of ourselves and the symptoms to look out for. On the academic front we received ample support, extended deadlines, adjusted requirements, and professors were also available for clarification of doubts online, apart from online lectures.

Aayushi Malhotra, Research Scholar, HSS Department

Around mid-March when only a few cases of COVID-19 were reported in India, BITS Pilani took timely measures to send the students home and arrange all essential services for the people who decided to stay back on campus. Thereafter, the Crisis Response Team is continually ensured that all necessary arrangements including mess services, regular cleaning of hostel washrooms, sanitization of the common areas and regulation of crowd at grocery stores are in place.

Rahul S, Student BE Electronics and Instrumentation Engineering

"The situation was handled quite well at BITS Pilani. All arrangements were made especially for our safe return to homes. Transportation facilities to all the major cities like Delhi and Jaipur were arranged to facilitate smooth travel. Most medical facilities and administrative departments worked overtime to ensure a hassle free COVID-19 response. The situation on campus is very good due to the phenomenal efforts of both the students and the management."

Dr. Pankaj Arora, Assistant Professor, EEE Department

Our flexible and student-friendly atmosphere, where students attend the courses out of their interest and not merely for completing attendance requirements, has now proven its worth. At BITS Pilani, using the swift leverage to technology, the online classrooms helped to mimic traditional classrooms in all forms to achieve a positive response by engaging the students in interactive sessions. This lockdown has never locked our efforts down, and with the collective efforts of both the faculty and the students, this 'Online Teaching' initiative proved fruitful.

*Dr. Kaushar Vaidya, Assistant Professor, Department of Physics
Faculty In-Charge, Teaching Learning Centre*

COVID-19 caught most of us completely off our guards! Teaching students in the online mode was a challenging and yet a very exciting experience. It meant a lot of meticulous planning, of every minute detail, for each lecture. Two of my biggest concerns were, interaction with students during the online lectures and feedback in the absence of continuous evaluation. I found the use of Google forms quite informative during the lectures to assess students' learning.

Research for Impact in News

Considering the fact that the detergents and soaps have managed to disrupt the surface spike protein of the deadly virus, a team supervised by Senior Professor Suman Kapur, Promoter of xcellence in Bio Innovations (xBITS) from Hyderabad Campus, has come up with an edible nutraceutical formulation, which can be tested in a 14-day period clinical trial for efficacy. This AYUSH approach “seeks to wash off the virus in the mouth and the throat of an infected person within the first few days of its presence” and help half a million people who are under quarantine in the state-run facilities. Read More @ <https://bit.ly/2XFUhtn>

Dr. Syed Mohammad Zafaruddin from EEE Department, BITS Pilani, Pilani Campus, along with students from BITS Pilani and VIT Vellore has developed CoviSafe: COVID-19 Tracking app. This app alerts people who may have encountered an infected person and guides the authorities to identify the places where the virus might have spread.

Social Responsibility

BITSAA

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, BITSians across the globe have been contributing through BITSAA to ameliorate the dire circumstances of those in need. So far, they have received around Rs 15 Lakhs and the help continues to pour in. The amount received has been utilized in distributing ration and food packets to needy people across all the three campuses of BITS-Pilani - Pilani, Hyderabad and K K Birla Goa campus. Also, ration has been distributed to 125 Maids serving to BITS staff houses and campus.

PARC

Pilani Atmanirbhar Resource Centre (PARC) contributed Rs 2 lakhs for the distribution of ration packets to the migrant labors, construction workers, daily wagers and other needy persons in and around Pilani campus..

Student Union

BITS Student Union has also come forward to extend a helping hand to the needy in these difficult times. They have collected funds and supported 8 *Rehdi Walas*, 7 auto drivers, 64 *dhobis* and 2 newspaper vendors by giving them Rs. 10,000 each.

Staff Association

Staff Association managed to gather Rs 6.62 lakhs in the form of donations by 02 April, and distributed groceries and food packets to the underprivileged and daily wage workers. So far, they have been distributed 100 food packets a day.

They are also helping a local community kitchen, which is committed to feeding the underprivileged class, with groceries, cooking supplies, and LPG cylinders. They wish to continue their services until the lockdown is completely lifted.

BITSian COVID-19 Initiative

RS Mani, DDG, NIC, Project head, Aarogya Setu App (Pilani, '87)

He is leading the team of India's COVID-19 contact tracing app 'Aarogya Setu'. Under his leadership the App was developed in just 15 days. It's the fastest app to reach 100 million downloads and helping government to connect essential health services with the people of India in their fight against COVID-19.

Chandradeo Arya, Founder, Callzy (Pilani, '17)

Chandradeo has built an all Indian 27*7 voice AI essential services helpline for COVID-19. Just by calling on +91790165293 anyone can get essential help from Govt authorities and NGOs. He is also engaged in building data analytics and sharing with Govt to increase the effectiveness of essential services across the country.

Aditya Ruia, Co-Founder, BECO (Pilani, 17)

BECO has designed innovative hands-free sanitizing stations, and already installed 1050 units in Mumbai. BECO has been producing eco-friendly tissues, ear buds, toothpicks and others commonly used lifestyle products.

Rakesh Kumar Prajapati, Deputy Commissioner Kangra, HP (Pilani, 09)

'Real Action Hero' covered in the latest issue of India Today for making outstanding contributions as Deputy Commissioner to combat COVID-19 in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh.

Sarthak Sethi, IoT Developer & STEM Trainer

Student, BITS Pilani Dubai Campus, '21

Sarthak has built a WiFi-enabled app control UV sterilizer called 'Obilizer'. With its help, we can sterilize items used every day. The process is completely transmission free. Things can be free of infection without using any liquid. It is highly useful in sanitizing electronic items.

Anand Madangopal, Founder and CEO, Cardiac Design Labs (WILP, '03)

He has developed a unique wearable device which can reduce health workers exposure to COVID-19 patients by taking their vitals remotely. The device can check on multiple patients simultaneously, from a remote location. It has already been built, and ready to be dispatched to hospitals in Bengaluru and beyond.

Respimatic 100 - A Low Cost Respirator

Govind Bhandari (1975-80) and his brother, Gopal Bhandari (1971-76) founded Clearpack Group in 1991, a big name in making Best-in-Class Packaging machines for Primary, Secondary and End of line packaging needs at optimal cost. In order to bolster India's health care system, using their technical prowess and the design processes, they have come up with RESPIMATIC 100 - a low cost respirator. Vijay Simha, another BITS alumnus (1974-79), a ventilator expert and Ajay Nayak (1975-80), Retired senior IAS officer also joined the team and contributed in developing the device.

Abhinav Asthana, CEO and Founder, Postman (Pilani, '10)

During this difficult time health care professionals, researchers, and government experts—need quick, easy access to real-time critical data. This type of information exchange is what APIs do best, and as an API-first company,

Postman have put together set of API resources to help fight the COVID-19 pandemic. They have also given free Postman licenses to nonprofit bodies that are involved in this critical effort. They can now easily share their data to other platforms with real time update.

Chaitanya Kumar Reddy, Trainee officer, Indian Forest Service (Pilani, '10)

During the lockdown he has offered to work at the forefront of the fight against COVID-19 in his hometown. Acknowledging his request, District Collector of Anantpur, Andhra Pradesh, Gandham Chandrudu appointed Mr Chaitanya to assist District Forest Officer R. Jagannath Singh in containment activity at Hindupur, which has been declared a COVID-19 hotspot in the district.

Alphonse Reddy, Founder & CEO, Sunday Rest (Pilani, '01)

His company is working with Indian gov to set temporary hospital facilities for COVID-19 patient. He has provided thousands of mattresses set up isolated beds in hospitals across the company.

BITS2K Helping Migrant Families in Extreme Poverty Rebuild Livelihoods

BITS 2000 Batch is helping migrant families in extreme poverty and chart a sustainable resurgence from the horrific effects of COVID-19. The program in Jharkhand works with the most vulnerable women in extreme poverty and with poor literacy rate to take them from less than INR 20,000 annual income to INR 60,000 by building sustainable income generating livelihoods for these women and her family.

They are currently working with 1200 families across 3 districts in Jharkhand with support from the State Rural Livelihood Mission.

Ramana Telidevara & Ravi Sekhar, Founder & Co-Founder, CodeTantra (Pilani, 00)

In response to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call to develop apps that can compete and replace Zoom, their company CodeTantra has developed a video conferencing platform, especially for virtual teaching. Company has also signed an MoU with MoE for virtual teaching platform. The platform provides a holistic platform for institutions that helps in attendance tracking, enabling student participation, ranking student performance, recording facility for classes and also an interactive board for teachers for explaining different concepts. Security points are also well taken. It encrypts all files and data shared

during the meeting along with logging in again in order to hear the recording of the meeting

Prof. Seshadri Vasan, Head, CSIRO Australia (Pilani, '91)

He has got a major breakthrough in developing a vaccine for coronavirus (COVID-19). The Dangerous Pathogens team of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO) in Australia, headed by Prof. Vasan has grown the first batch of coronavirus outside China. His team has grown the virus in sufficient quantity needed to conduct preclinical studies. The development has brought the world closer to a coronavirus vaccine. Before moving to Australia, he was the senior business development manager for Public Health England, London. He is also Adjunct Professor of Preventive and Social Medicine at Jawaharlal Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education and Research GOI.

Initiative by BITS Pilani, Alumni and NLS Bangalore

Alumni of BITS Pilani and National Law School Bangalore have joined hands together to help and provide food for the migrant workers heading back to their homes owing to COVID-19 pandemic on shramik special trains. They have partnered with the Akshaya Patra Foundation to serve 1,00,000 passengers as they board the trains at Mumbai and Delhi from 3rd June onwards. They started with providing food and water to the passengers on the Gurgoan to Balasore train. Ground-level volunteers ensure that the food reaches the migrant workers. Dry food is being given considering that cooked food may spoil faster during the travel. Apart from providing food and water, they are also working to arrange two trains for migrant workers, bearing the costs involved in the same. These trains will ply stranded migrant workers from Mumbai to Ranchi, Jharkhand and from Mumbai to Villupuram, Tamil Nadu.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. Souvik Bhattacharyya, Vice Chancellor of Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani-333 031 (Rajasthan). These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Arya Kumar, Dean Alumni Relations and Professor, Department of Economics and Finance, Birla Institute of Technology and Science, Pilani, Rajasthan. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.bits-pilani.ac.in, E-mail : vc@pilani.bits-pilani.ac.in

CAREER POINT UNIVERSITY, HAMIRPUR

The national lockdown declared by Honourable Prime Minister of India to combat effects of COVID-19, turns out an opportunity to the university to enhance its capability and capacity towards online teaching-learning process. Career Point University, Hamirpur has moved to online teaching/ learning from March 23, 2020 after national lockdown. Online learning enables students to gain knowledge at home over the internet and referred to as 'e-learning'.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

At career Point University, during this period beginning from March 23rd regular time table/ class schedule for the semester is followed religiously by each faculty member who delivered the e-lecture/ designed e-content at fixed slots to all the university students. University teachers although well versed in their subject matter yet upgraded themselves in designing the e-content over the routine class lecture delivered face-to-face. Hence, course content delivery/ teaching by the faculty members became effective and more comprehensive. The students have also responded suitably to online lectures delivered by the concerned faculty.

For e-lecture delivery, faculty is using different digital platforms like Cisco Webex meeting classes, Google meet, zoom meeting classes, etc. and for e-content delivery Moodle, Gmail and Whatsapp like platforms are in practice To make online teaching more effective and interesting doubt removal sessions/remedial classes are also being organized once in a week for every subject. On an average 20 to 24 lectures have been delivered for a 4 credit course till date (5th May, 2020). Practical Courses have also been demonstrated in virtual mode and experimental work is planned to be completed at the University.

For effective implementation of online teaching learning process, faculty members update google sheet on daily basis for their work done in parameters like classes taken through e-teaching, number of queries received from students and resolved per lecture, number of students participated in online lectures, etc. The university is also conducting co-

curricular activities like group discussions, essay writing, poster making, etc.

Feedback of students and parents is being taken continuously via making calls and through whatsapp messages to find out the level of their satisfaction. Deficiency, if any is being rectified immediately. Mid Term Exam (Minor) were also conducted in 3rd week of April successfully by making use of Google, Cisco, Webex and Zoom Platforms.

In addition to above said activities, students are also being engaged in extracurricular activities conducted under 'NSS'. The students and faculty members, made masks and distributed them to the natives of adopted villages under Unnat Bharat Abhiyan. The volunteers also created whatsapp group for these villages and made them aware about the precautions of COVID-19.

University has entered into an MOU with an online digital platform 'Coursera' where number of 'Certificate Courses' are available to the University students free of cost owing to the MOU, which are otherwise heavily charged. The certifications in various subjects/fields are being offered by the top universities of Europe, UK, USA and many other nations. The students also are motivated to opt courses from other online platforms like SWAYAM, NPTEL, etc. As on day, more than 1100 students of the University have already registered on Coursera platform for professional certifications and 261 students have successfully completed their certifications. These certifications shall add value to the regular degree of students and will also render them more competitive in the industry.

PLACEMENT

During the lockdown period, training and placement cell is in constant touch with reputed organizations for internship and placements of students. The cell is conducting mock interviews with students through video conferencing in which students are being assessed and helped in various aspects like job applications, group discussions, aptitude test and personal interviews.

In this direction students have also participated in online job placement drive on National Career Services platform (Government of India). Further,

the university has organized an industrial expert's talk cum interaction on dated April 30, 2020 for the students to understand the effect of COVID-19 on industry via online mode. The resource persons for this session were Dr Rakesh Verma, President-Prescient Healthcare Group, London (UK), Dr Sudipta Banerjee, Vice President, GESCO Healthcare Private Limited and Dr Rachal Adams, Senior Director of Regulatory Affairs, Johnson & Johnson, London (UK).

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. (Dr) K S Verma, Vice Chancellor of Career Point University, Hamirpur- 176 041 (Himachal Pradesh). The article has been contributed by Prof. (Dr) K S Verma, Vice Chancellor of Career Point University, Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.cpuh.in, E-mail : vc@cpuh.in

CHHATRAPATI SHAHU JI MAHARAJ UNIVERSITY, KANPUR

With the directives of the Government, Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj University (CSJMU), Kanpur has adopted online learning for its semester students. The University has remained strongly committed towards creating quality teaching-learning strategies through the use of modern tools and technology to meet the broader range of learner's needs during the aforesaid crisis. Some of the major initiatives taken will help in maintaining the learning rhythm during these difficult times.

- The Vice Chancellor and the Registrar of the University have ensured regular communication with all stakeholders through video and text messages, which has improved the bond between authorities, faculty, staff and students.
- The University is trying to address this extraordinary situation by involving different stakeholders in the system.
- The university has advised faculty members to use online group learning platforms like Google meet/ Google class /Microsoft team/Zoom, etc to conduct online classes as per their schedule in regular time table.
- All the faculty members engaging theory classes are uploading on the University website or any other learning platform like Google class, a detailed unit-wise schedule including sub-topics of the units in syllabi along with references/resource materials to be referred/books chapters/ online lecture/any other pedagogy through their Departmental Home Page.Faculty members are also uploading the topic-wise lecture notes / supplementary study material (PDF class lecture notes/ pdf from books/ ppt available online / other online recourses) for each unit of syllabi not covered so far.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

The University has taken an initiative to track the syllabi completion report from all its departments. Time limit has been given for uploading of study material for the benefit of the students. The faculties are interacting with students using different meeting apps. The study content has been posted on

emails and google classroom for class and teacher-student interactions.

Whatsapp and email groups have been created for efficient transfer of knowledge and group discussions. The study material on Whatsapp also helps in registering the attendance of the participating students.

The University is also making students aware about platforms like MOOCs and SWAYAM. SWAYAM platform launched by the Government of India hosts many subject-wise online courses. Some of the important online resource sites being utilised by the University are:

- SWAYAM
 - NPTEL
 - Udacity
 - Udemy
 - Skillshare
 - Harvard University
 - TED
 - Web Development
 - Digital Marketing
 - IOS app development
 - Open Learn
 - Future Learn
 - Tuts Plus
 - Open Culture
- The University has collaboration with IIT, Kanpur and Spoken Tutorial, IIT, Mumbai for access to online content.
 - Assignments/Tutorials/worked-out problems on each units of syllabi are prepared and uploaded on the University website or Departmental Home Page or any other learning platforms like Google Class.

E-Learning Library Facilities at CSJM University, Kanpur

- The faculty can access library resources from anywhere with the help of passwords provided to faculty members using remote services.
- Plagiarism check services are being provided by emails.

- Library website is operational on the university website where links are provided to access e-books, e-journals and other free resources.
- Webpage has been created to access e-resources from outside the campus, username and passwords for all Heads have been created and circulated.
- CSJM University can access McGraw Hill e-books remotely, Taylor and Francis resources for free, Bibliotex e-books, e-news, etc.
- A page has been specially designed for library users on the university website where all links are provided.

Other Initiatives

Vice Chancellors' Motivational Series

At this time of distress, confusion and panic amongst students, the Vice Chancellor of the University is regularly addressing the students through print and electronic media. She is delivering lectures in Motivational Lecture Series to boost the morale of students. Her topics include 'Examination Information', 'Time Management', 'Preparation for Examinations', 'About Corona Virus', 'Coping with Corona Virus', 'E-learning Methods', 'Duties for the Society during Covid Pandemic', 'Preparing for the Future', etc.

Counselling and Motivational Cell

A Counselling and Motivational Cell is operative to deal with stress, anxieties and other queries of students and staff as psychosocial well-being is a significant antecedent to learning. A four-member committee regularly addresses stress-related issues/queries of students, parents, women and elderly people who approach the Cell.

Entrepreneurship and Incubation Cell

The university has launched an Entrepreneurship and Incubation Cell in collaboration with Srijan Sanchar innovation challenge to facilitate crowd sourcing of ideas, solutions for ameliorating the current situation. This is an attempt to contribute to the goal of fighting corona by organizing an innovation challenge for different problem/opportunity areas of pandemic. Topics for Ideas include (but are not restricted to):

- Ideas for creating, maintaining, monitoring social distance in closed/open spaces/offices/public buildings especially in densely habituated areas like slums.
- Open source design, manufacturing, third party quality assurance of life support systems like ventilators.
- Ideas for repurposing by modification/addition of existing available equipment, consumer durable to life support equipment/ventilator.
- Monitoring including remote of indicative parameters like temperature etc for detecting probability of corona.
- Add on devices to monitor indicative parameters and obtaining patterns from aggregation on cloud.
- Ideas for creating, maintaining, monitoring social distances especially while the under privileged seek access to disrupted supplies of food, medicine during the lockdown.
- Low cost logistics for arranging supplies.
- Maintaining health and positivity of care givers, doctors, paramedics and others at front line in fighting corona.

Online Yoga Classes

To keep the mind and body healthy and to improve the immunity, the University has initiated online Yoga classes which is facilitating in removing the stress caused due to Corona pandemic. The classes are very popular and students from other universities have shown their interest to attend the classes.

Medical Counseling

A panel of doctors regularly attend to health issues raised by students, faculty, the sick and the diseased and elderly persons.

Lecture Series

A lecture series on COVID-19 has been arranged in which renowned academicians are delivering lectures on COVID-19 on youtube. The first lecture on 'COVID-19 and Immunity' was delivered by the Vice Chancellor. Other lectures are 'COVID-19 Pandemic', 'Positive Thinking and Mental Health to Fight against COVID-19', 'COVID-19 and Nutrition', 'Care and Concern

during Pregnancy in Time of COVID-19 Pandemic', 'Genome Organization and Life Cycle', 'Therapeutic Strategies against COVID-19'.

International Webinars

An International Webinar on 'Exploring and Understanding the COVID-19 Pandemic' was hosted by CSJM University, Kanpur on 2nd May, 2020 with Speakers from USA and UK. Registrations are on. Talks were on 'COVID-19: Coping with Present Day Challenges', 'Combat Anxiety and Stress due to COVID-19', 'The Effect of COVID-19 on IT Industry' and 'Sectors for Startups Post COVID-19 and Planning Finances'.

- NSS units of the University are regularly updating students about how to remain safe.
- Besides, academic support, the University has offered isolation centres in its hostels and is providing accommodation for doctors in its guest houses to support the government.
- The university and to affiliated colleges have provided financial support to the tune of Rs. 1 crore so far to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund and the Chief Minister's Relief Fund. The collection is still going on.
- The university regularly distributes lunch packets to the poor labour working in the campus.

CONCLUSION

CSJM University, Kanpur is continuously thriving to cope up with the prevailing situation, adopting the best practices in teaching-learning and nurturing students in such a manner that they develop into competent citizens, confident in handling times of distress and maintaining high academic standards.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. Neelima Gupta, Vice Chancellor of Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj University, Kalyanpur, Kanpur- 208 024 (Uttar Pradesh). These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Prof. Neelima Gupta, Vice Chancellor of Chhatrapati Shahu Ji Maharaj University, Kalyanpur, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.kanpuruniversity.org, E-mail : vcocsjmu@gmail.com

DAFFODIL INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, DHAKA

Understanding current threat of COVID-19 global pandemic towards the education sector, Daffodil International University (DIU), Bangladesh has taken the necessary initiatives for uninterrupted study flow and to support all the students, faculty members and employees virtually. As the situation required, DIU has taken several initiatives not only for continuation of academic and administrative activities, but also for spreading awareness and mental support during the challenging times. Some notable initiatives by DIU are as discussed here.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

DIU Blended Learning Centre (BLC) for all Academic Activities

DIU, as one of the top universities in Bangladesh, successfully conducted online classes during this pandemic COVID-19. From Summer-2020 Semester, the university started utilizing Learning Management System, Moodle through Blended Learning Center (BLC), DIU for all academic activities. Currently, DIU is having 1647 courses available for Summer-2020 where around 29,000 users including a few alumni are using BLC. In total, more than 90% students are using BLC as the platform.

SmartEdu for All Administrative and Academic Employees

Through the SmartEdu module under SAAS Education Solution, DIU ensured all employees and faculty members to work from home safely and smoothly with regular online interaction, activity, task management, update and maintain workflow.

Financial Aid on Tuition Fees to the Needy Students

With existing waiver facilities, DIU has also increased the amount of financial aid in the form of special waiver to help maximum number of students during the COVID-19 outbreak. Depending on the financial crisis, it will continue until the situation is resolved or till the degree completion.

50% Waiver to New Students and Laptop to Cope up with New Normal

DIU is providing about 50% up to 100% tuition fee waiver for the newly admitted students in the Fall 2020 Semester. To support the students to attend

online classes, DIU ensured early distribution of 2500 Free Laptops to the students during Summer-2020 semester.

Virtual Regular Events to Ensure Students Engagement

The regular initiatives of DIU during this pandemic are Online Learning Summit, CoronaThon: a Hackathon on combating COVID-19, Online summer fest, Virtual Job Fest, virtual trainings, e-talks, e-master classes, virtual internships, webinars, online debates, free mentorship programs, awareness seminars and providing numbers of video documentaries focusing automation, awareness, and handling situations successfully.

Providing Hand Sanitizer, Hand Wash, Mask and More Safety Materials for Community

The Department of Nutrition and Food Engineering along with the Department of Pharmacy of DIU prepared hand sanitizer and hand wash and distributed it to its students and staff for free. DIU also distributed hand sanitizer to some local hospitals, institutions and community as part of its social responsibility.

Activate Social Media Platform for Effective Use

DIU created an online forum to discuss, share and educate on COVID-19 news, statistics, scientific instruction, WHO guidelines, etc. COVID-19 dedicated website with relevant important information, resources and emergency numbers in local language.

International Mobility Initiatives

DIU is organizing the Virtual International Social Business Summer Program (ISBSP) during 20th-25th July which is 6 days long world's first summer program on social business. Students from different departments are attending summer schools, students participation in COIL projects, Virtual workshops, Online Student Exchange program in the partner's universities of DIU globally. DIU invited international faculty members and experts for lectures and e-workshop/ e-Master Class on academic and current topics. With continuous globalization planning DIU received memberships of Association of Economic Universities of South and Eastern Europe and the Black Sea Region (ASECU), University Leaders for a Sustainable Future (ULSF) and Asia Technological University Network (ATU-NET).

International Conferences

DIU has organizing an Online International Multidisciplinary Conference 'On Transformation and Survival of Business: Challenges and Opportunities'. At the same time, HRDI has taken an initiative of arranging Asian Conference along with the university of India and Nepal.

Partnership with GoEdu and Coursera for the Free Courses to all

DIU provided online courses dedicated to international universities, professionals, students and graduates from GoEdu and also sponsored Coursera courses. DIU introduced online Employability Skill Test <https://skill.jobs/employabilitytest/> for the graduates and students.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. M Lutfar Rahman, Vice Chancellor of Daffodil International University, Dhaka, Bangladesh. These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been authored by Prof. M Lutfar Rahman, Vice Chancellor of Daffodil International University, Dhaka, Bangladesh and has been provided for publication in this Book by Mr. C. Ramakrishna, Executive Director, Association of Management Development Institutions in South Asia (AMDISA), Hyderabad-500 046. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.daffodilvarsity.edu.bd, E-mail : vcoffice@daffodilvarsity.edu.bd, lrahman@daffodilvarsity.edu.bd, lrahman44@gmail.com.

DESH BHAGAT UNIVERSITY, FATEHGARH SAHIB

As Corona virus is spreading rapidly across the world, different countries have taken swift and decisive actions to mitigate the development of a full-blown pandemic in their own way. There have been multiple pronouncements suspending attendance at universities and schools. These risk-minimizing decisions have led millions of students into temporary 'home-schooling' situation and in a matter of weeks corona virus (COVID-19) has changed how students are educated around the world. These changes give us a glimpse at how education could change for the better in long term. These changes have certainly caused a degree of inconvenience, but they have also impelled new examples of educational innovation.

Amid this global challenge, we at Desh Bhagat University, Fatehgarh Sahib a member of Association of Indian Universities (AIU), a multi-faculty, multi-lingual and multi-dimensional prestigious state private university in Punjab, have put in untiring efforts to combat this situation where students are going through the state of anxiety, fear and uncertainty. DBU proactively worked on the engagement of students to keep them intact with studies and tried to transform the teaching methodologies for the protection of their academic interest.

Remote teaching is always posed a big challenge among us to keep our student engaged in academic activities but in situation like this it is imperative to invent creative ways to engage students gainfully. DBU team successfully countered the situation and adopted innovative online teaching learning practices.

FACULTY RESILIENCE and SKILL TRANSFORMATION

The rapid spread of COVID-19 has demonstrated the importance of building resilience to face various threats, from pandemic disease to rapid technological change. DBU always work on resilience of faculty and we prepared our faculty to adjust and transform their skills according to present needs. A three day workshop from 13th to 15th March, 2020 in anticipation of complete lockdown was organized on 'E Learning and MOOCS Content Generation and Delivery' in anticipation of complete lockdown. The workshop aimed at equipping faculty members with online teaching skills like creating online course content in PDF,

PPT, Video lecture format, teaching through Google classroom, developing MOOCS courses and using Learning Management Systems. This endeavor resulted in boosting morale and develop positive attitude of faculty about online teaching and content delivery.

ENGAGING STUDENT COMMUNITY

DBU adopted a set of innovative and productive practices to engage student community in academic as well as for their well being and mental health during COVID-19 pandemic period.

Online Teaching

Protecting students' academic interest is considered as the foremost important aspect of education and DBU is committed to safeguard this right of students. Online classes for all courses started immediately as preparations were already made and faculty was all set to transform from classroom to teaching to online teaching. Students were engaged through various online platforms.

Google Classroom

Classes were created for all courses and faculty members engaged students very actively in the Google classes. Course content was delivered through Google classroom portal and students were trained to prepare and submit assignments through Google Doc. Each student has their individual Google Drive folder that can be accessed by students as well as teachers. The tool facilitates paperless communication among teachers & students. Students shared their ideas and resources with fellow students and participated online classroom discussions.

Blended Learning

DBU is using Blended Learning methodology for many years as it helps in building better engagement of students. It has a mix of traditional classroom and online material is used to deliver course content where student listen to a online lecture at their place and make their points and discuss with instructor in classroom. It helps in getting more active participation from students.

SWAYAM and MOOCS

DBU always promoted SWAYAM initiative of Indian Government and students have been registered on SWAYAM portal and they are enrolled in the course of their field and interest. Faculty members of DBU are developing their

own MOOCS courses to help students and develop their digital teaching skills. In this situation when students are away from classes, our faculty is closely monitoring their progress in the enrolled course and further more it is helping them in preparing their regular courses.

Webinars

Cloud based video conferencing is proving to be very effective tool in online teaching and DBU has equipped its faculty members with skills to utilize these technologies for the benefit of students. We are using Zoom, Goto Meeting, Google Meet, Microsoft Team, etc. applications to interact face to face with students. Teachers organizing webinars on regular basis which enables all students to attend the lecture together and discuss their queries. Apart from faculty members, webinar of external experts are also organized to enrich the knowledge base of students. Given below is the list of some of webinars organized by the university.

- ✓ Webinar on 'Digital Marketing' by Mr. Shankar Dyal, Digital Marketing Expert.
- ✓ Webinar on 'Retail Management' by Mr. Sumit Wason, Marketing Expert.
- ✓ Webinar on 'Artificial Intelligence' by Mr. Munish, Corporate Trainer.
- ✓ Webinar on 'CAD and CAE' by Mr. Ayush, Technical Trainer .

Learning Management System LMS

DBU has its dedicated Learning Management System which provides student anywhere anytime access to their academic courseware, assignments, timetable, attendance, fee related information, results and notices. Faculty members are regularly updating course material on LMS to engage students' with their studies. Departments keep in touch with students and messages for their well being and health.

Online Research Dissertation Submission

To protect the interest of Research Scholars during lockdown period university started the process of online submission of thesis and synopsis, seminar. Scholars were facilitated to submit their research work in soft copy format to curtail the delay in evaluation of M.Phil/Ph.D. thesis and further sent to examiner through mail and presentations of synopsis, pre-submission seminar, viva-voce are conducted through cloud based video conferencing.

Digital Library

University library has provided online library access to our students, research scholars and faculty members. Library's operation and services at DBU are fully computerized with SIM ERP multi-user Integrated Library Automation Software. Bibliographic records of Desh Bhagat University Library's holdings can be accessed through the SIM ERP Web OPAC (Online Public Access Catalogue). Database of library books is being updated on a day-to-day basis with details of recently acquired books.

Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment and Evaluation is always a challenging task and they plays a significant role in teaching learning practice. In this situation where we are forced to adopts online teaching it become more challenging to evaluate and assess students. Students were given interactive and collaborative work assignments their interest and develop creativity along with focus on their academic growth.

Assignments

Engaged students in individual and group assignment related to their course objectives.

Quiz

Quizzes were designed to encourage students to look beyond their textual knowledge and build a relationship among theory and application of learnt concepts.

Presentations

Topic related to the course field were given to students and presentations were done through webinar. These presentations provide students a platform where they can express themselves and learn the art of presentation.

Test

Students were given test including Multiple Choice Questions and Long Answer Question.

PLACEMENTS

DBU has a dedicated and dynamic Training and Placement Department that works proactively on providing internship and placement opportunities to

students. Most of the students were given placement and internship opportunity before COVID-19 pandemic. As placements process is rolling and continuous in nature and T&P cell is in regular touch with prospective companies and developed a scope of online placement process. Companies are provided with profiles of students and a online placement process is specifically designed for present situation. Companies are invited to conduct interviews through video conferencing and students are given ample opportunities to secure an internship or placement offer. T&P cell is arranging interviews of the companies offering to work from home job profile.

EFFORTS TOWARDS WELL BEING AND MENTAL HEALTH

In this situation when world is struggling to counter the global challenge of COVID-19 pandemic, it is important stay positive and keep the morale boosted. Keeping this in view Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Campus and Human Resource Development Center of DBU started a novel venture in the form of an Online Web Series where experts from various fields shared their valuable knowledge and experience. Given below is the list of some of webinar organized by university.

- ✓ Webinar on 'Mental Well Being in the times of COVID-19' by Ms. Navjeet Grewal, Psychological Coach, United Kingdom.
- ✓ Webinar on 'Discover Your Passion' by Dr. D.R. Dhaliwal, Ex-CEO Thirumali Chemical, Birla Paricase (Aditya Birla Group).
- ✓ Webinar on 'Importance of Nutrition and Immunity' by Dr. Raj Bhandari, Member, National Technical Board of Nutrition and Health, NITI Aayog.
- ✓ Webinar on 'Stress Management through Music' by Dr. Anurag Joshi, Thapar University.
- ✓ Webinar on 'Spiritual Values from Scriptures in the Time of COVID-19' by Manishi Sant Vinay Kumar Ji Aalok and Dr. Zora Singh, Chancellor, Desh Bhagat University.
- ✓ Webinar on 'Role of Spirituality and Yoga in Education, Youth, Professional and Personal Development' by Dr. Param Parmeshwaram, Gujarat National Law University.
- ✓ Webinar on 'Personality Analysis and Self Improvement through Grapho Analysis' by Mr. Naveen Toshniwal, Grapho Analysis Specialist.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Engagement is the collaboration between educational institutions and other stakeholder of the society to have mutually beneficial exchange of resources and knowledge. As a part of its responsibility towards society DBU always encourage its students and staff members to work for betterment of society and underprivileged. In the epoch of Corona spread we have put in maximum efforts to help community to fight against COVID-19 and many activities were conducted for this novel cause.

- ✓ Sanitization: 5 villages were sanitized by University School of Ayurveda and Research.
- ✓ Mask Manufacturing and Distribution: 1500 masks were manufactured and distributed among villagers of surrounding area.
- ✓ Awareness Camp: Awareness camps regarding COVID-19 infection and safety organized in the surrounding villages and cities.
- ✓ Quarantine Centre: 40 bedded hospital in University School of Ayurveda is provided to be used as quarantine centre.

CONCLUSION

COVID-19 pandemic is a bitter reality and world is forced to face uncertainty and instability in every sector and academic landscape is no different from rest of segments. We are bound to face challenges and this situation may prove to be a paradigm shift where we rely more on virtual reality and embrace online teaching. We at Desh Bhagat University believe in change and always want to be a torch bearer to show path that is unexplored and inspiring.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. Shalini Gupta, Vice Chancellor of Desh Bhagat University, Fatehgarh Sahib- 147 203 (Punjab). These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Dr Shalini Gupta, Vice Chancellor of Desh Bhagat University, Fatehgarh Sahib, Punjab. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.deshbhagtuniversity.in, E-mail : vc@deshbhagtuniversity.in

DHARMSINH DESAI UNIVERSITY, NADIAD

As a State University having a glorious history of more than Five decades of academic excellence and 'Committed Socially', Dharmsinh Desai University, Nadiad, Gujarat has always put up its best efforts for the services of the local and trying to extend its services towards the global community. Efforts and achievements in this academic year which at the fag end mired by the Pandemic of COVID-19 are present here.

Absolutely New and Ultramodern hospital of University, Dr N D Desai, Faculty of Medical Science and Research was handed over to Government of Gujarat. This hospital with 350 beds with world class infrastructure, latest equipments and specialist and expert Medical staff with paramedical personnel is very effectively serving as COVID-19 Hospital of the State. This hospital has become very sought after and favorite in this part of the world because, since its inception of two years as it is serving the society and various patients on charity basis. No fee of any kind is charged. To all the patients healthy and hygienic Breakfast, Lunch, Tea and Dinner is provided free of charge.

As part of the University's philosophy 'Committed Socially', NSS Units of the University through its 250 volunteers are helping the local civil authorities through the Collector's Office to set up Awareness Campaigns at local levels as well as on Social Media platforms.

For Social Commitment, especially for health sector services this University has made two Guinness World Records during last four years. To help in the present critical situation, one day salary of all the staff members from Peon to the Vice Chancellor was donated to Chief Minister's Relief Fund (Rs 15 Lakhs). University students conducted 5 Blood Donation Camps and collected 1560 units of Blood from students and Faculty members.

Research and Development is the driving force for the Academic excellence of the university. During academic year 2019-20 total 107 research publications were published in various notable national and International journals, highest Impact factor of research paper is 7.5. Total 104 teaching faculties are reviewers, editorial team members of Research Journals.

Most importantly, in this Pandemic Crisis, University's academic teaching learning is continued 100% by all the teachers through online classes, counseling, remedial classes, etc. Digital platform is being very effectively used by teachers and students after the declaration of the lockdown.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. H M Desai, Vice Chancellor of Dharmsinh Desai University, Nadiad- 387001(Gujarat). The article has been contributed by Dr. H M Desai, Vice Chancellor of Dharmsinh Desai University, Nadiad, Gujarat. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.ddu.ac.in, E-mail : vc@ddu.ac.in

DR APJ ABDUL KALAM TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY, LUCKNOW

Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Technical University, Lucknow is an affiliating university in the state of Uttar Pradesh having 756 plus colleges and more than 2.5 Lac students studying in various professional courses. The University took many innovative initiatives for strengthening academics, preparing students for prospective placements, extending Online placements and internship opportunities, engaging students and faculty members in creative challenges, hosting webinar series focusing teachers knowledge sharing. In addition our University made a contribution to the society in manyways in this time of pandemic crisis. Some of them are enlisted here:

1. AKTU accelerated the drive to increase the Online Teaching-Learning during Lockdown; 3200+ e-Lectures were shot and pushed through ERP to students' digital account for the subjects they were enrolled in.
2. Constituted Virtual Lab Cell, mapped the University curriculum, and, initiated teacher induction webinars
3. Three-round Online Weekly Ideathon well conducted and best ideas were acknowledged in grand e-award ceremony.
4. Online PhD defense was initiated in addition to Mid-Term review of research progress.
5. Meditation and Yoga sessions for college leaderships.
6. Weekly FB Live for students focusing 'Understanding Oneself', 'Mastering Lockdown', 'Upgrade Oneself' and 'Becoming Productive'.
7. Students and teachers developed 3D printed 'Multi-Channel ventilator adopter' in collaboration with SGPGI, Lucknow, and, 'Face Mask Shield' in collaboration with RML Institute of Medical Sciences, Lucknow.
8. Invited Technical interventions from faculty and Students based on e-consortium (A conglomeration of world class Journals like IEEE, Springer, Elsevier Science Direct, ASME, ASCE and many more).
9. Conduct of midterm exams with support of various digital platforms including Google Classroom, etc.
10. Digital assessment of re-evaluation of approx. 30K examination sheets.

11. Regular digital dialogue with students, faculty members, Directors and Chairmen of the colleges, University officers and staff.
12. Extending Online Job placement and Internship opportunities to the students.
13. Under various MoUs initiated work for direct skill building of students for prospective placements and launched Train the Trainer programs.
14. Timely Online payment of around 8 Crore 85 Lac Rupees to around 25,000 AKTU faculty, staff, Class III, Class IV and security persons for doing various duties in the Examination.
15. Hon'ble Chancellor formed a committee comprising of seven Vice Chancellors of the Universities of U.P. under the Chairmanship of AKTU Vice Chancellor, Prof. Vinay Kumar Pathak to propose the plan of action to complete the academic syllabus, conduct of examinations, finalization of admissions and academic calendar of the next academic session in view of the lockdown.
16. More than 2.75 faculty and students installed the Arogya Setu App.
17. All faculty and staff donated 02 days salary and university contributed Rs. 21 Lacs to the Chief Minister's COVID CARE fund.
18. On the call of our University our colleges donated more than 1.0 Cr in Prime Minister COVID CARE Fund.
19. Understanding social responsibilities, University formed a 'KALAM Ann Chetra', a community kitchen to feed fresh readymade cooked food to around 1500 poor people daily around the area with the help of district administration, starting from first week of April.
20. Regularly conducting seminars to make people aware of the methods of prevention and hence protection against the deadly COVID-19.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. Vinay Kumar Pathak, Vice Chancellor of Dr A P J Abdul Kalam Technical University, Jankipuram, Lucknow- 226 031 (Uttar Pradesh). These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Prof. Vinay Kumar Pathak, Vice Chancellor of Dr A P J Abdul Kalam Technical University, Jankipuram, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.aktu.ac.in, E-mail : vc@aktu.ac.in

DR BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR OPEN UNIVERSITY, AHMEDABAD

The Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19 Pandemic) is declared by World Health Organization as World Health Emergency and Social Emergency. This infectious case was first diagnosed in November, 2019 as Coronavirus Disease and by April, 2020 it has adversely affected 212 countries across the globe, with 1,395,136 confirmed cases and 81,580 deaths worldwide (World Health Organization, 9th April, 2020). The Government of India took swift and timely measures to ensure the safety of citizens; it announced nationwide 'lockdown' allowing only essential services to function on regular basis. This resulted in entire close-down of educational institutes, schools, colleges and universities.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University is no exception, so complete 'lockdown' was implemented in the University to ensure health and safety of its employees. In the words of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, "Purpose of education is to moralize and socialize people." This statement establishes that an educational institute has higher responsibilities to fulfill than just providing education in the four walls of a classroom. It is a moral and social duty of every educational institute to mould a character of its students. In these challenging times, educational institutes have a vital role to play in ensuring academic interests of its students, and with a surge of technology and humanistic concerns; Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University, Ahmedabad, is satisfyingly fulfilling its roles by walking extra miles for its students and stakeholders.

GAINFULLY ENGAGING THE STUDENT COMMUNITY

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University, Ahmedabad, Gujarat is the university known for being student centric university as expected in 21st century. In this COVID-19 crisis, in order to ensure that the students and staff members can stay at home safe and focus on their studies and duties, the university has initiated various special initiatives through its various Information and Communication Technology (ICT) enabled platforms. In these unexpected, inevitable, and challenging times, University has taken further steps to ensure benefits of all the stakeholders in its purview.

E-Study Material on Website (OMKAR-e)

Open Matrix Knowledge Advancement Resource for Empowerment is an initiative by University to provide study materials in digital form. Due to the pandemic when students are not able to visit study centres, they can easily access and download entire study material for all the courses and programmes as well as recorded lectures of subject experts from the website; this fulfils the academic interests of students in this pandemic.

Video Lectures TV/Online

A special schedule of broadcasting of educational lectures has been prepared and shared of various courses and programmes of the university on University's educational TV channel Vande Gujarat -16 allocated to university by state government so that learners can avail its maximum benefits. In University's 'Chaitanya' Studio, faculties have conducted video lectures, which are accessible to students from the website.

Web TV and Radio

All the Lecture series of various courses and programmes of the university are made available on University's Web Television 'Swadhyay TV' and Web Radio 'Swadhyay Radio' platform, so that learners may visit to avail great learning experience visiting desired Video / Audio Lecture on demand which are video conducted by respective subject-experts of University as well as other senior faculties from academia.

Indigenous MOOCs Platform

In order to give continuous learning experience to the learners in the time of distance too; various courses and programmes of the university are made available on its indigenous MOOCs platform with four quadrants 'approach':

Quadrant-I: Tutorials that contain - Video and Audio Contents

Quadrant-II: e-Contents that contain - Portable Document Format or e-Books

Quadrant-III: Web Resources that contain - Related Links, Open Content on Internet

Quadrant-IV: Self-Assessment, that contain – Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ), Problems, Quizzes, Assignments and solutions, etc.

Five Mobile Applications

Further, the courses and relevant materials are made available on university's 5 mobile apps specially launched for students and made available on Google play store also. University uses its ICT platforms and Social Media very effectively to spread message among students and society, to continue the same university is effectively using its ICT Platforms and Social media platforms to create awareness among the students and stakeholders.

ICT Enabled Pre-submission Viva of Students

In order to ensure unhindered learning of its students, with a special concern for researchers, The University has undertaken pre-submission viva of its PhD and M phil students so that their education and degree does not get delayed in these testing times.

Round-the-year Online Admissions

Open university is not bound by conventional methods of enrolling students to courses and programmes. University has provided online admissions to citizens of Gujarat who want to pursue higher education through distance mode.

Innovative Methods for Academic Advancements

International Partnership of Open and Distance Learning

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University has participated in Commonwealth of Learning's initiative of Open and Distance Learning for COVID-19; so as to extend its boundaries and reach a learner in every corner of the world to provide higher education in a wide range of subjects.

Virtual Induction Programme

Virtual Faculty Induction Programs were prepared for all the courses and programmes offered by the University. These virtual induction programs will be broadcast on internet to introduce the procedures of admissions and examinations, and provide an overview of the course.

BAOU-Social-Connect Telegram Channel

University has created its own telegram channel which is a single point social media platform to reach out all the students so that they can connect

with the University. Students across Gujarat will be linked with their respective faculties; this initiative will benefit students as their concerns shall be directly addressed.

Ensuring Academic Interest of Students

Work From Home

As per directives of the Government, University follows complete lockdown, all the employees of the universities are informed to stay at home. The teaching and non-teaching staff are informed to work from home for the betterment of the student and community at large and stock of various activities are taken through Video Conferencing. Faculties, while staying at home have engaged themselves in academically enhancing activities to serve the students better, such as:

- Preparation of Self-Learning Material
- Preparation of Online Content
- Preparation of Assignments
- Preparation of Exhaustive Question-Banks
- Recording Subject-related Audio Lectures
- Engaging in Research work relevant to the present times
- Research projects for '*Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat*' Initiative

Zoom Application

The authorities and directors of University hold meetings to discuss the important issues with zoom application. The staff with various groups and core team meets virtually on uniform frequency through zoom application; they work for Self Learning Material, preparing question bank and NAAC work.

National Webinar on 129th Birth Anniversary of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Ji

The eponymous Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University, the only State Open University of Gujarat has created a culture of celebrating Birth Anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar since last four years. Today, when the world is facing COVID-19 challenge and India too is fighting it with a complete 'lockdown', the University continued this auspicious tradition of celebrating the birthday of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar

utilization ICT tools and fulfilling all the safety measures. On this occasion, the University has organized 'Webinar'- A Virtual National Conference on 'Bharat Ratna Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkarji's Life, *Thoughts and Social Harmony*' on 14th April, 2020. University's first ever Webinar was organized in the flagship of Vice Chancellor, Dr. Ami Upadhyay. Hon'ble Education Minister of Gujarat, Shri Bhupendrasinh Chudasamaji virtually inaugurated the webinar and appreciated the innovative and academically stimulating efforts of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University. An expert panel of speakers, namely, Hon'ble Member of Rajyasabha, Dr. Narendra Jadhav; Senior Educationist, Prof. Aniruddh Deshpande; Eminent Columnist and Speaker, Shri Kishor Makwana shared their valuable thoughts on the occasion.

The webinar witnessed an enthusiastic response with an online and active participation of as many as 23,293 viewers; 1,100 registrations of speakers, subject-experts, researchers, students, and representative from across the nation. Amidst the challenges, this webinar proved to be a fitting tribute to the propagator of humanity– Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar ji.

Fulfilling Public and Social Responsibilities

With all concern for the society, realizing the responsibility of an educational institute, University also walked a few miles more as mentioned below:

Public Awareness Measures on COVID-19

In the earlier months before 'lockdown' was announced by the Government; University took measures of social safety. Extension Activities Cell of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar University, Ahmedabad organized awareness programs at Dantali and Jaspur Villages of Gandhinagar district specially adopted by university under its Welfare Policy. The people living in the village were informed regarding symptoms of the virus, the necessary care and measures to be taken as well as avoiding getting panicked by taking preventive measures. The staff under this cell also visited schools of nearby villages, CHO and *Anganwadi* workers. The posters prepared by the university regarding 'COVID-19 Awareness' were also pasted on various locations in the village.

Monetary Contribution

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University has contributed salary of one day of every employee to Chief Minister Relief Fund.

Grocery Distribution

Vice Chancellor distributed grocery kit to more than 250 people comprising of class-4 employees, peons, sweepers, security staff, etc.

To ensure health and safety of people, University has prepared attractive and informative posters for COVID-19 awareness and displayed them on the notice board of various learner support centres, on the university website and its social media platforms.

During working days in the university, various precautionary measures were taken to protect the health and sensitisation of the people. All the departments of the university were sanitised properly as well as enough amount of sanitizer bottles were placed at entry gate, different schools, departments for directors, teaching staff, non-teaching staff, students and other visitors of the university.

University uploaded message from Hon'ble Prime Minister and Hon'ble Chief Minister of the State regarding COVID-19 focusing on the responsibility of citizens of India. For the same we shared those things on social media account of the university.

University uploaded various guidelines related to COVID-19 and its awareness on University website as well as Social Media Platforms. University published guidelines and directives published by Government of Gujarat, Government of India and World Health Organization on Social Media accounts of the University. University sends SMS regarding COVID-19 awareness to all the Students of the university making them aware 'to stay at home to be safe taking precautions to make their family safe' University and its officials are working from home to spread awareness about COVID-19 among students and society.

Thus, be it be continuous support through learning mechanics or COVID-19 awareness, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University, Ahmedabad, Gujarat is completely aware about its responsibility. University has implemented all the mandates of the Government of India, Government of Gujarat and University Grants Commission which are in the purview of an educational institution; further University has also with its vision and concern for society employed innovative methods to reach out to student in the times of COVID-19. It is standing tall and strong with robust channels which provide

incessant flow of knowledge to its students, not only that but all the other related services through digital platforms. It was meant to 'reach the unreached' and shall continue to do so in all its capacities, in testing times as COVID-19 and otherwise, forever.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. Ami U Upadhyay, Vice Chancellor of Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University, Ahmedabad-382 481 (Gujarat). These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Prof. Ami U Upadhyay, Vice Chancellor of Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University, Ahmedabad, Gujarat. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.baou.edu.in, E-mail : baouvc@gmail.com.

DR B R AMBEDKAR NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY, SONEPAT

Dr B R Ambedkar National Law University, Haryana has adopted various measures to protect the academic and professional interests of its students in the current pandemic situation which has arisen due to COVID-19. Some of the steps are elaborated here:

GAINFULLY ENGAGING THE STUDENT COMMUNITY

This University is running B.A. LL.B. (Hons.) Five Year Integrated programme from academic session 2019-20. The students of this programme are in Second Semester now and teaching learning process is being carried out through online mode by adopting various electronic means and social networking apps such as Google Meet, ZOOM platform, etc. by the faculty members. The students are being encouraged to participate in various online quiz competitions organized by different Colleges/Universities/Deemed-to-be Universities and Institutions of National importance. One student namely Mr. Raghav, who participated in online quiz competition secured on 8th position, which is a matter of pride for the University.

Psychological Counseling of Students

The teacher mentors have conducted Online sessions for counseling of students about tackling the pandemic of COVID-19. Also, telephonic conversation and interaction are also being held with the students by the teachers/mentors so as to ensure that there is no academic loss to students due to this global pandemic of students and Parents-Teachers meet are being conducted on regular intervals through various electronic means. Vice Chancellor held various round of interactions/counseling with the parents of students in groups consisting of 20 members in each group in which various issues raised by the parents were addressed.

Assessment and Evaluation

The Mid Term Examinations of B.A. LL.B. (Hons.) students were conducted online wherein the question papers consisted of Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) keeping in view the COVID-19 pandemic. These examinations were conducted in multiple shifts w.e.f. 25.04.2020 to 30.04.2020 and as

per the feedback given by the teachers and the students, the examinations were conducted smoothly. The students have submitted their subject-wise Assignment to their respective teacher. The Language Teacher recommended classical documentaries, short films and movies to enhance their language capabilities and reading material like classical novels and writings of freedom fighters. Other subject teachers are providing national and international articles related with topics and video links.

ONLINE PLACEMENTS

This University is running B.A. LL.B. (Hons.)-Five Year Integrated programme from academic session 2019-20. Presently, students of this programme are in Second Semester. Hence, no online placement drive is required at this stage as the students are yet to complete their course.

CONCLUSION

The University is trying its level best to carry out its academic and administrative work through various electronic means and social networking apps in light of the advisories issued by various agencies. All the files and cases are being processed by adopting online mode in order to ensure smooth functioning. Further, the meetings are conducted through video conference using various social networking apps such as Google Meet, Zoom App, etc. during COVID-19 pandemic. The teachers are also participating in various Faculty Development Programmes organized by different Colleges/Universities/ Deemed to be Universities and Institutions of National importance through online.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. (Mrs) Viney Kapoor Mehra, Vice Chancellor of Dr B R Ambedkar National Law University, Sonapat-131001 (Haryana). These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Dr. Amit Kumar, Registrar, Dr B R Ambedkar National Law University, Sonapat, Haryana. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.dbranlu.ac.in, E-mail : vc@dbranlu.ac.in.

EAST WEST UNIVERSITY, DHAKA

Before the outbreak of Corona Virus, university teachers both at private and public universities in Bangladesh did not have the experience to teach online. Universities, especially private ones, have started teaching online out of fear that the students will become uninterested in studies if they stay away from studies for a long time and a part of students may not return to university when the situation is normal. Because public universities follow the semester (bi-semester) system, university authorities have not shown interest in online teaching in the belief that the closure will not last long and students will have time to finish the semester when they come to the campus. But unfortunately, we do not know when the universities will reopen. Public universities are now showing interest in online teaching. A sudden shift from classroom teaching to online learning creates challenge for both teachers and students in adjusting the mindset.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Learning online teaching and assessment platforms in a short period of time is really a difficult task for teachers. They will face how to protect students from using unfair means in the examinations in the state of poor internet connection of students moving from city to village. We know that with a few exceptions, universities are not equipped to operate online platforms. So, what about the rest? We must not forget that learning online platforms with tools is not only the requirement. In addition to that teachers must acquire the skills to translate classroom teaching materials in ways so that students can understand in the online environment because they cannot rely on eye contact or other facial cues to determine whether students are understanding and showing interest in a lesson.

Some universities are actively thinking of using Management Learning System (MLS) or Content Management System (CMS) and also Canvas instead of Zoom or Google meet with extensions.

Some intrinsic changes can be predicted in teaching and learning: shifting from teaching centered learning to student centered learning and inductive methods from deductive methods will be the result of online teaching. Universities will conduct some courses online when normal situation will return.

Recently, University Grants Commission, Bangladesh (UGC-B) has asked universities to introduce a new education system called Outcome Based Education (OBE). Not only developed countries but also many developing countries have adopted this system. It is different from our existing system in terms of teaching and performance evaluation of students. The experience in using software help teachers in successfully implementing OBE. MLS or CMS type software is needed for Mapping different activities and performance of students such as Program Educational Objectives (PEOs) with Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and Measuring performance of the students against Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) threshold for each course, and finding out the strengths and shortfalls of the learning taking place. In this situation it is essential that UGC-Bangladesh to organize multiple workshops on online teaching and learning so that in future the use of e-learning in teaching and business sectors can be increased in Bangladesh.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. M. M. Shahidul Hassan, Vice Chancellor of East West University, Dhaka, Bangladesh. These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been authored by Prof. M. M. Shahidul Hassan, Vice Chancellor of East West University, Dhaka, Bangladesh and has been provided for publication in this Book by Mr. C. Ramakrishna, Executive Director, Association of Management Development Institutions in South Asia (AMDISA), Hyderabad-500 046. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.ewubd.edu, E-mail : vc@ewubd.edu.

GALGOTIAS UNIVERSITY, GREATER NOIDA

As the Nation headed towards lockdown and social distancing, wherein many people were engaged knowingly and unknowingly in wasting internet bandwidth for forwarding messages, creating rumours, panic, etc., Galgotias University responded immediately with the advances in technology to bring the classes online for effective Learning.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

From 18th March, 2020, the classes are being conducted through online mode effectively. For a University that caters to 15000+ students in an academic session, going online was not an easy task. But with a strong Integrated LMS system in place the tedious task could be done easily. Teaching, learning and assessment of learning outcomes were all conducted online. First time in the history that an elite, traditional, campus-based university has moved classes totally online, the faculty members deliver their lectures or teaching through an online learning platform – the Moodle. Galgotias already adopted this pedagogy using our own Learning Management System (LMS-moodle), which is one of the open sources learning management system which we have configured as per our requirements. We are running almost 120 programs with 1,428 courses, 1,700+ students and 600+ faculty members already trained and enrolled in LMS mapped to courses and students), and video conference platforms ZOOM, Webex, Google Classroom and have tried out many different technologies to enable better interaction with students and accessing their learning outcomes. The process adopted by Galgotias for online teaching pedagogy is as follows:

- We have asked all the faculty members to upload all the rich contents in the form of videos, e-resource such as pdf files, e-books and other e-contents on LMS and ERP.
- For virtual class rooms, we have used our LMS with inbuilt features for conducting virtual class rooms like Bigblue Button, Congrea and Zoom for video conferencing with students available in LMS courses which require less internet bandwidth.
- For laboratory-based courses, we have used Virtual Programming Lab (VPL) for computer science students. This platform enables us to create

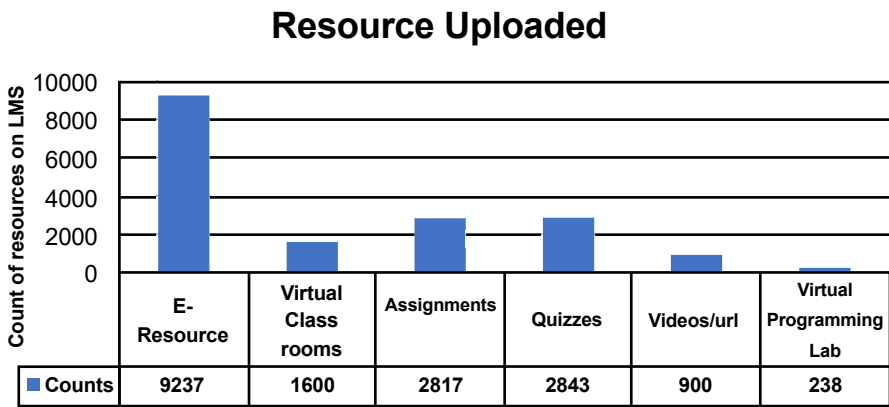
a problem statement and allows students to write their programming source code in any programming language(C,C++,JAVA, Python etc) as per demanded by IT sectors. All the assessments are based on Test cases and automatically graded, when students write their code properly and matches the test cases.

- For a few non-programming laboratories, we have also provided simulations incorporated within our LMS.
- We have also adopted blended mode learning, in which faculty teach a topic scheduled for that day and upload related videos, e-content for their references. After completion of reading the resources students are asked to attempt Multiple Choice Question (MCQ, short answer, match the following, true/false, etc.) and upload the assignments for grading, which is a part of their Internal Assessment components. The quizzes and assignments are time bounded and secured with various security features.
- For tracking students presence, faculty to takes attendance by capturing their log reports, which provides them each information like time spent for the activity and all necessary information like IP capturing, mode of browsing etc with video conferencing based attendance.
- We have shared all the training modules in the form of videos to train the faculty members for utilizing Google Classrooms and its features such as Hangout meet for 250 students virtual class rooms, Microsoft Team for education, Zoom, Skype, etc. for virtual class rooms as well.
- For UG and PG students undergoing internships, project evaluations and reviews were also conducted online by professors. Various seminars on how to write research papers, books chapters and, seek patents were conducted so the students can utilize this time for publishing research papers in scopus/sci/esci and other indexed journals.
- Students were time to time encouraged for enrolling online courses provided by NPTEL/SWAYAM/Udemy/Coursera, etc.
- For placement, in prospective point of view, students were asked to take online challenges on hackerrank, hackerearth to compete with other students across the world and their star rankings were captured by skill and training team for their progress and performances.

After adopting this teaching pedagogy, faculty have shared and uploaded following contents till 27th March for student as shown in table 1:

1. 9237 e-contents like pdf, PPT, word files for student.
2. Around 1600 virtual class room instances.
3. Number of Assignments closed to 2817 and Number of Quizzes around 2843 and 900 url and videos.
4. 238 Virtual Programming Labs by School of Computing Science.

Table 1 e-contents Uploaded by the Faculty



A total of 10,019 lectures have been conducted across 18 different schools of the University, between 18th March and 27th March, in which 90.01% of students attended the lectures and participated in the assessment. The entire online teaching programme has gone smoothly, thanks to the efforts made by the faculty, support staff and the administration of the University.

Methodology Adopted

Classroom Teaching, Learning and Assessment were carried out simultaneously. Various online platforms like ZOOM, LMS (MOODLE), Google Classrooms, Google Hangout, Skype and Virtual Labs were effectively used for content delivery. Social Networking tools like whatsapp were effectively utilized.

ZOOM

Students are connected via ZOOM, where Faculty delivers lecture online and students interact directly similar to face to face class room.

MOODLE

Lectures / Assessment / Pre Recorded videos in Moodle are posted for the students to go through at pre defined schedules.

GOOGLE CLASS ROOM

Course Materials were sent to the students using E-mail / Whatsapp, etc. and students were connected through Google Hangouts / Skype / Whatsapp for interaction with the faculty and finally assessment was conducted through google classroom.

GROUP DISUSSIONS / DEBATES

Students were connected through ZOOM for conducting Group Discussion Debates/Case Studies.

SEMINARS / PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

Seminars for courses (Self Study), PG Desertations and UG Project reviews were taken through Skype/Google Hangout/ZOOM and grading was done as per predefined rubrics.

VIRTUAL LABORATORY

Where ever possible, Virtual Labs were conducted and students were accessed based on Hakerreth, and other online assessment platforms

The Student Experience

The most important factor in teaching is accessing the learners experience and their ability to access the understanding of learning outcomes. According to the student satisfaction survey, and grievance handling mechanism, students have reported very positive learning experiences. Students also reported that they were relaxed and not distracted much by the other students.

Around 50% of the students felt that Online teaching is better compared to traditional face-to-face teaching, 50-55% students were of the opinion that Both online and offline teaching was able to transfer the objectives equally and around 15% students were of the opinion that traditional teaching was better.

Most importantly, online teaching has helped students to learn in a different environment and has motivated the students for self-learning, which is a very

important skill, required for Life Long Learning. With ICT tools, the confidence of students in using the latest technology trends and platforms, has improved, which will help them to excel in the future. In order to build the team spirit, Group exercises such as case studies, group puzzle/ problem solving techniques were used to assess the learning outcomes.

Experience of Teachers

Although it takes a lot of time to prepare and deliver the content online, most faculty were excited and made themselves involved, to ensure that the learning becomes interactive and informative.

Apart from regular class room teaching, the other activities of the university including Provost, Deans Council, Class Representatives Meeting, Research Council Meetings, Upskilling of faculty in AIML were conducted during this period through various ICT tools. This helped the faculty and students to stay in positive frame of mind and stay focused at the time when the entire Nation needs the youth to be motivated and stay in focus.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr Preeti Bajaj, Vice Chancellor of Galgotias University, Greater Noida - 203 201 Gautam Budh Nagar (Uttar Pradesh). These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Dr Preeti Bajaj, Vice Chancellor of Galgotias University, Greater Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.galgotiasuniversity.edu.in, E-mail : vcoffice@galgotiasuniversity.edu.in

GUJARAT TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, AHMEDABAD

As per the guidelines of Education Department, Government of Gujarat Notification No: CRN/102020/15032020/KH-2, Dated 15.03.2020, the academic activities were suspended till 29th March, 2020 in the initial phase which were further extended till 14th April, 2020 due to declaration of complete lockdown of 21 days. Gujarat Technological University, being the largest technical university in Gujarat with a network of more than 430 colleges and approx. 5,00,000 students studying in various disciplines of Pharmacy, Management, Engineering, Computer Applications and Architecture, actively took major steps to protect the interest of students and issued guidelines for all affiliated colleges. All the principals of GTU affiliated colleges were informed to implement the online teaching-learning process for the students to avoid delay in course completion in lieu of completion of academic term as per the Academic Calendar.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Digital Classrooms for Students

GTU took many initiatives to minimize the academic loss of the students during this lockdown. To ensure the safety of all stakeholders, GTU adopted novel ways to promote online teaching –learning methods to effectively communicate with the students and to keep them engaged. Initially it was transition phase to convert classroom teaching to online teaching but gradually students and faculty members both adapted the digital learning mode and students were really satisfied that they were not supposed to compromise learning in terms of completion of course. Coping with COVID-19 was complicated for academic institutions because classroom teaching is must in Indian scenario. But as it is rightly said, 'Something is better than nothing', all stakeholders very quickly switched to online mode of teaching and learning with a joy of studying the course in safe environment.

For engaging the student community, Gujarat Technological University adopted following possible solutions/tools for running online classes -

- A-VIEW (Amrita Virtual Interactive ELearning World Classroom)
- Google Class Room

- ZOOM Cloud Meeting
- Flinnt Open Platform
- FaceBook Live

Online Learning Programmes Ffor Faculty Members

- Professors at GTU left no stone unturned to convert this lockdown period to opportunistic time to learn new ways of teaching and mentoring students through utilization of available digital modes. Even they spared their time to enhance their skills in the area of interest with joining online sessions on SWAYAM portal and other platforms.
- With reference to the e-mail received from NPIU-MoE on 27th March, 2020 regarding TEQIP Phase-III : Enhancing utilization of SWAYAM and MOOCS for improved learning in UG/ PG programs, it was advised to all the faculties of GTU affiliated engineering colleges to refer the online courses corresponding to the subject they are dealing with and use them in their teaching-learning process.
- University issued circular regarding the nomination of faculties to contribute to the translation of NPTEL transcripts in regional language with reference to the E-mail received from NPTEL, IIT Madras about the translation of NPTEL transcripts in regional languages dated- 7th April, 2020.

Instructions for Students Regarding Project Work

- In view of the current situation of nationwide lockdown due to COVID-19, GTU directed its all affiliated institutes to abide by all the social distancing guidelines and other measures as promulgated by both Government of India and Government of Gujarat.
- As per the directives received from All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE), it was informed to all affiliated institutes of university to instruct their students, NOT to take up any Internships outside the organizations which involves travel, contact with outsiders, etc. However, ongoing internships, where companies are allowing students to work from home, shall be allowed to continue.

- In order to positively engage students who are not able to get internships in current situation of lockdown, all affiliated institutes should give challenging problems as internship to such students which can be worked upon by them from their respective homes.
- All students were instructed NOT to visit industries/companies for their IDP/ Project work and students should complete their work from home only.

Online Teaching–learning Activities Done by 3 Postgraduate Schools of the University

Following methods were inculcated to run the online classes by PG schools :

Online classes were conducted through various digital platforms by faculty members of Graduate School of Management Studies (GSMS), Graduate School of Pharmacy (GSP) and Graduate School of Engineering and Technology (GSET). Faculty members preferred to use Zoom Cloud Meeting app and/or Facebook Live for taking online or recorded sessions. Three hours of theory sessions as well as two hours of practical sessions were taken by faculty members of GSET per day. All the students completed practical work very sincerely.

Students enthusiastically attended the online lectures. Almost 85% to 90% student attendance was recorded for each session in Engineering. Apart from teaching through the various digital platforms like Google Classroom and Zoom cloud meeting, links of SWAYAM MOOCs and links of YouTube channels were also shared with the students.

Faculty members shared course content, lecture notes, assignments and question bank with the students. ME CE (Cyber Security) 2nd semester students of GSET did Blockchain Technology internships in addition to the regular academics.

The information of MoE digital initiatives in Higher Education such as SWAYAM MOOC Platform, National Digital Library of India, Virtual Labs, e-Yantra, etc. has also been shared with the students to utilize these platforms for enhancing their academic activities. Various E-books were also shared with the students to understand the concepts in better way.

Faculty members of Graduate School of Management Studies guided their students for project work related to Global Country Study Report (GCSR) and Comprehensive Project (CP).

Pharmacy faculty members engaged students by discussing project reports and other subject related queries with the help of telephonic discussion, e-mail communication and WhatsApp Communication.

Innovative Steps Taken by Cyber Security Faculties

Individual practical tasks have been given to the students in the Malware Analysis subject. Students are supposed to perform the specific practical and prepare a recorded presentation for the same and it will be first reviewed. Then the entire practical will be shared via YouTube Channel, so that maximum students can learn out of this. This idea will be useful to develop students' communication skill; writing skill as well as they will contribute their own work on a digital platform.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Faculty members created Whatsapp group for easy communication and sharing the assignments.

The Google Classroom was also utilized for assignment submission and course material sharing. Assignments were assessed online by faculty members.

The progress of the students was being monitored by each course coordinator daily. Almost every student has been kept engaged through various online means such as Google classroom, Zoom Cloud Meeting, WhatsApp, etc. during these times when personal engagement was impossible. Special attention was given to first-year students in ME CE (Cyber Security) and ME EC (Mobile Communication and Network Technology).

Case studies related to the subjects were given to the Management students to find the optimum solutions.

Teaching staff enthusiastically gave guidance/ solutions practically 24x7.

Students were also asked to submit handwritten assignments to avoid mass copying especially in case of solving numerical problems.

- Examination form filling schedule of all courses for all semesters and all Theory and Practical Summer 2020 Examination for all courses were postponed till further orders as a precautionary measure against the threat of COVID-19.
- GTU is tentatively planning to conduct MCQ based examination for students other than final semester. Final semester students will appear for regular examination once the lockdown period is over.

Advisory for Students and Faculty Members

- In view of the current situation of nationwide lockdown due to COVID-19, GTU directed its all affiliated institutes to abide by all the social distancing guidelines and other measures as promulgated by both Government of India and Government of Gujarat.
- A circular was issued on how to protect ourselves from Corona virus so that we could prevent ourselves from getting infected.
- Guidelines: Measures to-boost immunity
- DSCI advisory related with ‘Work From Home - Cyber security best practices for employees’

Uploaded Various UGC, AICTE and MoE Circulars on GTU Website

- GTU uploaded details of various ICT initiatives of Ministry of Education (MoE) on website to achieve ‘Social Distancing’.
- UGC letter regarding downloading the Aarogya Setu App.
- UGC letter regarding Mental Health and Well-being of students during and after COVID-19 outbreak.
- Bharat Padhe Online Campaign.

Other Initiatives

- As a preventive measure university cancelled all events and meetings where there were chances of gathering many people at one place.
- Homoeopathic medicines were distributed to employees to boost up the immunity level.

- As a gentle gesture of humanity, university also decided to pay full salary during lockdown period to all regular and contractual employees. Even daily wagers were given full salary for non-working days to meet their day to day expenses. This decision was very well appreciated by all employees of the university.

Innovative Products Developed by Students of GTU Innovation Council (GIC)

- ***Airoking*** - A startup developed by Akshit and Vrutantkumar Patil, is a wireless robot to help nurses and medical staff in transferring food and medicine, etc.
- ***Dronelab***- Students of GTU innovation council developed drones to fight this pandemic which are really helpful in Broadcasting, Disinfecting Common Areas, Social Monitoring and Delivery of Critical Supplies.
- GTU Students developed Smart Multi-layer Hand Gloves to stop spreading corona virus.
- ***San Burn*** (developed by Archan Mehta) - a small fully automatic machine which will burn used face mask, hand gloves, tissue papers and hair caps, etc.
- ***Sanitizer Tunnel/Cabinet*** (developed by Anand Mundhawa) - Flexible tunnel with minimum resources for all societies, Government Units, Hospitals to make everyone virus free before entering into building.
- ***Helping Hands*** - 6 wheeler robot which can carry up to minimum 5 kg of weight. It can also clean / sanitize the room. it can reduce spreading of corona-virus through patients to other people by reducing physical contact between medical staff and patients.

ONLINE PLACEMENTS

Updated information about students along with Resumes was collected through Google Docs Form.

- University focused on home internship options for summer projects of MBA students.

- Few companies agreed to take online interview for placement and shortlisted students participated in the same.

OTHER INITIATIVES TAKEN BY GTU

Financial Contribution to the CM Relief Fund

University decided to contribute one day salary of all employees to Chief Minister Relief fund and also urged to affiliated institutes to contribute in the relief fund.

- GTU supported the initiative of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and appealed for switching off the electric lights for 9 minutes on 5th April, 2020 and lighting the lamp. Vice Chancellor also appealed through video message to the citizens of the country to follow the guidelines of lockdown to save themselves and others.
- Live Classical Music Programme for one week from 11th April, 2020 to 16th April, 2020.

Thus, the university ensured students' learning and engaged students' community in the current critical situation to fight against COVID-19 with stay safe and work from the home approach. It is expected that strategies, action plans and innovative methods implemented by Gujarat Technological University would prove to be a very useful document for the future generations to help them to cope up with the similar situations that arise in future.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. (Dr.) Navin Sheth, Vice Chancellor of Gujarat Technological University, Ahmedabad-382424 (Gujarat). These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Dr. Sarika Srivastava, Assistant Professor, Graduate School of Management Studies, Gujarat Technological University, Ahmedabad. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.gtu.ac.in, E-mail : vc@gtu.ac.in | AP2_CGBS@gtu.edu.in

GULBARGA UNIVERSITY, KALABURAGI

Gulbarga University, Kalaburagi established in 1980 by the Act of Karnataka State has been strictly complying to the guidelines and directions issued by MoE-UGC, Government of India and Government of Karnataka at regular intervals to protect the academic community against the Corona Pandemic and conducting the academic and administrative activities using Online Technologies on the principle of Stay at Distance and using Masks as a mandatory protective measures. To protect the academic interest of students during Corona Pandemic, certain best practices were carried out which are discussed here.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

- The Vice Chancellor, Registrar and Registrar Evaluation soon after declaring lockdown due to COVID-19, organized meeting with faculties of various departments, Syndicate and principals of affiliated colleges using 'GotoMeeting' Online app to make strategies to conduct the remaining syllabus using Internet, Online and social networking tools while adhering to the guidelines of government of India and Karnataka.
- All the departments of the University have created separate 'Whatsapp' Groups of their respective departments and further Semester-wise whatsapp groups are also created to have regular interactions, posting lecture notes, assignments, useful links of videos and updating the health and safety measures and education policies.
- Regular online classes were conducted by the respective Faculty of the departments to complete the syllabus (30-40%) using Online Tools like GotoMeeting, Zoom, Cisco Webex, Skype and Google Meet.
- The Course Materials have been uploaded on the University website for easy access to help the students to prepare for their assignments.
- Remote access facility (<http://14.139.156.110:2048/login>) has been enabled to the students, research scholars and faculty to access e-resources especially available under e-shodhsindhu consortia of

INFLIBNET Centre to support their learning, teaching and research activities (<https://www.inflibnet.ac.in/ess/eres.php?memID=71>).

- Using the existing Official whatsapp group of the university, the IQAC-is regularly updated with the government policies, MoE-UGC forms and announcements regarding the conduct of academic programmes.
- Online webinars are conducted to the academic community especially on Indian Citation Index and Scopus Database with the support from the e-publishers.
- Students, Research scholars and faculty were encouraged to make use of online learning course materials, video lectures and short term certificate courses available through SWAYAM, NPTEL, Youtube, E-PGPathashala, MOOCS, Eshodhganga, MIT OCW and the list of useful e-resources are compiled and accessible at <http://guglibrary.net/useful-links.aspx> and <https://gug.ac.in/> and also posted in different whatsapp groups, email and on the institutional website.

Impact on Students

The best practice of interacting with different colleges was adopted for and getting feedback not only from principals but also from students using online tools, emails and mobiles to evaluate the success of online classes, status of syllabus being covered and difficulties faced. As a whole, 75-80% of the students are happy in this critical situation of COVID-19 with the facilities extended by the university through whatsapp, online classes, learning materials available on the Institutional website, remote access facility and virtual contact with their faculty. About 20-25% of the students especially those residing in the rural/ remote areas, could not be reached properly due to lack of Internet connectivity or slow speed of connectivity and non-availability of smart phones owing to their economic conditions. Efforts are made to contact these students by the respective faculty and helping them to ensure to get the lesson plans. As a whole, the new venture in online technology has created a 'Technology Culture' in true spirit to support the academic and research for the overall development of the university.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

The revised calendar of events in the light of directions received from UGC, New Delhi were followed for conducting examinations.

CONCLUSION

The Gulbarga University foreseeing the future perspective of online education and delivery to reach the students, shall develop and use robust Indian based online platform and in this direction, TCS iON Digital Glass Room has been registered and will develop effective learning managing system (Moodle) and move towards implementation of e-governance for smooth and effective functioning of educational system in the university system.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. Chandrakant M. Yatanoor, Vice Chancellor of Gulbarga University, Kalaburagi- 581 506 (Karnataka). These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Prof. Chandrakant M. Yatanoor, Vice Chancellor of Gulbarga University, Kalaburagi, Karnataka. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.gug.ac.in, E-mail : vcgug@rediffmail.com

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF FOREIGN TRADE, NEW DELHI

We are a small university and have faced limited problems due to the closure. As far as the main flagship MBA program is considered, all classes have been completed prior to the lockdown as is usual under the trimester system and second year students are going to proceed to PPA internship in April, 2020 or as and when companies open up. Examinations are now likely to be delayed and we expect that the next year session might well be on time. We are however ready for a couple of weeks delay. As far as the entrance exam for the 2020-22 MBA batch is concerned, the results have been collated and will be declared as soon as the lockdown is lifted and prospective candidates informed. So admission too may well be on time or may be delayed by a week or so. The other program is the MA (Economics) program which works on the two semester system. Here classes are ongoing on the Zoom platform and we expect the exams would be held as normally scheduled. Similarly, all part time and weekend programs like the MBA (3yrs) and the Executive Management programs are being run in the online mode. Teachers are conducting classes from their homes as per arranged time table schedules. Administration is also working on the online platform and all issues are dealt by mail and then the answers to queries, etc. are either filed or replied to. Assuming the lockdown is lifted at least partially we don't see too much disruption in our main teaching and research programs.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. Manoj Pant, Director of Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, Qutub Institutional Area, New Delhi- 110 016. These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Prof. Manoj Pant, Director of Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, Qutub Institutional Area, New Delhi. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.iift.edu, E-mail : diroffice@iift.ac.in

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF HEALTH MANAGEMENT RESEARCH UNIVERSITY, JAIPUR

COVID-19 pandemic has changed the world sooner than we knew for Indian Institute of Health Management Research (IIHMR) University. Remote meetings and online teachings have become the default mode of learning for all of us, and it has radically changed us. This tech shift was initially a terrible shock, frustrating, mind-boggling, as we all are from across generations had to be digital native overnight, but we soon grappled the new norms of tech mediated learning and teaching. Over the last 35 years in university, this crossover was happening to us in bits and pieces, but today we all are engaged in blended learning. We at IIHMR University, Jaipur always believe in remaining relevant to the masses at the same time continually innovating and evolving ourselves. We believe the workplace of tomorrow must innovate or perish.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Our team has shown high resilience and commitment to adapt and lead by example quickly. Digitized examinations, online mentoring, course discussion meetings, online teaching, training programs, webinars, virtual internships, virtual seminars, group discussions almost all aspects of teaching and learning currently we are managing online. For this, we are using new virtual tools of project management, to meeting tools like Microsoft team and Skype for business, and GotoWebinar. Of course, it does not come easy, but amidst all this, we all are keeping the morale of our students high through constant connect and mentorship during this uncertain time. We are enjoying a significant class of students online and teaching with more personalized competency-based courses.

We are armed with innovative programs with a ground-breaking pedigree. In the post-pandemic scenario, we have created an ecosystem of students, industry, and alumni who are researchers, visionaries, and innovators spanning disciplines and industries. We are using this time to build our techno education system and driving changes seamlessly and making our students ready to face the challenges. We are quickly attuned to new programs and providing more significant emphasis on analytics, leadership, and career development.

The good news is we are out of our inertia, more confident and optimistic, and quickly changing our habits and working towards some of the new waves of digital problems. However, we shall overcome it soon. We are putting fairness at

the heart of delivering, just not falling into the rat race, as an institution we were prepared to tackle this innovatively. Yes, we had scrambles, and improvisations during the process, but that virus was quite short-lived.

In these modern and uncertain times, as we negotiate what this pandemic means personally and globally, we crave and need access to timely, credible, and clear information to help us understand and manage risk. As the dynamics of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to evolve, we felt it is essential than ever to ensure people have up-to-date information, contextualized to their needs and environment. Their learning needs and wellbeing are not compromised. COVID-19 urged us to stay even more focused. To follow the social distancing, we began the institute lockdown on March 20, 2020, and initiated the Work from Home for our team. We initiated our EdTech journey keeping in mind six aspects which are being discussed here one by one.

Examine the Readiness and Choose the Most Relevant Tools

We decided to use high-technology and low-technology solutions based on the reliability of local power supplies, internet connectivity, and digital skills of our faculty and students. We are working on building video lessons; this could range through integrated digital learning platforms, MOOCs, etc.

Protect Data Privacy and Data Security

We realized that we need to assess data security when uploading data or educational resources to web spaces, as well as when sharing them with other organizations or individuals. We ensured that the use of applications and platforms does not violate any data privacy. Also, in times of increased online uses and surge in cybercrime, we have worked on strengthening our systems.

Prioritize Solutions to Address Psychosocial Challenges before Teaching

We decided to mobilize available tools to connect with parents, faculty members, and students with each other. Through emails, virtual meetings, messages, we are reaching out to them and having constant interaction and addressing possible psychosocial challenges that students may face when they are isolated.

Plan the Study Schedule of the New Academic Year

Organized discussions with stakeholders to examine the possible duration of university closures and working on how our program should focus on teaching new knowledge or enhance students' knowledge of previous lessons. We are planning the schedule depending on the situation of the affected zones, level of studies, needs of students.

Provide Support to Faculty and Students on the Use of Digital Tools

We have formulated an online program review committee, and we are organizing brief handholding sessions for our faculty members. We are helping our faculty members to prepare for live streaming of lessons. Similar support to connect and learn online was provided to our students.

Blend Appropriate Approaches and Limit the Number of Applications and Platforms.

We are blending tools or media that are available for most students, both for synchronous communication and lessons and for asynchronous learning. We are integrating Microsoft Teams into our learning system. It will avoid overloading students by asking them to download and test too many applications or platforms.

Our Initiatives

Automatic Shifting to Online teaching Institute shifted all its classes in online mode. It supported large class and enabled a safe environment, interaction, and launching of discussion forum. Microsoft Teams was used by the faculty to conduct classes from home. We are working on further strengthening our learning management system.

Webinars

IIHMR University is organizing a variety of webinars for all stakeholders. The webinars will address different topics, but all will consider strategies to maintain the continuity of learning, especially for students. Each webinar can be accessed online and includes several expert presenters from different parts of the world. A moderator facilitates the discussion between the presenters and the audience.

MOOC Courses

Our students are also engaged in pursuing guided value-added courses on various MOOC platforms such as SWAYAM, Udemy, Coursera, edx, etc. More importantly, our campus recently got approval for the 'Coursera for Campus' programme, thus increasing the bandwidth of online learning for our students with a flexibility to choose from an exhaustive list of 3800+ courses offered by the top universities across the world.

Work From Home Internship

Further, most of our students continue to pursue their summer internship programs on 'Work From Home' (WFH) basis with some of our partners.

Further, for a few of those partners having logistics challenges to engage our students for scheduled SIPs, we are engaging them in a guided research project involving faculty mentors to produce a publication in SCOPUS/ABDC journals or listed case folios. Field experience will be provided to students as and when time permits and if it is conducive to do so. Faculty mentors are constantly engaged with them, and providing them mentoring support online,

Work From Home Faculty Engagement

All our faculty members are engaged in WFH pursuing research, teaching, evaluation, guiding students online for SIP and working with Ph.D. research scholars, developing new courses and digital content for existing courses, get trained on new pedagogical tools for blended learning through our IT training department and various MOOC platforms. Most importantly many of them are actively engaged in active research and we are working on bring out a special issue of our journal on health management on COVID-19 soon.

Access to Digital Content

Access to digital content, e-learning material through remote access to our digital library platform, various databases, and research content is made available to all students, faculty, staff, and Ph.D. scholars. Daily digital newspaper and latest news can also be accessed by the staff, students, and faculty members.

Continuation of Admissions and Placement Activities

The placement of batch 2018-20 is almost over, with less than 10% of students remaining to be placed. Admissions are almost halfway, and we are apprehending that admissions may slow down in view of the COVID-19 situation. Nevertheless, continuous addition to applications is happening. We conducted online group discussions, and interviews for ten students during the period of lockdown, as well as our UMAT examination, was also conducted online. We have almost replicated our offline process online with a better conversion rate. Before initiating the process mock drill was organized and also complete support was provided by the IT team to aspirants.

Online Examination Platform

In response to the current COVID-19 pandemic, we are moving our centre-based examination to online delivery. We are doing this to balance the wellbeing of our candidates and their families with the desire of many students to complete their current studies despite these unprecedented global circumstances. In view of present uncertain COVID-19 scenario it is proposed to conduct the

examinations online. To maintain the sanctity and integrity of examination following measures will be adopted:

- a. Use of an online platform/service provider that allows multiple checks for student identity and online support so that the students can be proctored during examinations.
- b. The questions papers to be framed in such a manner that the questions are more conceptual, and application based. It will force a student to think and answer rather than just read and cheat.

Online Executive Education Programs

IIHMR University has been one of the foremost training partners for leading corporates in India. It has consistently offered customized MDPs (Management Development Programmes) for top companies in India based on their requirements. The programs on offer are both long term and short term. We have planned our forthcoming training programs online.

Online Convocation for Graduating Batch

University is planning to organize E-convocation. The degrees will be conferred on pass out the batch students, and the same will be made available to them through email as well as uploaded on ERP. Similarly, the Grade Sheets, Diploma Certificates, and Merit Certificates are being uploaded on ERP, which our students can access. The original copies will be sent to them on the next day of the convocation by post.

Continuous Mentoring for Creating an Atmosphere of Trust

We have a robust system and culture of mentoring, wherein faculty and students share a bond that transcends beyond learning. Nothing could have worked more effectively for students than the assurance shared by mentors. It was vital for us to tell our students that their learning is taken care of, and the academic calendar is adhered to. Our system of mentoring also helped to keep in touch with students and parents to address their concerns. Mentors regularly planned virtual meetings with students online as well as WhatsApp sessions.

Customized Surveys/Feedback Forms

We have completely automated our feedback mechanism and supporting our faculty and students to conduct online surveys and customize them using Jotform.

Virtual Work Meeting

We are meeting in various smaller and larger groups every day to discuss and plan for students wellbeing, monitoring our progress, redesigning our curriculum, integration of technology and smooth sailing this journey.

Worst Scenario Planning and SoPs for Post Lockdown Opening

Planning for the post-lockdown opening is extremely important. In all possibilities, the lockdown opening for educational institutions will be subject to a lot of protocols and restrictions. We are also prepared for worst-case planning and has started the process of preparing ourselves for post lockdown working. The worst-case planning has taken into account five different scenarios of time of starting of academic activities, which extend up to the end of December, 2020. The planning has been done on all fronts—academic delivery, campus safety, sanitization and hygiene norms, and budget. We have heard about flipping our classroom, but this pandemic has made us think of a new way of learning using technology. Jose Bowen has beautifully illustrated in the book 'Teaching Naked.' Bowen's practical advice on engaging students with new technology while restructuring classes into more active learning environments sounds so accurate and helpful today.

CONCLUSION

Given the wholehearted participation of our students, faculty, staff, and research scholars, we are already witnessing some very progressive trends ever since we took up the initiatives mentioned above during this lockdown. We are also experiencing that the current crisis is helping us become more creative, adaptive, agile, and resilient as we teach ourselves newer and better ways of academic and research engagements. Salute to academic warriors!

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. Pankaj Gupta, Vice Chancellor of IIHMR University, Jaipur- 302 029 (Rajasthan). The article has been contributed by Mr. Hem K. Bhargava, Registrar, IIHMR, University, Jaipur, Rajasthan. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.iihmr.edu.in, E-mail : pgupta@iihmr.edu.in

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TEACHER EDUCATION, GANDHINAGAR

Indian Institute of Teacher Education (IITE), Gandhinagar, Gujrat being exclusively dedicated institution to the teaching-learning and training discipline of Teacher Education, has Vision, Mission and Objectives justifying its role in the academia and society in general. During the critical times of COVID-19 outbreak also, our approach was to strive for and find out best conducive progress possibilities of maintaining the normalcy in routine teaching-learning and evaluation practices, establishing new mediums of maintaining the dialogue with the students and society in general, by maintaining social distancing and all other required amount of precautions as suggested by the guidelines issued by the Central Government of India as well as the State Government of Gujarat.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

While COVID-19 was emerging as a threat in the early stage of its diagnosis in India, we recorded lectures of more than seven different subjects through a local facility of BISAG, based in Gandhinagar. The recorded lectures were telecast through TV Channel, Vande-Gujarat-I and Jio TV, ensuring the successful curriculum transaction. Remaining portion of teaching was successfully carried out through online platforms like Zoom, Google Classroom and other facilities of convenience to students and parents.

A successful attempt to bring about versatile dialogue on various subject disciplines through webinars, conferences, workshops and creative activities was offered by five different centres of IITE's multifaceted structure. Being an institute dedicated to teacher education discipline, we ensured our role as to deliver through the New Normal means of transaction. Our attempts were well-received by the members of the society, student community and well-backed by the academic fraternity in general. Senior Professors, well-known academicians and also the education department of the state endorsed and welcomed the meticulous arrangement of academic discussions as healthy and encouraging practices of IITE.

We did find times as challenging, in terms of conducting exams and assessments. In that regard, we did oblige to the guidelines of the central and the state governments. As there was due scope, we conducted a hundred per cent successful preliminary exam through google classroom, as open book assignment submissions with calculative measures. With the participation of students, parents and teachers, the whole arrangement turned out to be very successful in respective reference. In order to provide enough facility in terms

of stationery to the students, the examination department parcelled the exam stationery to all its students of the Centre of Education at their residence through Indian Postal Services.

Along with many other practices, it was also important to maintain the progress of recruitment as going. We issued advertisement for the post of permanent and contractual teaching staff, as well as non-teaching staff. Two of the permanent teaching posts of Associate Professor were successfully filled, with few other non-teaching contractual vacancies. The letter of appointment were issued to the appointed teachers through the Education Minister of the State of Gujarat, Shri Bhupendrasinh Chudasama.

Recently, through the notification of the state Government of Gujarat, the Education Department rested the responsibility to affiliate the Government and Grant-in-Aid colleges of Education with IITE. We are proud to announce that, we also completed the process of affiliation successfully by maintaining all precautionary measures of social distancing.

The idea of identity and belongingness is well-acquainted with the foundation day, and the whole of IITE family celebrated its 10th Foundation Day on June 30, 2020. In the graceful presence of Hon'ble. Education Minister, Gujarat State, Shri Bhupendrasinh Chudasama, and Shri Arun Dave, an eminent Scientist, prominent Educationist and the Managing Trustee of Lok Bharati, Sanosara, IITE declared its resolution for the future plan as immediate and long term.

A pre-synopsis viva of a Ph.D. scholars was also organized online in the presence of the Vice Chancellor. It was conducted as soon the University Grants Commission (UGC) issued the new guidelines for viva conduct.

We also scheduled our plan to conduct the entrance test for the upcoming semester in all versatility of the courses we offer. We have also scheduled examination through online mode.

The new semester proceedings have started from our side to make sure we don't compromise on the part of our responsibility in any manner of conduct.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr Harshad A. Patel, Vice Chancellor of Indian Institute of Teacher Education, Gandhinagar-382 016 (Gujarat). These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Dr Harshad A. Patel, Vice Chancellor of Indian Institute of Teacher Education, Gandhinagar and Dr. Deepak Kumar J Trivedi, Associate Professor, Indian Institute of Teacher Education, Gandhinagar, Gujarat. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributors only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.iite.ac.in, E-mail : vc@iitel.ac.in

INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY, NEW DELHI

COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted almost all walks of our life including the teaching-learning system both at school and higher education level. Because of the country wide lockdown all the educational institutes are closed down and the students as well as the teachers are stranded in their homes. In spite of that, educational institutions including the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), Maidan Garhi, New Delhi have devised new and innovative ways of teaching their students and providing them all kinds of support services. In fact, the technological interventions and innovative initiatives by the university authorities, faculty and staff have made this period highly productive from teaching-learning point of view. During COVID-19 pandemic, IGNOU has taken several innovative initiatives for protecting academic interests of the students even in this period of exigence. Right from the stage of admission to imparting instructions, providing study material and other support services, students have been provided all kinds of support and facility for effective learning while being at their homes. A brief description of such innovative initiatives by the university is given here.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

IGNOU imparts education to the learners through open and distance education mode. Normally, the distance learners are provided academic and administrative support through a network of 67 Regional Centres and large number of Study Centres spread all over the country and also in some of the overseas countries. Academic Counsellors at the study centres provide them discipline-wise counselling which is supplemented by various kind of technology-based instructions and support by the faculty from Headquarter. But during the COVID-19 lockdown the face to face support provided by the study centres and the Regional Centres has been disrupted badly. In such a situation, university has taken up several important technology enabled initiatives to reach out to the students and teach them at their homes. These initiatives include programme wise web based academic support, online support guide, online video counselling by the teachers, organizing Facebook Live sessions, e-counselling, online induction and orientation programmes, etc.

Online Induction Programmes for Newly Admitted Students

After completion of each admission cycle, the Regional Centres and Study Centres normally organize face to face induction programmes for the newly admitted students in different programmes. But because of COVID-19 lockdown, it was not possible to organize such programmes in the usual traditional way. Even then the university teachers and faculty at the Regional Centres organised online induction and orientation programmes for the newly admitted students by using the video conferencing tools like Zoom, Google Meet, Cisco WebEx and Microsoft Teams, etc. Various Regional Centres of IGNOU are organizing such induction programmes regularly and guiding the students about their programme structure, instructional system at IGNOU, counselling sessions, process of submission of assignments, etc. In this process of interaction, the students can ask any question, clarify their doubts. Students have found this quite effective and useful.

E-Counselling of the Learners During Lockdown

Because of the country wide lockdown, students cannot go to their study centres to attend the counselling sessions. In that case IGNOU faculty including senior professors in different subjects are regularly conducting interactive video-based counselling from their homes or from the IGNOU studio. These video counselling sessions include two-way video counselling as well as one-way video counselling.

Face Book live sessions have been very extensively used for conducting one-way video counselling, in which teachers are taking live classes regularly mainly from IGNOU Headquarter and students are able to interact through text-based chat and ask their questions. IGNOU Facebook Live has become quite popular among the students. The information about various sessions is publicised well in advance through various social media including Official Twitter account and university website. Facebook live sessions have been conducted by many senior professors of the university including the Pro-Vice Chancellors. Even the Vice Chancellor, IGNOU has also conducted few motivational sessions on Facebook Live. In some cases, teachers are conducting Facebook Live sessions from their home also. During this lockdown period, more than 100 sessions have been conducted for different courses. Another important and useful way of conducting one-way video counselling used by IGNOU is YouTube

Live. Though, the use of YouTube live was started last year for some of the low enrolment programmes under Web Enabled Academic Support (WEAS) scheme at NCIDE, it has picked up great momentum during the lockdown period.

But now with the availability of two-way video conferencing tools like Google Meet, Microsoft Team, Cisco WebEx and Zoom, two-way video counselling is being used for low enrolment programmes. Every day two-three interactive video counselling sessions are being organised by various faculty members for several programmes from their homes. The innovative features of these video sessions include live interactivity through video, text chat, inclusion of power point presentation and recording of the video sessions. The recorded sessions are made available immediately after the session on the WEAS portal of the respective programme. In two-way video counselling, teachers and students are able to interact with each other and also see each other. The increasing number of students attending these sessions indicates their usefulness and importance. It is a very successful experiment by the university during COVID-19. It is also being used by various study centres of the university.

e-Counselling sessions through Facebook Live, Twitter and YouTube Live are being organized by the various Regional Centres also covering different issues and problems of the students related to exam, assignments, online classes. Small video clips focusing on various day to day problems and issues faced by the learners have been prepared by the Regional Centres and placed on the YouTube channels for wider circulation among students. Online video counselling sessions are also conducted by different Academic Counsellors at various Learner Support Centres to resolve academic difficulties of learners on spot.

Web Enabled Academic Support to the Learners

During the COVID-19 lockdown period, the distance learners of different programmes, particularly low enrolment programmes have extensively used the Web Enabled Academic Support (WEAS) platform for different types of online resources and interaction with their teachers and peers. WEAS is an interactive one-stop programme portal for providing academic support to the distance learners, with components like learning content in the form of digital self-learning material, learning resources like audio books, videos, articles, OER,

weekly quiz, and FAQs related to the programme. E-mentoring, collaborative learning through discussion forum, and interactive virtual classroom are some other useful components of the portal. Though, WEAS was launched last year with three programmes, today it hosts 18 courses/programmes. During the lockdown period, the portal has also facilitated the students of the programmes with large enrolments like BSc. programme of School of Sciences. It caters to the learning needs of thousands of learners and has a pool of learning resources including links to available virtual labs. The WEAS portals also hosts the recorded sessions of web-counselling conducted for various programmes by the faculty members from their homes

Similarly, School of Gender and Development Studies has developed an innovative platform- WGS-Forum for engaging the learners in teaching-learning process. It's an asynchronous e-platform open for registered learners that provides access to study material (water marked) and audio-video material supplementing the study material. Assignments are also uploaded. There is an interactive window where the faculty as well as the registered learners can post their queries regarding any concept or theory that any learner asks for clarification or needs additional readings. Faculty also posts new articles and texts that substantiate the discussions in the SIM. Further, any current event that needs to be looked at from a gendered understanding are also opened for interaction for learners. This also helps peer to peer interaction. There is a provision of uploading original creative work by the learners and many learners have posted their art work and poems on this platform. During lockdown period, all the University notifications for the learners were posted on the forum. It has a very good impact factor as the learners get direct access to all the course coordinators at one place and all the study material, programme guide and assignments, audio-video material is available at one platform. Also, it provides platform for peer to peer learning and interaction.

Live Video Counselling Sessions on *Gyan Vani* and *Gyan Dhara*

In order to reach out to the learners in the remotest parts of the country, Door Darshan and radio has always been a powerful media. During COVID-19 pandemic, IGNOU has extensively used this media to provide live counselling to the learners by organizing live programmes through the Gyan Darshan TV Channel and *Gyan Vani*, FM Radio station will jointly telecast the live teleconference/Live Radio Interactive sessions from 21st April, 2020 onward

daily. The live sessions are taken by the subject Professors including the Pro-Vice Chancellors. Daily four to five live sessions have conducted by the subject experts. A series of special awareness programme on COVID-19 issues has been organized by the faculty of School of Health Science (SOHS) on daily basis by Prof. T K Jena, Director, SOHS and Dr. Biplab Jamatia, Assistant Professor, SOH. Similarly, Prof. Saryakam, PVC, IGNOU has been regularly taking live sessions on Suno Kahani. Prof. Nageshwar Rao, Vice Chancellor, IGNOU has also interacted with the learners through these joint live sessions. The innovative feature of this initiative is that the students can watch the live programme through Direct to Home service through various disc operators or cable operators and they can directly interact with their teachers through dedicated telephone service. The programmes are being viewed through television and are being listened through radio without depending on the internet connectivity. It has proved to be a very effective mode of teaching distance learners during this COVID-19 period. Through these sessions, faculty is offering guidance regarding the courses, the study material, assignments and other aspects of various programmes offered by the university.

Apart from this all the GV Delhi programmes were broadcast through relay mode through various Regional centres also and are made available to all the learners. Details of various Teleconferencing sessions / IRC schedules and all other important information are posted on the RC Websites and the same is informed to the learners through SMS and Email.

Availability of e-Resources for Learners

During the COVID-19 pandemic period, various other resources of the university were also made available to the learners through internet in online mode including a large repository of video programmes in its YouTube Channel, 21 courses available on SWAYAM platform, six courses of the three online IGNOU programmes and ten courses of SWAYAMPARBHA. IGNOU SWAYAM PRABHA Channels at channel numbers 23, 24, 26 and 32 were also freely available to all the learners during the lockdown period. The Channel 23 covers courses on Liberal Arts and Humanities; the Channel 24 covers courses on Agriculture, Vocation and allied Sciences; Channel 26 covers programmes of the State Open Universities and the Channel 32 covers the NIOS courses and Teacher Education programmes. School of Computer and Information Sciences, IGNOU has created an Online Support Guide for their students. It

consists of a reservoir of curated material in the form of OER, Quick Reference Cards, e-books, virtual labs, PPTs, and Videos of SOCIS faculty, etc. This is a unique initiative in providing a variety of learning material to the learners.

Online Availability of the Study Material

In Open and Distance Learning system, the Self Learning Material (SLM) plays a pivotal role in teaching-learning and it is considered to be the teacher in print. In order to make the SLM available to the students immediately after the admission, university has allowed the learners to access the SLM of their programme from the online repository named as e-Gyankosh. Digitised Self Learning Material available on eGyan Kosh, is freely accessible to all the students through IGNOU website at <http://egyankosh.ac.in>. and also, through mobile app which can be downloaded from the Google Play store. In some of the distance mode programmes which are supported by Web Enabled Academic Support (WEAS), the SLM can be accessed through their WEAS portal also.

Technology Mediated Learner Support and Grievance Redressal

The Student Support Centre at IGNOU is very actively addressing the problems and grievances of the learners during the lockdown period through its online portal iGRAM portal. At the same time, the Regional Centres of IGNOU are also very effectively engaging the learners by providing soft copy of Study Materials and encouraging them for self-study activities. The Regional Centres are arranging web-enabled counselling classes for clearing learners' academic doubts and providing them academic supports. The learners' grievances are also being sorted out by the Regional centres through online platform iGRAM, Email, Whatsapp, Facebook, Twitter and over Phone. Timely Academic Support and proper guidance by the RCs has resulted in to substantial reduction in students' queries and grievances.

Some of the Regional Centres are organizing E-Grievance Redressal drive through Facebook Live session on Assignments, Examination, Re-registration, Online Counselling sessions and Project/ Synopsis for the benefit of the students regularly. Strengthening SMS services for RCs to reach out to Learner's more frequently through messages regarding COVID-19 awareness, general wellbeing, inspirational quotes to academic alerts, has been very effective and useful.

Innovative Initiatives in the Field of Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment and evaluation are very important component at IGNOU. As a part of formative assessment, learners are required to submit their tutor marked assignments project work, synopsis, internship reports, etc. at the study centres or at the Regional Centres before registering for the Term End Exam. But, because of the sudden declaration of the lockdown, it was difficult for the students to submit the same at the RCs or SCs in person. As a solution to this problem, firstly the university allowed the students to submit their hand written scanned assignments through email to the concerned RC. But there were some problems in sorting out of so many emails. Therefore, several RCs have devised of an innovative way of collecting assignments through Google Forms. The learners are advised to submit their assignments through Google forms. At the same time, evaluation of assignments is also being arranged through online mode. Some of the Regional Centres have also provisioned for online submission and evaluation of synopsis, projects, internships, etc. It has helped students in submission and evaluation of assignments, synopsis, projects, and internships on stipulated time. Several thousands of assignments have been received at the various RCs so far through Google form. Thus, handling of online submission of hand written assignments, developing Google Form to collect Assignments from the learners and developing e- feedback form to collect feedback as well as marks/grade in e-award sheet developed in spreadsheet are some of the innovative initiatives in the field of assessment and evaluation.

Similarly, a provision has been made by some of the schools at IGNOU for online submission of the Project Proposals for various courses through email which are evaluated by the faculty, approved and sent back with comments. In the absence of postal and courier services, this provided maximum online assistance to the learners. It also helped in speedy processing and feedback.

Some of the Regional Centres like RC, Kolkata have organized online reorientation of counselors and evaluators for more innovative strategies of assessment delivery for online learners. The reorientation focuses on devising strategies to assess online learners through innovative workplan, learner communities' interactive exchanges, problem solving strategies, etc. RC is also in the process of coordinating a brainstorming with counsellors to devise a consolidated strategy for continuous assessment of online learners based on a performance sheet for every counseling session. The performance sheet

will reflect the learner's internalization of the proceedings delivered on that particular counseling session along with a feedback for the counselor to plan the next session according to learners needs.

In order to encourage and guide the IGNOU students about their concerns and anxiety related to examination, Prof. R. R. Kanhere, Pro-Vice Chancellor has also conducted a special live session on Facebook Live.

PLACEMENT DRIVE THROUGH ONLINE MODE

Strategies are being worked out for conduct of online placement drive and creating the job opportunities for distance learners by the university and well as the Regional Centres of the University. IGNOU Regional Centre, Trivandrum has taken initiative in this regard. Regional Centre, Kolkata has initiated towards enhancing employability and capacity management of online learners. For this purpose, they are preparing a monthly open letter that accumulates information regarding opportunities available for learners to upgrade their skills for job market, and employment options. Besides, they have created an online page including Newspaper collage of current affair related information, call for papers, seminar and conference alerts, skill building workshops, employment bazaar and other relevant opportunities for learners. They have created an online platform for IGNOU achievers and a webpage dedicated to their CV, special talents, achievements, awards for dissemination and outreach to potential employers and other job headhunting communities.

OTHER INNOVATIVE INITIATIVES

In addition to the above-mentioned innovative practices, IGNOU has taken several other initiatives for gainfully engaging the learners in teaching-learning process during the lockdown period. Some of them are described in brief here.

Empowering Faculty for Innovative Use of Technology

During lockdown period, teachers and other staff of the university wanted to use the available technological tools for teaching and interacting with their students. But many of them did not have proper skills for using such tools. In that case, the teachers from different schools were imparted virtual training for using the various ICT tools and techniques like Google Meet and Zoom for video counselling and YouTube Live streaming from home. The faculty of School of Science was trained about conducting online discussion forums, uploading

their learning resource on the web portal of their programme. As leaders in ODL system, IGNOU through the School of Health Sciences organised an Online National Workshop for faculty in the medical, dental, and nursing colleges and faculty of allied health professionals as prospective Academic Counsellors.

Providing Remote Access to Cloud Based E-Resources to the Faculty and Students

Cloud based service adopted to provide publishers' copyright e-contents (subscribed and consortia based) such as American Physical Society, EPW, ISIS, JCCC, JSTOR, Oxford University Press, Project Muse, Springer Link, Taylor and Francis, World e-book Library, etc, through Ez-proxy (an OCLC, UK software) for Remote Access To E-resources (RATE) on 24X7 basis from anywhere. It supported University's students, faculty and academics to pursue their learning and research from home in the times of lockdown while staying safe at home. They can access thousands of e books, journals and databases through this service.

In addition to the above-mentioned initiatives by the IGNOU for gainfully engaging the learners, the university encouraged them for maximum use of the various initiatives and e- resources of MoE, UGC and other such organizations like National Digital Library of India (NDLI) for online learning during COVID-19 pandemic.

Encouraging Students towards Creativity, Innovation and Entrepreneurship

During COVID-19 period, National Centre for Innovations in Distance Education (NCIDE) at IGNOU has taken several new initiatives to engage the interested students in the creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship by organizing different types of online and virtual activities. For this purpose, a one-stop portal called as ऋVRIETI has been developed for IGNOU students who are interested in innovation, start-ups and entrepreneurship. It has sections like IGNOU Schemes, Resources, Inspiring Stories, Events/Workshop and Important Websites. The section on IGNOU Schemes highlights the various schemes of the university for its learners related to innovation, start-ups and entrepreneurship. The Resources section has links to a few online courses and learning resources on innovation. Inspiring Stories highlight the stories of successful entrepreneurs. The Events/Workshop page highlights the latest events organised by NCIDE, IIC, etc. The login page provides a link to the student

portal of **₢VRIETI**: which is password-protected and has additional facilities like a variety of educational resources like documents, web resources, video resources etc, links to online courses, besides asynchronous and synchronous modes of communication with the registered learners of IGNOU.

Besides it, a special talk series on 'Being Your Own Boss' is being organized virtually for the shortlisted students for Idea to Start-up scheme of the university. The talk series includes talks on Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Business Plan Development, setting up your Enterprise, Setting up Start-ups, etc.

In order to foster the culture of creativity and innovation among the learners and IGNOU fraternity during this period; NCIDE has started a series of online Creativity Challenge for IGNOU students and fraternity from May, 2020. The first challenge focuses on Innovative ways of addressing the Problems This first Challenge aims at understanding how innovative the IGNOU students and fraternity are in solving the day-today problems in emergency situation and how creatively they describe that innovative solution. The problems areas may be related to health, food, studies, office work, connecting with students/teachers or any other household problem. All the participants will be provided e-Certificate of Participation and the best five responses will be awarded Certificate of Merit. The next Creativity Challenge in the series will be upcoming in the following week.

Besides it, the Institution's Innovation Council (IIC) at IGNOU has been encouraging the students and faculty to watch the online Leadership Talks and Webinars on various topics on Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Start-up, Intellectual Property Rights and Policies, being organized by the MoE's Innovation Council (MIC) through Twitter Live, Facebook Live and YouTube Live during the COVID-19 Lockdown period. Thousands of IGNOU students across India are watching these talks regularly and interacting through twitter and emails. Teachers, academics and staff members of IGNOU headquarters and Regional Centres are also watching these talks.

ONLINE SUPPORT BY SCHOOL OF COMPUTER AND INFORMATION SCIENCES

During the complete lockdown period as it is not possible to have complete access to the servers, the School of Computer and Information Sciences (SOCIS) has adopted a different approach for uploading the resources on to the IGNOU official website. It has made an attempt to tap the potential

of the social media tools like Facebook and Twitter primarily. Immediately after the announcement of the lockdown it opened a Facebook page titled 'Ignou Socis' with URL <https://www.facebook.com/ignou.socis.3>. It has also opened 2 new Twitter Handles @ignoucit, @ignoupdca. Already since many years the Twitter handles @mcaignou and @bcaignou of MCA and BCA programmes were functional. So, they have Twitter handles for all of its programmes. Already many of the Regional Centres were having the Facebook accounts and requested them to join our Ignou Socis account for sharing the information. Also, informed all the Regional Centres to follow the SOCIS-Programme Twitter accounts for latest updates. Wherever there is not possibility of directly uploading to the FB and Twitter accounts, the documents/PPTs /audio clips are uploaded on to the Google Drive/slideshare.net/sound cloud/anchor.fm etc., and made available the shareable links on the FB and Twitter accounts.

The following are the resources created by its faculty and shared through emails, *Ignou Socis* Facebook and the entire programme Twitter accounts of SOCIS:

- For each of its 4 programmes CIT, BCA, PGDCA and MCA Help links document of the entire programme is being created and shared with the users. This document contains the reference links to the complete course material, programme guide, assignments, videos, Old questions papers, PPTs etc.. for respective programme. The equivalent QR codes were also generated for the convenience of the students to randomly go to the sites if they have WIFI or mobile data on their access devices.
- Curated the available eBooks (reference books) and generated equivalent QR-codes for them and circulated to students.
- **PGDCA FB-Page** was created and provided a AI- powered ChatBot facility
- **Academic Counseling:** NPTEL video courses were examined and were mapped to our equivalent BCA/MCA courses and shared with students.
- **Practical Counseling:** Available Virtual Labs (a GoI initiative under NMEICT) @ www.vlab.co.in were compiled coursewise and shared with our learners to perform practicals at their home.
- Informed about eGyankosh SLM portal and IGNOU eContent app.
- Audio tracks were uploaded on Sound Cloud for Communication Skills (MCS-015) course were shared.
- Available videos on eGyankosh were shared.

- Organised FB-Live sessions @OfficialPageIGNOU for CIT/BCA/MCA/PGDCA students as shown in Fig 2. Till now SOCIS has conducted 18 sessions for its students of CIT/BCA/PGDCA/MCA students.
- Faculty participated in Academic Counseling at LSCs through video conferencing.
- MCS-012 Computer Organisation FB Page was started by its course coordinator to share the updates with the students.
- Coursewise help links by individual course coordinators for many of the courses.
- Interactive Radio Counselling and recordings of them shared online.
- Whatsapps groups for internal communication and with PhD scholars.
- Uploading PPTs on Slideshare.net and sharing them with students.
- Quick Reference Cards were downloaded and shared with the students for Lab courses, programming courses.
- Assignments for all the programmes were shared as a separate document.
- Programme guides for all the programmes were shared as a separate document.
- For internal administration, whatsapp group was created.
- Grievance handling was handled by individual programme/course coordinators. RTIs, iGram grievances etc were handled on their respective websites themselves.
- Queries through emails were handled by respective faculty.
- Faculty meetings were organised using video-conferencing tools
- All the PPTs were shared with the students prior ahead for the FB-Live sessions.
- Some of the Faculty members joined academic counseling and induction programmes along with the regional centres / LSCs.
- Short video clippings were prepared by the course coordinator of MCS-053 to explain the underlying concepts for that course.
- 20 videos and 20 PPTs were shared for MCS-023 (Introduction to DMBS) course by its course coordinator.
- Common Wealth of Learning OERs on computer Science and Technology are also shared with our students.
- Quick Reference Cards are curated for practical courses/programming courses.
- Springer (408 Nos) freely downloadable eBooks are shared.

- FOSSEE- Project Spoken tutorials were curated and shared with the learners for computer science courses especially for practical courses.
- SPRINGER (65 Nos) books on Data Science, R Programming, Python Programming etc were shared with learners.

SOCIS Online Support Guide

Documentation plays an important role in disseminating of the information. SOCIS also tried in this direction to create a valuable document containing all the reference links, documents etc shared with the students, RCs, LSCs, etc.. from 23rd March onwards as on date. This support guide is shared through the Facebook, Twitter and emails. As the resources are sent from day to day, altogether 3 versions of the guide were shared.

As on date the information is shared and the continuous support is going on using several different ICT interventions.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof Nageshwar Rao, Vice Chancellor, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi. These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The initial part of the article has been contributed by Dr Oum Prakash Sharma, Director, National Centre for Innovations in Distance Education; and later part on Online Support of school of Computer and Information Sciences (SOCIS) is contributed by Prof. V.V. Subrahmanyam, Director, School of Computer and Information Sciences. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributors only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.ignou.ac.in, E-mail vc@ignou.ac.in

INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT, KARACHI

Lockdown has crash-landed all educational institutions into the 21st century education paradigm with a bang. Universities have been forced to understand, adopt and implement paradigms that may have otherwise have taken at least two decades to adopt. Many universities have taken on the challenge. This roller coaster drive has enabled many of the universities to survive the 'avalanche' of digital disruption and has made even some 'elephants to dance' which a gradual more transition may have led to a gradual agonizing perish like the one witnessed by Encyclopaedia Britannica or Encyclopaedia Americana in the face of wikipedia type challenge.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

The suddenness of this transition has enabled acquisition and adoption of digital learning platforms by universities. These platforms have served as a great equalizer in bridging the North-South digital divide. Going over the webinars of Harvard Business School and other such universities, I found that the Moodle like LMS resources available to us are offering similar pedagogical activities that seem to be available to those industry leaders. They are talking about the same issues in pedagogy that our faculty are discussing using our platforms. I think the preceding observation is more true for our private sector universities as compared to the big public universities with outdated campus management systems. Moreover, we in the South don't seem to be encumbered by the resource constraints arising from the revenue models of big universities there that have a major component coming from dorms, dining halls, gyms, sports stadiums, and campus student facilities. Last but not the least, the suddenness of this transition has thrown the field wide open and our local entrepreneurs are evenly poised to develop their own technologies and platforms to rival those available in the West.

The emerging consensus is suggesting that the use of online education platforms is here to stay. These platforms provide ease of managing a large number of courses, better delegation, ease of monitoring of the classroom engagement, ease of managing Assurance of Learning (AoL), and ease of linkage with industry and alumni. These efficiencies coupled with virtual existence

during lockdown has transformed all the educational processes of universities into paper-less operations. This transformation has made universities more scalable and now offer them a tremendous opportunity for spreading their access to poor areas and even beyond their catchment region.

Online education has also unleashed out of the box thinking from faculty and students. On one hand, faculty members' creativity can be seen in the explosion of innovative ideas that they are implementing and new ways of organizing pedagogical activities. On the other hand, laggard faculty members and those just clocking in their times have been exposed. This shakeup promises a better configuration of the portfolio of our faculty members.

The bureaucratic regulators of higher education in our countries have also gone through a cultural shock. Most of their assumptions for evaluating the quality of universities have been exposed. They have gone through a radical shift in the reassessment of the underlying assumptions behind the measures of conventional quality such as the area of university campus and buildings, size of covered area per student, physical labs, secrecy of papers and examinations, size of lecture halls, etc. They have understood that there are other parameters of educational quality which they were reluctant to consider earlier, or not give them enough weightage.

Overall, I see a positive impact on the management of education, delivery of education and learning of students. There is a great potential for universities to truly become Peter Senge's 'Schools that Learn'.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. Syed Irfan Hyder, Rector of Institute of Business Management, Karachi, Pakistan. The article has been authored by Dr. Syed Irfan Hyder, Rector of Institute of Business Management, Karachi, Pakistan and has been provided for publication in this Book by Mr. C. Ramakrishna, Executive Director, Association of Management Development Institutions in South Asia (AMDISA), Hyderabad-500 046. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.iobm.edu.pk, E-mail : bjm@iobm.edu.pk.

INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC ENTERPRISE, HYDERABAD

The Institute of Public Enterprise (IPE), Hyderabad is a non-profit educational society established in 1964. It is devoted to Education, Training, Research and Consultancy for business enterprises in the public and private sector. IPE is the premier Business School at Hyderabad and is recognized as a 'Centre of Excellence' by the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR), Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, New Delhi for doctoral studies. It has also been recognized by eight universities in India for guidance of Ph.D scholars. It has developed strong linkages with industry and academic institutions and is the founder member of the Association of Indian Management Schools (AIMS) and is also the member of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Computer Society of India (CSI). It is involved in:

- ◆ Research
- ◆ Training
- ◆ Management Education
- ◆ Management Development Programmes
- ◆ Publications
- ◆ Consultancy

The disruption caused by the lockdown and the different ways that business schools managed the situation are varied. IPE took this as an opportunity to improve its operations. It took an extensive sensitization drive across both the IPE campuses.

Academic Meetings

Faculty interactions happened as frequently as possible and discussed wide range of issues including academic systems strengthening, research and publications, student's assessments, etc.

Faculty Knowledge Sharing and Gaining

IPE faculty members are quite active in knowledge accumulation by attending and participating various online courses, workshops, and seminars, etc. Our faculty were invited by various institutions as resource persons, speakers at academic and research session

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

With the COVID-19, IPE soon realised that there is an urgent need for the faculties to ‘unlearn’ some of the knowledge and skills they currently possess and quickly ‘learn’ skills required for delivering online education. The online learning behavior of participants is vastly different from their normal classroom behavior. Lack of personal interaction with the teachers and peers in a classroom can distract students’ attention leading to poor learning outcomes. Moreover, much of the learning experience in a business school also happens in peer groups and peer-to-peer interactions. Motivating and engaging students through remote interactions can be extremely challenging. Hence, the faculty has to be trained in the latest tools and techniques of online course delivery.

Learning Opportunities

Organized regular FDPs, encouraged participants to attend virtual conferences and Seminars to be updated and enhance teaching abilities.

- Faculty participated in Faculty Development Programs;
- Faculty has been trained in the latest tools and techniques of online course delivery;.
- Online workshop on ‘*How to develop a Mindset to never waste time*’. The ultimate time management course’ was conducted on January 8, 2021

Teaching Methods

Pedagogy has to be a mix of all It is one of the safe methods of education in today’s time since students do not have to meet physically in a class room. For faculty too, it works as faculty could guide from remote place. Group teaching should also be considered especially if one was to structure the programme in modular form.

Performance Management

In education sector, the deliverables remain same irrespective of location. Faculties have to teach, write, publish, conduct virtual training and also participate in bidding consulting assignments. Every faculty has their choice of areas to perform. They make choice in the beginning of year for the preference to perform. During COVID-19 scenario, not many changes have been incorporate in the performance area considering the ease in operations

online for educational feedback. Students feedback play an important role in performance of faculties.

Employee Engagement

Online weekly meetings have helped us to cross the difficult phase of COVID-19. A two-ways communication has always been the key at IPE, Hyderabad

Workforce Management and Enabling Dispersed Operations

IPE followed a staggered workforce in the initial days of spread of pandemic. Only 30% of the workforce was allowed to work at time. IPE has two campuses, thus only those people who were needed at office were asked to report at office in person with those who were needed to have login time. Systems login were made compulsory and that made the difference as every individual were doing their job. An element of trust was always for all IPE members in the IPE family as where-ever they are, work will happen.

Technology: Approach to Digital Transformation

COVID-19 has been the strongest reason for Digital Transformation and adoption across Organizations.

- Students Online feedback for the class
- Online class recordings used as a knowledge management practice at IPE.

There has been complete dependence on technology for the smooth conduct of classes at IPE. During this period, IPE has conducted all its classes every day, in the same manner as it is conducted in the more traditional way inside the campus. There has been no change in the regular timetable, and teaching and learning is continuing in the similar manner with the only change being the geographical dispersion of the students, and faculty having to rely entirely on the technology platform for conducting classes. IPE has been using its MOODLE based Learning Management System for providing blended learning, flipped classrooms, and other e-learning based assignment and assessments, and term ending examinations highly effectively. In addition to that, our faculty quickly shifted over to the Zoom platform for conducting regular classes at IPE. *IPE Issued Guidelines to Faculties for Conduct Online Class.*

Guidelines to Conduct Online Class

Establishing infrastructure to conduct the Online / Offline classes using MS Teams and Digital Pad with Styles. The very recent efforts with both in-class and online students include:

- LAN cable for the Internet (For Good Speed).
- Projector Cable (To project your screen to classroom students).
- Digital Pad Stylus.

IPE has taken recourse to introduce various digital technologies and platforms including Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom, etc.

Building Organization's Capability to Face the Challenges of COVID-19

Aggregated and standardized teaching along with distributed and customized learning is the main objective of IPE at the difficult times of COVID-19. IPE has initiated various drives using digital platform.

Alumni Connect

During the pandemic, taking advantage of the online platform, IPE organised events where an alumni panel comprising alumni from all across the globe address the current students. In such events alumni, who are in very senior positions, bring in their experiences of either setting up their own companies, or their rich and varied experience of working in multiple countries across the world. Hangout, on the other hand, is a panel discussion, where award winners in various categories from different batches during their PGDM days, share their experience of what it takes to be an award winner in IPE, and their journey post IPE. All these experienced alumni also give insights to the students about the current scenario of their industries.

Industry Connect

A PGDM course does not meet its objectives when students are not able to connect theory with practice. IPE has addressed industry connect in the following ways:

Panel Discussions: Senior industry practitioners are invited to conduct panel discussion through webinars. For these panel discussions, IPE has invited

leading senior executives from PSUs and private enterprises who share their experiences on the theme of the discussions.

Classroom Research Projects: Each of our students has completed an individual class-research project. This project is a full-fledged primary survey based research paper. Students have identified topics that are contemporary and relevant. Since they cannot go out to talk to respondents and collect data, students have been encouraged to go for online surveys.

Virtual Projects

At IPE students are encouraged to undertake virtual projects to be done from their homes. Virtual Projects are similar to internships, for which students are kept free from their classes in the second half of the day, so that they can work on the projects given by the company. These projects are for a minimum duration of 4 weeks and is in addition to the internship, which we expect our students to do early next year, should the situation improve by that time.

Guest Lectures

Guest lectures form an important part of the PGDM curriculum at IPE. They not only help students interact with industry professionals but also network with them and gain knowledge of industry best practices, developments and advances, new trends and guidance to shape their own success story. During this period, we at IPE are continuing to have our regular guest lectures using digital platform as in the same manner as in the past.

PLACEMENT

The following novel HR Process and Practices were introduced to ensure placements.

Talent Acquisition and On-boarding

Online interviews have been conducted and faculty has joined the institute online and was present during online meetings and has taken classes during the pandemic as the travel was restricted. No more physical joining matters to the institute as this has enabled the institute to have better faculty accessibility.

SOPs Created for Office Classes

As the off-line classes are scheduled to commence, IPE designed its policy for ensuring safety protocols in the classroom which has already been shared with students.

- 1) The first row of students to be seated a minimum of 6 feet away from the podium.
- 2) Faculty should stay stationary and stick to the podium and not move about inside the classroom, as that would subject them to the risk of exposure at close quarters.
- 3) Faculty to wear double masks if appropriate (double-masks have been found to significantly increase the safety of the mask-wearers).
- 4) Clear Entry and Exit procedures to be followed by both Faculty and Students, to ensure the 6 feet distance rule is followed.

A copy of the SOPs for Health, Hygiene and other safety protocols is shared with all employees, students, parents, etc.

General Instructions

- Physical distancing of at least 6 feet shall be followed.
- Use of face covers/masks is mandatory.
- Frequent hand washing with soap even when hands are not visibly dirty
- Frequent use of hand sanitizers.
- Respiratory etiquettes to be strictly followed. This involves strict practice of covering one's mouth and nose while coughing/sneezing with a tissue/handkerchief/flexed elbow and disposing of used tissues properly.
- Self-monitoring of health by all and reporting any illness at the earliest.
- Spitting shall be strictly prohibited on campus.
- Installation and use of AarogyaSetu App is advised.

Medical Camps

- Free medical camps were organised for all employees including Full time, Maintenance team, and Contractual employees etc, to screen COVID-19 cases before starting physical office and classes.
- Usage of technology has become the need of the hour to communicate with employees. IPE uses both formal and informal mechanism of

the communication. The following were introduced as a measure of technological support:

- Formal: Email
- Informal: WhatsApp group
- Progress updation group – No. of students attended the classes

Overall Learning's (Through Experiences During COVID-19)

3 BIG learnings for IPE

Learning I — Unforeseen situations can affect us but resilience is the key to manage it.

Learning II — *Changes to be appreciated as it gives us better opportunities.*
— International guest lectures have suddenly become at ease and affordable. This is certainly possible to be retained.

Learning III – *Empathy and trusting employees makes a lot of difference.*

People are usually nice, it's just the situations which makes it difficult. Empathizing and trusting employees and students in difficult times does build confidence and sense of responsibility among individuals.

SUGGESTIONS

Suggestions on making organizations future ready by reimagining the future in the background of COVID-19.

Suggestion I – Digitalisation is the key

Suggestion II – Blended learning will sustain. Classroom alone will not be of any help and is not needed. Best faculties can be accessed from anywhere and everywhere.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. R. K. Mishra, Director of Institute of Public Enterprise, Osmania University Campus, Hyderabad. The article has been contributed by Dr. R. K. Mishra, Director of Institute of Public Enterprise, Osmania University Campus, Hyderabad. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.ipeindia.org, E-mail : rkmishra@ipeindia.org

IMS UNISON UNIVERSITY, DEHRADUN

IMS Unison University in pursuance of excellence in education, has set a remarkable precedent by enhancing academic quotient through series of progressive efforts in this direction and by changing dynamics of continuous learning with a smooth transition to online mode during this unprecedented situation. When, during a pandemic, smooth conduction of online classes seemed difficult, the university has set records by establishing an accurate and regular academic delivery to students. Beyond this, when the academic fraternity was debating whether and how to conduct examinations, IUU has adopted an efficient platform for successful conduct of examination and making e-examination a ground breaking reality in the field online learning.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

E-Teaching Learning at IUU

Learning does not end at the lecture rooms alone. At IMS Unison University we are continually investing in technology and facilities to ensure that the students are able to access the high-quality education. Online learning has become saviour in these testing times of such a pandemic. In these testing circumstances due to impromptu closure, the biggest benefactors and the blessings in disguise are the online learning platforms. During the time of lockdown, University has made tremendous efforts in successfully conducting Online Classes through G-Suite. Online end-term examinations of semesters and trimesters for all our programs were conducted through Artificial Intelligence based Proctored Software.

During initial days of lockdown in the month of March, 2020, most of our faculty members were not aware of how to conduct classes online. Our students were also not clear how to absorb online learning. However, sometimes such challenges also bring many opportunities. Our faculty members who were earlier not conversant with online delivery, have since learned through our inhouse training programs and developed their competency in online delivery of learning. The key areas for success of our effective teaching-learning experience was none other than training. We had conducted three training programs in campus for all our faculty members before lockdown on 25th March, 2020 on both Google G-suite and later on Microsoft Teams. Similar programs were also conducted for all students through online mode. Also, to

reduce the anxiety among students for appearing online proctor examination, we had conducted three to five times mock test for each of our program. To ensure maximum participation and good attendance of students, we had also introduced weekly evaluation in the form of quiz, case analysis and assignments. A detailed MIS was also developed in Excel and circulated to faculty members for daily reporting and accordingly corrective measures were taken from time to time, based on the MIS. Individual students were contacted for feedback and counselled accordingly.

During COVID-19, our online courses gave students full control over their own learning, and the freedom to learn at their own speed. The most important development was that these classes, as per original class timetable did not leave any scope for idle ruminations on the COVID-19 anxiety, and focused their complete attention on the learning process. This also helped the parents in seeing the academic delivery to their children right in their presence, without any break during the lockdown. Through the feedback on individual subjects, the teachers realized that not all courses were straight way amenable for online delivery. Different efforts and methods needed to be adopted for different subjects.

The classes were conducted through online platform via. Google Classroom and Google Meet. The remaining classes after lockdown were taken up on Microsoft Teams. This also made it convenient for the faculty members to conduct classes without any distortion.

In a short span of time, Google Classroom, Google Meet and later, MS Teams have become viable platforms to manage online teaching-learning for both students and teachers.

In the initial days, we faced bandwidth issues owing to students scattered across different geographies, including remote villages and hilly areas. The university made every possible effort by aligning technical facilities to touch the lives of the students. In addition to maintaining regularity in classes, students were given online graded assignments and quizzes on weekly basis as part of their continuous evaluation process.

Despite of our all proactive decisions and possible efforts, this "forced" online learning has its issues! While learning continues, it cannot replicate the teacher-student connect and the peer-to-peer learning that happens in a face to face

classroom. There are technological options, but they cannot supplant tacit learning of physical class rooms. Also, students with dated technology may find it difficult to keep up. This is not easy for many of the students scattered across the country. Some students unfamiliar with online learning or low-income students with issues like housing and food insecurity, lack of access to Wi-Fi and the internet and lack of laptops/desktops are finding it difficult to cope.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

E-Proctored Examinations at IUU

The prime objective was to minimize the loss of academic time and enable the students to graduate on time. With this in mind, University quickly equipped itself to conduct the assessments and exams online, when due to lockdown, students were not able to come to the campus to appear for exams.

When it comes to conduct of examination, it is vital that the quality of the question paper is set in congruence to the high academic standards of the institution. To address this, the format of the question paper was drawn by external subject experts. As the mode was online, it was crucial to analyse whether an average student would be able to complete the examination within the stipulated time. For this reason, for each of the subjects, the junior lecturers of the respective subjects were asked to take the examination and analyse the difficulty level and time required. Accordingly, modifications like reducing questions for the given time were introduced. Further, each question was moderated for graded scale of difficulty and categorized in different sections of the question paper.

One of the chief concerns of the university was the poor bandwidth available to students in some remote and hilly areas. Uninterrupted internet connectivity for longer duration is a reasonable apprehension for such locations. To address this issue, the software used was customized and flexible enough to facilitate exams on desktop, laptops and even mobile phones with the lowest possible bandwidth.

After registration, each student was provided a unique ID and a link for the purpose of taking examination through AI Based Software. The student would only be able to access the paper after filling the required credentials and prescribed verifications. The software finally used was customized after

exhaustive efforts from the service providers in collaboration with the university IT team. Also, the software had other important smart features like keeping tab on new browser tabs/windows being opened, students would be able to navigate between the questions(forward and backward). Further, they can mark the questions as 'done/to-review' with set colour coding to help them hit only the questions to be reviewed when they have lesser time left. Another smart feature was also inbuilt to take care of sudden power outages/other technical issues the students might face. The student would be able to resume from the same point as the software auto-saves the content, the student need not think about keeping extra minutes to submit the answer sheet. Also, the software auto-submitted the answer sheet as soon as the allotted time was over.

The biggest challenge for the university was to foresee and overcome every possible technical issue and ensure time bound resolution of all such problems. For this purpose, the university had constituted a Technical Support Team, consisting of faculty and IT staff members, who worked round the clock to mitigate all possible contingencies that could arise during the conduct of examination. Additionally, we had identified student representatives from each batch for the purposes of maintaining effective communication, identifying problems and their redressal in the best possible way.

It was a well-planned proctored examination wherein every practice was monitored with due compliance to regulations set by university norms. Fairness, an indispensable parameter, was ensured during the examination by setting of question papers by external experts of the subjects. All answer sheets were mandatorily run through Anti-plagiarism Software – Turnitin. The evaluation was done only after satisfactory report of anti-plagiarism software.

The students were provided with supplementary instructions, the 'dos and don'ts' of the examination, detailed guidelines for taking Online examination, general instructions as well as special Instructions for mobile users making the online examination as examinee friendly as possible. Faculty members created small videos on necessary steps to be followed during examinations.

Training and mock drills of faculty from both, the standpoint of examination as well as evaluation was conducted. There was a complete revamping of the technical facilities including desktops, software, bandwidth support, etc. so as to enable plagiarism check and evaluation of answer sheets of all the subjects of difference schools of the university.

After having conducted online classes on Google Classroom/ Meet, the university set out on its mission of taking examinations online so that our students were in no way adversely affected. And for this purpose, we had to ensure that we bring out the best balance of synergies- technology as well as due-compliance to ethical standards at par with offline paper-based examination. As we moved ahead, at every step we were faced with unforeseeable constraints and the university with its 24*7 Technical Support Team, regular mock drills with students and active support and cooperation from students turned online examinations into a reality. After having tested various platforms and their compatibilities at several bandwidths, the Mid-Term Examinations were conducted from 27th April, 2020 to 2nd May, 2020 in online mode using the software 'G-Suite for Education'. A whopping 99% of students appeared in the examination. What is remarkable is the spirit of the University! In furtherance of its goal of academic excellence, the pattern of question was kept unchanged. The nature of question paper was still subjective with modifications to equip itself to the new platform and suit the requirements of different subject areas of different schools of studies. To ensure sanctity of the Mid Term Examinations, the answers submitted by the students were run through URKUND plagiarism software, on a pilot basis.

The End-Term Examinations were conducted from 1st June, 2020 to 10th June 2020 in online mode. These examinations being the most crucial examinations for the entire semester required an even better platform to be conducted on and therefore a state-of-the-art software that was Artificial Intelligence enabled examination software with proctorial features. This software was provided by a trusted, reputed software agency with a pan-India presence. The software made sure that the students did not have any kind of disadvantage due to sudden power outages, network/internet related issues as they would be able to start the examination from the same point and would be given extra-time as deemed fit. Over five mock tests were conducted to familiarise the students with the pattern of the questions and test the online platform, as it was a big transition for them as well. A dedicated Examination Help Line was set up, manned by faculty and IT staff, to help students before and during the examination for any problem, whether related to the question paper or IT and technical issues. Close to 100 per cent students appeared for the examinations. The question paper was a subjective with application-based questions. For maintaining quality, they were set by internal faculty as well as

external subject experts. The end term examination answer books were run through anti-plagiarism software Turnitin.

The students and faculty both were satisfied with the manner in which the examinations were conducted. Again, the conduct of online examination was a source of continuous learning for the teachers as well and it uncovered scope for improvement in both conduct and technical issues. Based on the cooperation of and support of all stakeholders, IMS Unison University was able to complete its Academic Session 2019-20 on time and also start the Academic Session 2020-21 on time.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. Gautam Sinha, Vice Chancellor of IMS Unison University, Dehradun-248 001 (UK). The article has been contributed by Prof. Gautam Sinha, Vice Chancellor of IMS Unison University, Dehradun. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.iihmr.edu.in, E-mail : orsrao.icfai@gmail.com

JAGAN NATH UNIVERSITY, JHAJJAR

COVID-19 pandemic, a highly infectious disease caused by new virus, has had an increasing impact on Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) around the world. Corona virus has significantly disrupted the higher education sector, which is crucial determinant of country's economic future. It is likely to have an impact on country's competitiveness and their ability to foster advanced skills and development. The bigger concern on everybody's mind today is the effect of the disease on the employment rate. Recently, graduating students fearing jobs crunch and withdrawal of offers by corporate. As per the CMIE estimates, the unemployment rate shot up from 8.4% in the mid-March to 23% in April and urban unemployment rate to 30.9%.

Since the pandemic has transferred the old chalk-talk teaching model to one driven by technology, this disruption is pushing HEIs to work out on e-learning solutions, A large number of open source digital learning solutions and learning management software need to be adopted so that faculty can conduct teaching online. There are number of issues involved in it, which need to be handled strategically at national and institutional levels.

COVID-19 pandemic has posed many serious challenges for HEIs in delivery of their programs. Since March, 2020, when it was almost the mid of the current semester, the conduct of classes and other academic activities in institutions have been disrupted due to announcement of lockdowns and shutdown of institutions. To mitigate the loss of studies, the HEIs adopted various short-terms measures by way of organising online classes, holding webinars and student interactions online, using digital resource materials, student assignments, online assessments of performance, etc. But, all these steps were taken hurriedly as the outbreak of the pandemic was so sudden that it did not provide any preparatory time and put to test the abilities of faculty, students and administration to adjust to the new situation. Every institution tried its best, keeping in view the resources available and other local realities, to mitigate the academic loss while following the UGC, State Government and Local Authorities guidelines with regard to health safety and social distancing.

For HEIs perhaps it was the first and the most challenging phase ever experienced earlier. Since the nature of virus and realities of COVID-19 pandemic were quite different from crises the world experienced previously, like financial crisis of 2008, which were more related to business and not health, but this time coronavirus threatened the life of people and therefore its solution required different strategies to deal with it.

COVID-19 has affected all the countries of the world whether rich or poor, socialistic or capitalistic and big or small as well as all the sectors of the economy including higher education. IMF report says that there is going to be a drastic drop in economic activities in the world and the pain of this pandemic is going to be more serious and widespread as compared to any previous world crisis. The disruption caused could potentially de-globalize the world at a faster pace as its origin is perceived to be one of the negative consequences of globalization. In view of all this, the HEIs need to adopt both short-term and long term innovative strategies to mitigate coronavirus negative effects and protect students' academic interests during this period.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Initiatives at the University

The University adopted a multi-pronged strategy to mitigate the effect of corona on delivery of education, which includes online classes, students' webinars, digital academic resources, students' assignments, online assessment tests, student feedback system and online End-term examinations. For conducting online classes open softwares like zoom, goggle meet, goggle classes, micro soft team, etc. were used by the faculty and classes were held regularly as per the time table. Since the semester duration was extended, some of the faculty members even conducted revision classes to ensure effective learning by students. Every department of the University organized atleast one webinar on emerging issues in the discipline which was attended by all the students and faculty, in addition to outside participants. Every teacher shared the study material with the students as per the syllabus. The students also submitted assignments online and appeared in assessment tests as part of the internal assessment evaluation. Towards the end of the semester students' feedback on content delivery and general experiences on online education was collected. Though the students gave positive feedback about coverage of syllabi, but they also shared their experiences about some difficulties in respect of access to technology and digital infrastructure availability. In view of the above experiences the various issues and future strategies for effective online education are discussed under the haedline 'some suggestions'.

Teaching and Learning

During COVID-19, teaching and learning process has continued in a distance mode using online technologies. Switching to online classes revealed several challenges that majority institutions are facing right now. These issues include

access to internet, internet speed and connections, and absence of hardware facilities that support online teaching and learning. Further, many teachers and students have some psychological resistance and not all staff members were prepared for switching to online mode of curriculum delivery. To overcome all these difficulties, institutions is strengthening digital infrastructure and training faculty in online pedagogy as well as developing sufficient learning material. Student digital support system also needs to be strengthened. Jagan Nath University has taken initiatives to support effective teaching learning process.

Examinations

Face to face examinations are not possible in the present situation. The UGC has issued detailed guidelines regarding the conduct of online examinations. All the universities need to take immediate steps to conduct online examinations. Since COVID-19 has impacted administrative procedure also, admission process for next session need to be initiated through online applications. Prospective students need to be supported in the process of submission of applications and final admissions. Further, the student support system needs to be strengthened for placements of graduating students to navigate the uncertainties of job market. JNUB has already initiated for the conduct of online examinations and admissions.

Faculty and Supporting Staff

There are many issues with the staff as they were required to work from home during this period. JNUB ensured that the services of all the staff remain intact. There are regular meetings with staff to ensure their engagements. The Deans and Head of Departments (HoDs) have been delegated powers to take all routine decisions as they know best the students problems and the complexities of day to day operations.

Infrastructure

As the demand for improved digital infrastructure has increased for online and blended learning models, the University has ensured to provide better connectivity and equipments to the faculty. However, the students are required to make their own arrangements. The experience shows that some steps are needed to be taken at national level also to strengthen the overall availability of digital infrastructure to ensure effective conduct of online education throughout the country for ensuring equity and access to all.

Financing

Institutional financing and students financing support system are also two important areas which need attention at national level because COVID-19 is going to affect the economy and availability of funds for higher education, which is expected to shrink further. Self financing institutions will suffer more during this phase because they mainly depend upon student fees as source of their revenue. Alternative sources of financing the higher education need to be explored. Students will also feel financial impact of the crisis, which could affect admissions in institutions.

Quality Assurance

Given the need of HEIs to move towards online education, one of the major challenges administration is facing is quality assurance of such education delivery. The regulating environment is not yet aligned with online learning. National Quality Assurance agencies like National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), National Board of Accreditation (NBA), etc. can play an important role in it.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, it may be said that various measures adopted by HEIs to mitigate corona effect were with short term objectives presuming that it is going to end soon. Now institutions need to work on medium term and long term strategies to deal with challenges of coronavirus and revamp systems to convert challenges into opportunities. There are certain issues which need to be handled at national level like strengthening digital infrastructure, financing of higher education and regulatory framework for quality assurance in online education. Effective online education requires student centric approach with individual attention to each student by faculty to compensate for holistic concerns which are missing due to social distancing.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. H L Verma, Vice Chancellor of Jagan Nath University, Jhajjar-124507 (Haryana). The article has been contributed by Prof. H L Verma, Vice Chancellor of Jagan Nath University, Jhajjar, Haryana. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributors only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.jagannathuniversityncr.ac.in, E-mail : vc@jagannathuniversityncr.ac.in

JAIN UNIVERSITY, BENGALURU

(DEEMED-TO-BE UNIVERSITY)

COVID-19 pandemic brought about an unprecedented impact on the lives and institutions worldwide. The nature of impact that it created has both short and long term implications to the mission of universities and this very challenge had been generating creative responses to overcome the crisis and to minimise its impact. Through this paper, JAIN (Deemed-to-be University) endeavours to share its experience of evolving multifaceted responses during the national lockdown period for continuing the learning process of students, the purposeful engagement of faculty members and progressing the research pursuits.

Strategic Dimension to the Response

Even prior to the lockdown was announced, all senior members of faculty and the topmost authorities connected with overall governance of the university began collective discussions and analysed the possible scenarios and implications of the unfolding pandemic situation to the functioning of the university. This participative process and the inspirational leadership brought about a strategic perspective and shared view of treating this unprecedented situation as also an opportunity to accelerate technological solutions and enhancing the competencies of the faculty members. This early participative process supported and guided by the top level also brought about better motivation and awareness to overcome the possible psychosocial consequences of the crisis among the faculty, the students and other stakeholders as well. Yet another perspective shared during this process pertained to the consciousness for utmost economy and coping with the economic constraints.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Educational Communications About COVID-19

At the outset, the university developed a web page for the purpose of wider communication with students, faculty and community at large to provide information relevant to prepare for and mitigate the impacts from COVID-19. The top priority was to support the health and wellbeing of the university community. This website provides answers to frequently asked questions,

as well as information about health, and other University resources. It also provided a window to view the counselling services available at Jain (Deemed-to-be University) virtual mental health platform '*Manas*' to combat stress and psychological health challenges during the COVID-19 outbreak.

COVID-19 web page of the university provided menu driven access to information in user friendly fashion. FAQ menu covered separate sections for information relevant to (i) current students, (II) prospective students, (iii) current faculty and staff, and (iv) prospective faculty and staff. The menu on CORONA Virus information provided access to relevant resources from World Health Organisation, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, National Centre for Disease Control. There is also a section on Myth busters considering information explosion in public domain on this crisis. A separate menu addressed access to various advisories and instructions from the government including the guidelines and instructions from UGC/MoE, MHA, and the state government. Emergency contact details are also included. Thus this serves as a dynamic facility for the benefit of the university community including its stake holders.

Preparations for Online Instruction on a Large Scale

Even at a stage when lockdown was being pondered over in the country as an imminent measure, the university sprang into action by the second week of March 2020, to consider the continued engagement of students under such circumstances, for minimising the impact on ongoing activities in different faculties/departments/research centres of the university.

After assessing the detailed status of various UG and PG programmes for the current semester, contingency plans were discussed among all senior members of different faculties/ centres. Under the overall guidance and direction of the Vice Chancellor and other senior officers, strategies were evolved for (i) ensuring safety, (ii) implementing the government instructions and (iii) safeguarding the interests of students and faculty. This enhanced motivation among the faculty to overcome this challenge by seeking solutions through augmented use of online technologies and collective sharing of experiences.

A participative process was also implemented for timely choice of platforms and technologies with involvement of Deans, Directors and other experts in the university and external experts in the field under the overall guidance of the

Registrar. This could ensure the balance of solutions from long and short term considerations including costs, reliability, bandwidth efficiency and flexibility for upgradation.

As regards content, all faculty members were communicated through issue of guidelines, interactive sessions, and training at departmental levels. The members of faculty started in the right earnest to adapt the curricular content to new pedagogical methods involving online/digital technologies and connect to with their students for teaching and learning as the national lockdown became a reality.

Due to this solid approach guided by the highest level of management the university could implement delivery of classes online for all programs including conduct of remedial classes for slow learners and the internal assessment tasks using 'Zoom' platform (with multiple licences). Thus virtually no gap in the student-learning process had resulted since the suspension of classes initially by the university from 14th to 28th March, 2020 and subsequently during national lockdown.

During the period beginning 23rd March, 2020 to 15th of May, 2020, 11535 classes were held for different courses including UG, PG and Ph D/M Phil related courses averaging 245 classes a day. Average number of students logged per class was 58. Forty five per cent of the classes were devoted to engineering and technology courses while others were distributed among the courses under the faculties of science, commerce, management, humanities and social sciences mainly.

Guidelines for Online Teaching

In order to promote teaching practices which are effective in an online environment, a document for guiding faculty members on best practices for online teaching was prepared by the Office of Communications and Human Resources. This provided detailed guidelines to faculty members on how to prepare their own space, the method of presenting an online lecture, use of online collaborative tools, tips for effective student engagement and commitment towards continuous improvement. In general, the following aspects had been emphasised:

A. Focus on the pedagogy, not just the platform

The message that the time spent now thinking about how faculty members want to teach using this technology will be time well spent.

B. Taking advantage of interactivity

Students are digital natives who already use remote technology for their meetings and gatherings. Faculty can take advantage of these possibilities.

C. An opportunity to innovate

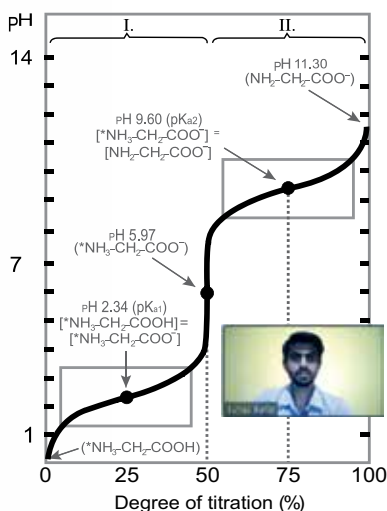
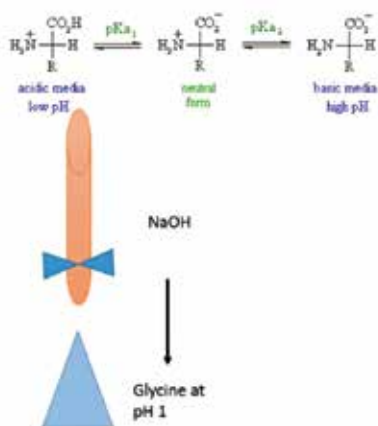
Take advantage of this time to experiment with new teaching methods and tools.

Collaborative Learning and Research

Faculty of Jain (Deemed-to-be University) have been using this disruptive lockdown phase to explore hitherto unexplored dimensions of pedagogy. In a feedback, one of the Deans remarked that he was pleasantly surprised to discover that it is possible to generate a higher order cognitive discourse with his Ph.D. students on an online platform. He further said that he had always assumed that face to face interface was a must to interact with learners on abstract topics like 'personality'.

Fig. 1 : A Screen Shot of Online Lesson in Screen Share Mode

Titration Curve



At the school of Computer Sciences and IT, the faculty members have used a mix and match approach of not only online platforms like Google Classroom, Zoom, Hangout and so on, but also of methodologies to promote interactive learning through demonstration, to replicate the learning experience in a

classroom. For instance, while making students learn about security features as part of the module on Cloud Computing, the faculty members share tools beforehand with learners and then interactively explore the security features of multiple platforms like AWS, CISCO and Microsoft during a video conference. Eventually the learner will write code and share the screen shot of the output through Google Classroom. The teachers then evaluate the output and interact with students.

Students from the School of Commerce have been learning stock investing online. They spend the first week to learn the basics of stock investing through videos. They then trade on a mock terminal provided by trakinvest.com for a period of three months. If they show four weeks of continuous trading profits, they are awarded a certificate.

Students and faculty of the Post Graduate School of Sciences (CPGS) collaborated online on a research project pertaining to COVID-19. A paper, authored by Ms. Dipti and Dr. K.V. Ramesh titled, 'Binding site analysis of potential protease inhibitors of COVID-19 using AutoDock' from the bioinformatics domain has been accepted for publication in a Web of Sciences indexed Springer Journal, 'VirusDisease' (formerly Indian Journal of Virology). As part of Springer's commitment towards sharing knowledge with the whole world about the outbreak, the research findings and the paper have been shared by them with the World Health Organisation. The Director of the School of Sciences (Centre for Post Graduate Studies) expressed her happiness that Faculty members and Research Scholars from Jain (Deemed-to-be University) have contributed their bit towards alleviation of the suffering that people from all over the world have been through in the last few months.

From the Centre of Nano Material Sciences of the university, a perspective article on 'Use of Ozone to combat Corona Virus' was prepared by Faculty through online collaboration with a scientist from Pharmacology division of the US Research Laboratory. In addition, through a concerted effort of faculty to collaborate online, a Project titled 'Development of Inexpensive Antiviral and Antibacterial Face Masks by using Conformal Coating of Cu_2O , CuO and ZnO onto the Wearable Fabrics, Polymers and 3D Carbonaceous Materials' has been submitted to the Nano mission Wing of Department of Science and Technology, Government of India.

In conclusion, the faculty and students, with support and guidance from the top leadership, have constantly innovated and found new ways of achieving outcomes through online collaboration using a repertoire of 'fit for the purpose' tools and platforms.

Societal Interface–Student and Faculty Initiatives

A significant contribution to societal interface resulted from their initial participation in awareness, training programs and later their engagements with society to spread message and supportive roles

As many as 500 students participated in the commitment pledge for safety against corona virus, a program co-sponsored by a company named Delgon technologies. Further, Janata curfew and stay at home pledge undertaken as per the guidelines of Ministry of electronics and Information Technology drew much larger participation.

Students had created two videos on Awareness to fight COVID-19. A student had directed a musical video on Shanti Mantra for calming the mind during COVID-19 crisis –which became very widely viewed video on the web. Further, they took active part in the 'Spitting Skills Campaign', Training and Awareness' joining hands with 'Narayana Health' chain of hospitals. Students and faculty have also taken training guided by UNICEF for post lockdown activities for Department of youth and sports Government of Karnataka. Many similarly got certified by Apollo Med skills in the field of awareness and prevention training. All such awareness and training sessions have resulted into students engagement into societal service such as their distribution of food and ration to the needy at metro stations in Bengaluru, which was featured in PMs *Mann ki Baat* on 26th April, 2020. These student initiatives were ably complemented by the faculty members, who have given many talks on awareness of COVID-19 and related topics in Webinars at both national and international level.

COUNSELLING AND GUIDANCE

Vishwas Centre and the Creation of Mental Health Platform MANASA

Jain Deemed-to-be University has been proactively working on helping the stakeholders (mainly the students and faculty members) to remain calm and productive during the lockdown period using technology and social

media to reach out to the needy. MANASA is the mental health platform created by the university's student guidance and counselling unit, Vishwas. This aims to help the stakeholders to cope with psycho social challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown in India. Manasa pamphlets were sent through electronic media with contact numbers of the psychologists and their area of expertise so that the needy can seek help. A 24/7 help line number was also included in the pamphlet. Ten short videos of relevant topics were made available to students during lockdown period to provide information on challenges that one faces during these situations and methods to overcome them. Videos included: Dealing with anxiety, Technology addiction, handling withdrawal symptoms, staying focussed on education, Self-care, Stress management and Leveraging emotional intelligence. Manasa caters to the mental health needs of all concerned, ensuring that during the times of lockdown and social distancing, students can be virtually connected to the expert counsellors and remain mentally healthy and strong as a sound mind in a healthy body is essential to fight the deadly virus.

Vishwasgram- Social Media Handles

Vishwas - the Student Guidance and counselling cell has always prioritised the mental health and wellbeing of its stakeholders. VISHWASGRAM is a social platform umbrella where all the campuses of Jain (Deemed-to-be University) come together to talk about the importance of Mental Wellbeing.

To promote Mental Wellness of stakeholders, VISHWASGRAM uses different social media handles like Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn to connect to the technology savvy youth. Mental health awareness, general facts about the mental wellbeing are discussion points in this platform. It provides an elaborate gallery of all events of Vishwas and notification of upcoming ventures and activities.

Videos for Different Facets of Mental Health

A segment in India Today' news channel reported a short video of Dr Uma Warriar of JAIN Deemed-to-be University on importance of Mental Health on April 22nd, 2020, as can be found in the following link: https://www.instagram.com/p/B_bru7tJpv2/?igshid=8e59hrmwdim

Further, some videos are posted on the Instagram handle of Vishwas, curated by the campus counsellors of Jain Deemed-to-be University from their homes during the lockdown which are given in Table-1.

Table-1 : Vedio Posted on Instagram

Video title	Link details
Coping strategies during COVID-19	https://www.instagram.com/tv/B_mIE8rJ9Yw/?igshid=1v5octndwusqx
Grounding strategies for stress & anxiety management	https://www.instagram.com/tv/CADMg-7ptPz/?igshid=1hj8keky2n5j5
Curbing Stress of Withdrawal during COVID-19	https://drive.google.com/open?id=1NDaA7Vd0AdyWYOqcZRtR8bNzkNYYDCRc
Reduce Gadget Addiction during COVID-19	https://www.instagram.com/tv/B_XnBIIJ0g_/?igshid=1mr3cv9uwuvha
Keeping yourself motivated and focused during a global pandemic	https://www.instagram.com/tv/CADReHHjeJK/?igshid=14n6drgn3m5cu
How to safeguard your mental health during quarantine	https://www.instagram.com/tv/CADNCueAkFP/?igshid=83n2mgad9252
Coping strategies during COVID-19	https://www.instagram.com/tv/B_VZtzHpS0_/?igshid=fbaobrg34zbw
“Why is it important to take care of ourselves, why not start now in this quarantine, we have time and mental space?”	https://www.instagram.com/tv/CADYTxNj1d1/?igshid=101cceku6argr
Stress Management COVID-19	https://www.instagram.com/tv/CADYquzpOhA/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Poster Activity

During these tough times of adjusting to the new norms created by the lockdown, positive affirmation can make a difference in one's life. Realising the potential of positive affirmation, the digital mental health platform of Vishwas-Manasa created a digital collage of positive affirmations, contributed by all the campus counsellors of JU- Vishwas .This activity was initiated to promote mental wellbeing during COVID-19. Team Vishwas came up with an idea of making a digital collage of positive affirmations and activities that could help

in making the lockdown period less stressful. The poster consisted of 10 ideas/affirmations students can follow during COVID-19 to handle the situation in a better way and keep themselves calm and mentally healthy. The details can be seen by following the link below. https://www.instagram.com/p/B_wVfg_pWDt/?igshid=11u4cmhn45e1

Psycho-educative Session on Stress and Anxiety Management

A Psycho-educative session was conducted by a campus counsellor on the 5th of May, via an online platform, with the objective of providing the students with the ability to manage the stress and anxiety that they might be facing during this global pandemic. The interactive session involved the participants in engaging activities that helped in understanding their feelings of stress and anxiety, locate its causes and find effective and simple methods to handle them.

Vishwas - 30 Day Mental Wellbeing Challenge: 11th May, 2020

Social media challenges have also been in the centre amidst the COVID-19 lockdown quarantine. Interesting and healthy challenges like drinkingwater challenge, workout challenge and numerous other challenges where focus on physical health and leisure are constantly seen on TV channels and social media platforms. Taking a cue from this, a 30 days mental health challenge was kick started by Manasa. The benefits accrued from the 30 days challenge is two-fold:

a) Individuals tend to perform a task with ease when it is broken down into Specific, Manageable, Attainable, Realistic and Time bound steps (SMART).

b) It is scientifically proven that when a task is performed consistently for 21 days it becomes a habit. Hence, members for Manasa – Vishwas brainstormed to develop a set of simple yet effective tasks and carefully scrutinised 30 enjoyable tasks that would make the stakeholders calmer, happier and give a sense of productivity. Further, it was circulated to the Centre heads through Manasa's virtual platforms. The details can be accessed through the link that follows.

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CAArPLaJ4PS/?igshid=pfvaalbq6iuf>

Research Projects Relevant to COVID Environment – In Wellness and Behavioural Sciences Area

The fact that research is the future for any academic institution progress and sustainability is well acknowledged at the Counselling unit of the university. Research is a tool that can be leveraged for knowledge building and sharing, efficient learning, understanding new issues and challenges and exploring

possible solutions for the same. The counsellors of Vishwas are encouraged to do research during the lockdown period to come up with useful research finding that helps the university to function better with respect to mental health of the stakeholders as well as general public. Topics of research are identified by the counsellors of Vishwas, vetted by chief counsellor for the relevance and usefulness of the research output. Research Guidance and handholding are done to help the counsellors use different research methodologies to explore the topic of their choice. The following are some of the current research topics that are at varying stages of completion. Table-2 summarises the topics and themes of research.

Table-2 : Research Studies Under Process

Research Title	Research faculty	Remarks
Role of Emotional Intelligence to foster learning and development in Higher Education Institution's (HEI) during COVID-19	Dr Uma Warriar	Results under review for publication. Highly relevant in the context of OBE.
Leveraging Mindfulness to combat Organizational Role Stress- An Indian perspective	Dr Uma Warriar	Paper submitted and under review. Relevant for improved stress coping
Leveraging Emotional intelligence in Computer Mediated communication during and post COVID-19 era - An exploration	Dr Uma Warriar	Ongoing research
Identity Crisis in Massively Multi-player Online Role Playing Gamers (MMORPG)	Pallavi Prahlad	Ongoing research on addiction behaviour to Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Games in COVID constrained environment.
Dealing with examination anxiety with Emotional intelligence as coping mechanism.	Manaswini.M	Ongoing research
Moderating effects of gender on internet addiction and psychological well-being of Scholars of HEI-A conceptual study	Jeba Shanthilin	Ongoing study
Effect of emotional labour on job satisfaction and turnover intention	Vaishnavi	Ongoing study on aircraft crew
Do next generation engineers learn differently?	Midhun	Ongoing study to assess preferred learning style

Webinars Involving Industry

Amidst the Lockdown, the university had been able to continue engagement industry through Online Webinars and Virtual Roundtable Conferences. These events were attended by the Students, some of their parents and also external stakeholders. These events were promoted through our university's web and social media channels to raise awareness on various topics including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and how one should be prepared. The university had organized over 20 Webinars and cumulative participation exceeding several thousands of student community and faculty. Table-3 follows provides information on the topics and the affiliation of experts from industry.

Table-3 : Topics and Affiliation of Experts

Date	Topic	Industry associated
16.04.2020	Campus preparedness for campus placements	Wipro
20.04.2020	Talent in Uberised World	Inspirage
23.04.2020	“ Decoding the economics in COVID-19, an era of new finance transformation “	Accenture
24.04.2020	Civil services as a Career	Government of India
28.04.2020	Jobs vs Higher Education vs Entrepreneurship	TALERANG
01.05.2020	Life after COVID - Future world	Greenlam Industries Limited
04.05.2020	IT Skills of the Future	Corbus
05.05.2020	To be future ready - The TCS way!!	Tata Consultancy Services
06.05.2020	career opportunity post COVID-19	Wipro
07.05.2020	how COVID-19 will be impact people practice in organisation	berkadia(Berkshire hathway)
08.05.2020	“AI – Creating a Paradigm shift”	Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India LLP
09.05.2020	Employment vs Employability	Mazars – Transformation, Automation & Outsourcing
09.05.2020	Impact of COVID-19 on IT Sector and the way forward	Cognizant Technology Solutions

Date	Topic	Industry associated
11.05.2020	Advantages of learning an additional foreign language	Inlingua
12.05.2020	the impact of COVID-19 on retail and employee	PUMA RETAIL
13.05.2020	Billion people Impacted through Innovation	Azooka life sciences
14.05.2020	Developing the Art of Focusing in these Distracting Times	Loangini
12.05.2020	NLP (Neuro-Linguistic programming)	Freelancer
15.05.2020	Clinical Research, Trials on COVID-19 & Healthcare Lifestyle.	Symetric
16.05.2020	The intelligent automation revolution	Genpact Digital
18.05.2020	Roadmap to your Masters Abroad	inspiruseducation
19.05.2020	Career prospects and skills required for Industry	Biocon

Personality and Skill Development

Recognising the need for reinforcing the skill development aspects, the university organized about 30 hours of Online Personality Development Training Programmes for the pre-final year students of the University. 3000 students had been undergoing training program where 65 industry experts are delivering programs through online classroom mode. The programs focus on a variety of skills demanded in contemporary environment industry, business as well as other organisations. The University has also been proactive in its outreach to the recruiter community to motivate them to organize virtual interviews for campus placements and internships. The placement cell has been organising online sessions with the students for orienting them on virtual interviews. Notwithstanding a very challenging environment for placements, the university has accomplished a substantial placement offers for students prior to the national lockdown and has been working with the corporates for on boarding the placed students on completion of the final semester examinations. During the pandemic, the MBA Students were also encouraged to take up virtual internships. Twenty five companies had come forward with 140 offers for internships with online engagements. This trend is further likely to grow.

PREPARING FOR POST LOCKDOWN ENVIRONMENT

Since the post lockdown environment is going to be equally challenging if not more, the university is rapidly progressing to ensure continuity of academic, research and essential extension activities through short, medium and long term road maps as well as Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) These address particularly the challenges of extensive sanitisation of spaces on daily basis, sanitary booths and checks for humans, physical distancing in the campuses, staggering the presence of student groups, blended and online instruction coupled with face to face instruction, new guidelines on student activities including projects/internships, adaptation in evaluation methods, placement challenges, new architectures of catering and hostel services, transportation related planning, healthcare/ medical emergency handling, students participation in planning and implementation measures as well as communications with parents.

In conclusion, the COVID-19 environment has brought major challenges for higher education institutions, but they also had altered the perceptions and practices of learning and research activities, involving increased use of technologies while maintaining or improving the quality of learning process. The learning and adaptation phase for the changed environment is yet to mature and will continue for considerable time. The sharing of experiences among different institutions will not only be relevant but also will motivate greater focus on outcomes relevant to the students and our society.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. N Sundararajan, Vice Chancellor of Jain (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru- 560 027 (Karnataka). The article has been contributed by Dr. N Sundararajan, Vice Chancellor of Jain (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru, Karnataka. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.jainuniversity.ac.in, E-mail : vc@jainuniversity.ac.in

JK LAKSHMIPAT UNIVERSITY, JAIPUR

Staying home is the only way, at this juncture, to stay safe and well. At JK Lakshmipat University (JKLU), this *mantra* has been implemented in letter and spirit. Without, in any way, compromising on 'quality', JKLU has continued with its academic activity-mix, particularly its 'teaching-learning process' across all its programs, offered by its Institute of Management, Institute of Engineering & Technology and the recently established Institute of Design.

Assessing the onset of an extraordinary situation, and following government advisories, all on-campus academic and co-curricular activities were suspended on March 14, 2020, (initially), advising the resident students to return to (and reach) their homes by March 17, 2020. Students were advised to use the time for revision, assignment completion and doubt clarification with their faculty members through online interactions and faculty were asked to meaningfully engage with their students similarly. Knowing Students, Faculty, the IT infrastructure in place and its access the faculty and students could have from their residences, JKLU's faculty started online interaction with students from as early as 16, March. Re-assessing the situation, post the announcement of the national lockdown, and in keeping with its commitment to minimize the impact of COVID-19, the university leadership decided to continue with online teaching in all the courses.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Today, all students are safe at their residences and teaching and non-teaching staff are operating tirelessly under WFH norms. Operating from home, faculty have come out with innovative ways to deliver content to students in a very engaging and impactful manner. Faculty are now working on fine-tuning assessment and evaluation mechanisms.

As part of the master plan of the University, the JKLU campus has been fully Wi-fi enabled with high-speed Internet connectivity from day one. This forethought is now immensely facilitating faculty and staff residing on campus to rise to the occasion and keep on performing amidst present situation in WFH mode. Campus life at JKLU is totally safe, secure and serene with round-the-clock support from administration.

JKLU stays committed to minimize the impact of COVID-19 like situations on its activity-mix. While, Faculty are richly engaged on their academic (teaching/research) agenda, Technical (Computing & Learning Resource) staff are busy in providing uninterrupted support to the faculty and Administration is busy in keeping life at campus safe. Career Services Division (CSD) of the University is keeping both employers and students (on one to one basis) constantly engaged to ensure that jobs, practice schools, and internships of recently placed (but not yet on boarded) students are protected, convincing some companies to onboard students online during the lockdown period.

The Chancellor and Vice Chancellor recently had a two and half hour zoom review meeting with all faculty members across the three Institutions of the University and the experiences shared by all the faculty members were very encouraging. Faculty's admission that they themselves had come a long way and become more proficient and confident on this mode of delivery from their first online session on March 16. Response from some of the students and their parents/guardians was luke-warm to begin with, citing network access issues and home disturbances as the reasons. However, once the sessions got going, with some interactions, in between, with such students and parents/guardians, the response has now really been quite encouraging and motivating for us to continue with online teaching, with greater thrust and impetus. Regular feedback interaction with students on their involvement and responsiveness (over a period of now almost four weeks) both faculty as well as students are now looking ahead on this mode of teaching-learning as a new normal with a great sense of satisfaction and enthusiasm, which shows through their almost 100% attendance. Upskilling of all faculty and staff through a series of video conferencing sessions by experts from their respective fields has helped in minimizing the disruption to the teaching-learning process. Faculty members are better prepared and realizing that online teaching is here to stay, have already started incorporating and integrating online components in their scheme of things.

Having now (at the time of writing this piece) conducted nearly 800 online teaching sessions, across all subjects, with amazing response from students and faculty alike, and then having received requests from several institute heads, JKLU's academic leadership conducted a zoom session for them to share its online teaching experience with them. Sharing the JKLU experience, the author

recently delivered a well-received webinar on 'Getting Prepared for a New Normal' which was requested and hosted by MIT - WPU, Pune.

Online Master Classes, Industry Luminary Lecture Series as well as *JKLU Signature Session Series* by eminent academics and professionals from the country and abroad have been introduced to augment online teaching-learning process at the University. The way the faculty and academic leadership at JKLU have learnt and come out with innovative ways of delivering the content, ensuring student presence, interest and engagement in the online teaching sessions, giving and evaluating assignments, quizzes, and exams, and simultaneously students overcoming issues like network access, etc, has really been phenomenal. All these approaches have ensured the most minimal impact on regular class-room teaching-learning process without compromising on quality.

As per the Vice Chancellor of JKLU, Dr R L Raina, "While, personally, I believe that there is no substitute to the regular classroom teaching-learning process, particularly in some subjects and courses, there can be a robust support to it. This online mode of delivery is increasingly getting embedded in our teaching-learning process, going forward as the New Norm, whether COVID-19 or not. Online teaching is here to stay."

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr R L Raina, Vice Chancellor of J K Lakshmi Pat University, Jaipur-302026 (Rajasthan). The article has been contributed by Dr R L Raina, Vice Chancellor of J K Lakshmi Pat University, Jaipur, Rajasthan. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.jklu.edu.in, E-mail : vc@jklu.edu.in

KALASALINGAM ACADEMY OF RESEARCH AND EDUCATION, KRISHNANKOIL

Throughout the world, the coronavirus pandemic has changed the entire scenario of education, giving a glimpse how future of education would change in the short and long run. On one side, this pandemic has created an apparent inconvenience in making things physically inaccessible to all the stakeholders, but on the other hand, it has also prompted exploring newer ways of innovation in education.

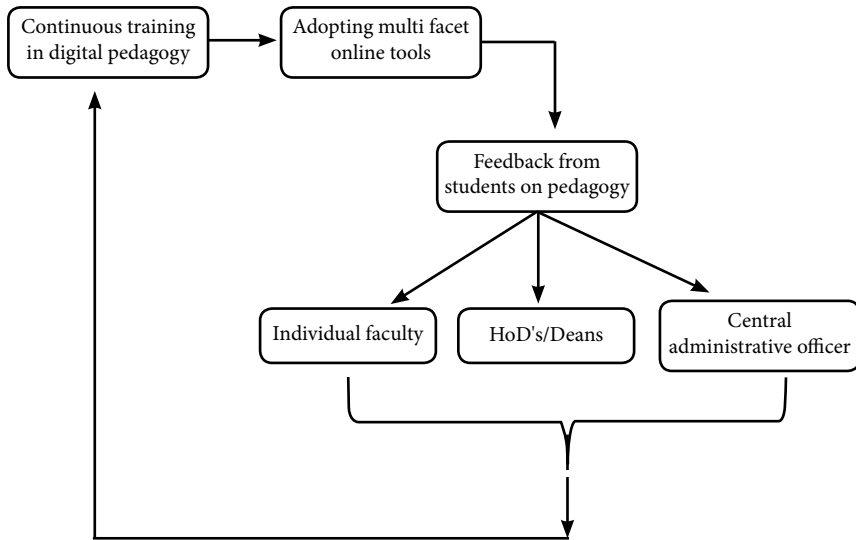
We at Kalasalingam Academy of Research and Education (KARE) have taken many initiatives towards supporting the quality of education and training to our students through the digital platform. Amidst the existing challenges in the country in terms of lack of effective mobile towers and signals in the remote areas, both our students and faculty members have very actively taken to utilize the digital platform.

GAINFULLY ENGAGING THE STUDENT COMMUNITY

Adopting and Adapting to Variety of Online Digital Tools

KARE offers a variety of coursework structure such as courses which are integrated with laboratory, courses with project, courses with practical component, etc. Even before the coronavirus turned into a pandemic, our faculty members were systematically trained to adopt digital pedagogy in their regular teaching-learning. We have already implemented Impartus Lecture Capture System effectively in all the departments which have been used more extensively during this period giving a greater impetus to use and experience the power of digital platform in education. Our faculty members have used Book Creator, Cisco WebEx, Zoom, Easy class, Google Class room, Google Form, Google Hangouts, Google Meet, Impartus, Join Me, Kahoot, Meet me, Microsoft Team, NPTEL resources, PHP editor, PHP Fiddle, Screencast, Skype, Wacom and Workplace. There is also a continuous effort to get students feedback (to individual faculty, HoDs and central level administration) on the difficulties faced and faculty members are continuously adapting to newer platforms and technologies as required to meet the needs of students. The process is demonstrated through the figure 1.

Figure-1 Process Adopted for Ensuring Student Learning During COVID-19 Lockdown



There was a highly cooperative effort by all the faculty members and all the syllabus in all the courses were effectively completed in a very time bound manner. For effective conductance of laboratory exercise, we have also extensively used the GDB Online Debugger, Matlab online/Matlab mobile, Virtual labs offered by NIT Suratkal, IIT Bombay, Amrita University, etc.

Development of In-House Virtual Labs and Animations

Our faculty members are also developing in-house virtual labs using LabVIEW platform for some of the experiments. Virtual Laboratory for core programming courses is developed to provide easy and anywhere access to C, C++, Java and Python based academic courses. The lack of hardware support and physical distancing has made students struggle in learning hands-on laboratory courses. Keeping this in mind, we started the provision to take this learning objective online. Since the least compactable device that the students can use is a Smart Mobile phone with internet, the learning platform is designed for device portability. The same platform can be accessed from Mobile, Tablet or Personal Computers/Laptops.

C, C++, Java and Python compilers are linked with this platform where students can do laboratory exercises for the courses which requires these

compilers. The server is provided with enough space to accommodate all the programs done by the students. They have the access to view their history of programs and the outcome. The platform not only facilitate compilation, but also the same can be used for conducting academic examinations. Two modes of operation is available in this platform. The first, the students normal practice mode where students will do their exercises. This mode is not restricted to any time limit or not locked for copy/paste. The second mode is examination mode where students will be assigned random questions uploaded by the instructors. The exam time can be configured, where students have to login on the particular time and the session will automatically close once the exam time exceed. During the examination, students are not allowed to copy/paste any content to the platform to ensure the genuineness of examination. The individual reports can be downloaded by the instructors.

Our faculty members also used Doodly (a program for creating whiteboard videos through a drag-and-drop interface) which is perfectly suitable for engineering classroom and online lecturing.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Adopting Online Tools

Our faculty members used online tools such as Book creator, Easy class, Flashcard Quiz using Zoom, Google Class room, Google form, Hot potatoes, Kahoot, Moodle, Piazza, Quiziz, QuizStar, testmoz, etc. for completing all the internal assessments for their courses. Student projects reviews are conducted as per the schedule through Zoom meeting. Students' seminars and other reviews as required in a given course are all completed as per fixed schedule.

Development of In-House Platform

For Sessional Examination-2 (a part of continuous evaluation system), we utilized the services of a third party viz., Campus Connection. For Sessional Examination-3, we have resorted to our own product development and testing.

Our faculty used the in-house developed software platform with the Controller of Examination Office to create 375 Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) per course in a very short time period of less than a week.

ONLINE PLACEMENTS

Multi-Dimensional Placement Training Programmes

Training and Placement Office of KARE is leaving no stone unturned to keep the students improve the placement prospects during the lockdown. Our main focus was on intense placement skill training for the students harnessing the digital platform to the fullest extent.

Through M/s Smart Training Resources, 15 sets of Aptitude, Logical Analysis and Reasoning technique tests were conducted for preparing our students for placements and the analysis report of their performance was obtained. A 30 days of free webinar was conducted by M/s Innovative Services on C Programming and Data Structures. About 450 of our circuit branch students have made use of the sessions online. We had scheduled the webinar between 01.04.2020 to 30.04.2020. There was an overwhelming response from our students. Certification will be given to students who have successfully qualified in these training sessions by M/s Innovative Services.

M/s Tata Consultancy Services had initiated Code Vita to spot the young coding talent among the freshers. Our students have actively participated in this event. In this regard we have also scheduled TCS Ninja full module test by Connect Training. It is the initiative of NASSCOM Skill initiatives. We have conducted Mock Tests for TCS, Accenture, Capgemini, IBM, Hexaware, Deloitte through Placement Season .

Our students and many of our KARE faculty members have attended the Infosys Live webinar by Mr.Sujith Kumar, AVP & HR Business leader, Infosys Limited organized by NASSCOM. This webinar helped the students to know about online recruitment process, interview shortcuts and latest software to upgrade their skills for meeting the industrial requirements, besides helping them to recognize to keep themselves abreast of the latest technologies, the importance of body language required for the virtual interview and other important requirements like judicious usage of laptops during the interview.

We are also conducting Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence Training workshop for our Pre-final year students by M/s Infoziant.

Apart from this, active initiatives are being taken to promote campus recruitment through online mode. M/s Parle Agro and M/s ABS Fruits have selected 17 of our students very recently. Besides this, the Training and Placement

Office of KARE is regularly convening meeting with top level recruiters with a aim to offer 100% placement offer to all of our students.

Educational Partnership with IUCEE

With our institutional level collaboration with Indo Universal Collaboration for Engineering Education (IUCEE), KARE is offering special training programmes to selected students through the online platform. More specifically, our students are participating in the Students Leadership Programme offered by IUCEE wherein our students are directly interacting with the international experts on the Sustainable Development Goal of the UN, and are working in team with others to develop leadership skills while solving some real time community problem. These leadership skills are very vital for the students to face the placement interviews as well as meet the challenges of professional career once they are into job.

The training program is organized every Friday through webinars wherein weekly assignments are given both individually and as group. At the end of the sequence of webinar sessions, students have to work on real time project as a team.

CONCLUSION

The century-old lecture based system of teaching is prevailing our educational institutions. While globally institutions have adopted digital mode of teaching and learning very actively, the pace has remained very slow as far India is concerned. However, the present crisis created by COVID-19 has become a catalyst to search for and adopt innovative solutions in a relatively short period of time. We at KARE are committed to the academic quality and are actively developing and adopting innovative methods to use these technologies not only during the present crisis but also for integrating them permanently into the system.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof Nagraj Ramrao, Vice Chancellor of Kalasalingam Academy of Research and Education, Krishnankoil, Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu-626126. These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Prof Nagraj Ramrao, Vice Chancellor of Kalasalingam Academy of Research and Education, Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.kalasalingam.ac.in, E-mail: vc@klu.ac.in

KAVAYITRI BAHINABAI CHAUDHARI NORTH MAHARASHTRA UNIVERSITY, JALGAON

Kavayitri Bahinabai Chaudhari North Maharashtra University has initiated different activities during Corona Pandemic lockdown period to retain the academic interest of the students and also focused on health care, mind stability and stress management during this period. The activities undertaken for the students during the lockdown period are presented here.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

The academic activities undertaken for the students during the lockdown period are listed as below:

- Training workshops on 'Google Classroom' for students and teachers are being organized.
- Nearly, 13000 MCQs on various subjects taught at PG level are configured in Moodle-the open source software.
- Faculty members from campus are motivated for delivering video lectures since the starting of lockdown. Till date 30 video lectures on various subjects have been recorded and uploaded through Moodle based Learning Management System (LMS) on university website.
- E-learning initiatives like NMEICT, SWAYAM, MOOC, INFLIBNET, Shodhganga, Shodhsindhu, Shodhgangotri, NPTEL etc were thoroughly used. Lectures are also configured in LMS along with PPTs on various subjects by the teachers.
- The e-resources of the university are also configured in LMS.
- University IQAC has intimated to nearly 1600 students of PG programs through mail (17.03.2020) on the campus, regarding launch of LMS on university official portal (www.nmu.ac.in) with already allotted secured login to the students and teachers.
- Teachers had recorded their lectures using resources available at home like Mobile, web cam, Laptop, etc. and same lectures are made available on LMS. Besides, teachers are also conducting online lectures of PG students and completing the curriculum.

- The teachers are providing study material, PPTs, assignments and conducting quiz tests, short tests, students seminar online with the help of Google Classroom, Zoom, etc. and teachers are imparting instructions to the students on regular basis so as to upkeep the academic interest.
- Personal counseling sessions are organized by the teachers through Google Classroom during this lockdown period.
- The teachers are also intimated to make use of remote services of e-books, study components like services made available exclusively during Corona crisis period by Springer, Digital Libraries, INFLIBNET, UGC etc. In this regard, teachers are also taking efforts to update their study materials.
- **Counselling Helpline for Students:** The university has established COVID-19 help desk cell on 9th May, 2020 in the university and addressing to resolve the doubts of students regarding examinations related work such as filling up of examination forms, conduct of examination, declaration of results, etc., pending redressal cases (because of pandemic situation), syllabus for examinations, safety during examinations etc. This cell is functioning with seven faculty members for counselling to the students. Up to 21st May, 2020 the cell answered to 473 phone calls and 187 emails of students regarding examinations. This cell will work for students counselling till the lockdown is revoked.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

In addition to the above activities, the NSS Department of the University has undertaken various quality activities with the help of 15000 student volunteers through 97 NSS Units of the affiliated Colleges from three district, Jalgaon, Dhule and Nandurbar during the lockdown period which is briefly summarized below:

- The list of NSS Volunteers from 97 NSS Units of affiliated colleges indicating collegewise NSS Program officers along with contact details and strength of each NSS Unit from 3 districts have been prepared. The supportive hand NSS student volunteers from Jalgaon, Dhule and Nandurbar (7000, 4500 and 2300, respectively), district coordinators and regional coordinators were provided to the Collectorate Office of Jalgaon, Dhule and Nandurbar, respectively.

- The NSS Unit has encouraged end-users to download 'Arogya Setu App' (Number-3324), registered to iGOT health Module (679) and Blood Donations (172)
- The NSS Unit has also prepared and distributed Face Masks, Sanitizers, etc. to around 2315 individuals. Further, the volunteers extended assistance as a 'Police Mitra' (365) and assisting in distribution of essential ration related goods (8963 individuals), including, Grocery items (9441 individuals), and distributed medicine and provided health related services to about 4508 individuals.
- The NSS Unit has extended assistance with the help of 8881 student volunteers for sanitization/fumigation/spraying of premises, about 997 student volunteers provided assistance to the local administration, conducted Health awareness through social media and contributed an amount of Rs.1,80,881/- towards PM Care and CM funds. Besides, each District NSS Unit has undertaken a task to prepare list of possible Blood Group donors to the District Blood Bank Units. In addition, the District NSS Units with 15,530 volunteers are intimated to adopt 10 families each from respective villages and provided online services regarding Banking, counseling, and distribution of ration items, sanitizers and vegetables.
- An amount of Rs. 10.91 Lakhs has been contributed by employees of this University from salary (One day) towards 'Chief Ministers Fund for COVID-19'.
- Isolation Centres are functional at 04 colleges: (1) Arts, Science College Dharangaon, (2) Arts Science College, Shendurni (3) Iqra College, Mehrun, Jalgaon (4) Pratap College, Amalner. The university hostels, guest houses, etc are also made available to the Jalgaon administration.
- ***Counselling and Helpline for Senior Citizens:*** The Life Long Learning and Extension (LLLES) Section of KBCNMU, Jalgaon has extended cooperation to the needy senior citizens through the local organizations. The university has given helpline numbers to contact in any requirement for the senior citizens. The University Life Long Learning & Evaluation section has already a list of more than 500 senior citizens, with their details (Address & Mobile numbers).

The Life Long Learning and Extension Department of KBCNMU, Jalgaon has been already been associated with some of the local Senior Citizens Organizations, namely, 1) Bhartiya Vidya Sanshodhan Kendra, Shree Samarth Vaghdevta Mandir, Dhule; 2) Jesht Nagrik Sangh, Chopda 3) Maharashtra Jesht Nagrik Mahasangh Fescom Khandesh Pradeshik Vibhag, Dhule; 4) Shri Onkareshwar Jesht Nagrik Seva Bhavi Sanstha, Raver; 5) Dhandai Jesht Nagrik Sangh, Amalner and 6) Jesht Nagrik Sangh, Face, District Nandurbar. It is a regular activity of university since last three years. However during the period of COVID-19 outbreak special attention is given to the senior citizens from three districts under the jurisdiction of KBCNMU, Jalgaon (Jalgaon, Dhule and Nandurbar) for any kind of help and requirements.

ONLINE PLACEMENT

The university has given wide circulation to the students from affiliated colleges and university departments about circulars received from the MoE, New Delhi and AICTE, New Delhi pertinent to the online job and internship-link for getting placement as well as curricular internship to the students.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. P. P. Mahulikar, Pro-Vice Chancellor of Kavayitri Bahinabai Chaudhari North Maharashtra University, Jalgaon - 425 001(MS). These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Prof. P. P. Mahulikar, Pro-Vice Chancellor of Kavayitri Bahinabai Chaudhari North Maharashtra University, Jalgaon (MS). The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.nmu.ac.in, E-mail : pvc@nmu.ac.in, mahulikarpp@gmail.com

KAVIKULAGURU KALIDAS SANSKRIT UNIVERSITY, RAMTEK

COVID-19 Lockdown at Kavikulaguru Kalidas Sanskrit University, Ramtek started from 23rd March, 2020. Some highlights of the activities for gainfully engaging of student community during Lockdown are following:

1. All preventive measures have been taken by the University to observe lockdown.
2. The Academic Calendar of the University is prepared with all precautions.
3. All the examinations have been postponed.
4. The teaching fraternity of the university is continuing teaching work online.
5. Teachers are engaged in online activities under ICT.
6. System of work from home is strictly followed.
7. One day salary of all the employees is donated to the Chief Minister relief fund.
8. The employees have donated to the disaster relief fund of the University.
9. The university has donated Rs.10 Lacs from its general fund to the university disaster relief fund.
10. The online help desk is created by the Yoga dept to guide the public on health issues and immunity during COVID-19 and Post COVID-19 period.
11. The Yoga experts of the University and it's affiliated Yoga Institutes are guiding the society through live discussions online.
12. The yoga protocol is prepared and uploaded on the University's website.
13. NSS cell of the University with the help of its volunteers and employees is actively serving the public during the COVID-19 pandemic. Masks, food pockets, grains and necessary help is extended to needy persons.
14. Community kitchen is started in the university campus at Ramtek to provide food to Police and other volunteers engaged to control the COVID-19 pandemic situation.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. Shrinivasa Varkhedi, Vice Chancellor of Kavikulaguru Kalidas Sanskrit Vishwavidyalaya, Ramtek, Nagpur- 441106. The article has been contributed by Prof. Shrinivasa Varkhedi, Vice Chancellor of Kavikulaguru Kalidas Sanskrit Vishwavidyalaya, Ramtek, Nagpur. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.kksanskrituni.digitaluniversity.ac.in, E-mail : vc@kksu.org

MAHATMA GANDHI CENTRAL UNIVERSITY, EAST CHAMPARAN

Mahatma Gandhi Central University, East Champaran, Bihar has become a fountainhead of knowledge during these testing times. MGCU was very prompt to engage academic fraternity during closure of routine activities. The Vice Chancellor, through regular virtual meetings with the administration and faculty, has constantly given directions, which in turn ensured efficient and productive use of this lockdown period. From creating a repository of over 1000 PPTs, 40 video lectures of faculties from various departments, 24 Facebook Live Lectures by eminent scholars and academicians across the country, Mahatma Gandhi Central University is also hosting a series of live and on-demand webinars on student-centered learning, creating online community, and navigating the transition to digital learning, which is the need of the hour. All the faculty members of the university are in constant touch with their students through all the modes of digital communication. A detailed report of the activities conducted and initiatives taken by the University to protect the Academic interests of the students during COVID-19 is presented here.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

E-Vimarsh

Mahatma Gandhi Central University conducted an online lecture series by eminent speakers. The series was named- E Vimarsh. For this, the University constituted a committee comprising Prof. Pavnesh Kumar, Prof. Asheesh Shrivastava, Prof. Vikas Pareek, Shri Deepak Dinkar and Ms. Shephalika Mishra. As the first speaker, the Vice Chancellor Prof Sanjeev Kumar Sharma delivered a lecture on 'The making of Indian Constitution'. In the lecture, he spoke about the Indian Constitution. The lecture was followed by talks from other academicians on topics of general interest as well as topics from curricula of the University. The approach has worked wonders. Till date more than 40 video lectures and around 1000 power point presentations have been shared under E-Vimarsh.

E-Gyan Series

The Vice Chancellor, Prof. anjeev Kumar Sharma inaugurated the 'E-Gyan Series' on 6th May, 2020. Under 'E-Gyan Series', envisioned and organised by

the Department of Commerce, Mahatma Gandhi Central University, various online lectures were organised on a wide spectrum of topics related to the discipline of commerce and contemporary issues using Google Meet platform. Undergraduate and Postgraduate students of the Department of Commerce and Department of Management Sciences greatly benefitted from the lecture series. Research scholars of both the Departments also actively attended the online lectures.

Special Lectures

Total 27 Special Lectures were conducted. List is presented in Table -1.

Table -1: Special Lectures

S. No.	Date	Department	Topic	Guest
1.	13 th April	School of Commerce and Management Sciences	Expert Lecture on Awareness About COVID-19	Prof. Bhuminath Tripathi, IGNTU, Amarkantak Dr. Vijay Paramanik, IGNTU, Amarkantak
2.	27 th April	School of Commerce and Management Sciences	Essential Skills to Survive Post Corona Placement Challenges	Mr. Anupam Raghvanshi, Career Strategist, Mentor and Trainer
3.	18 th May	Department of English	Critical Humanities	Prof. D. Venkar Rao The English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad
4.	19 th May	Department of English	Romanticism in English Literature	Dr. Vikas Sharma CCS University, Meerut
5.	20 th May	Department of English	Contemporary Indian English Fiction: Search for Identity	Prof. Jagdish Batra O.P Jindal Global University
6.	21 st May		Literature, History and Literary Theory	Dr. Kumar Susheel Punjabi University Campus, Talwandi Sabo
7.	25 th May	Department of Political Science	India's Security Strategy for China- A Perspective	Brigadier (Retd.) Vivek Lall, Sena Medal, University of Waikato, New Zealand

S. No.	Date	Department	Topic	Guest
8.	3 rd June	School of Life Sciences	Contemporary Issues in Biosciences	Prof. Shrinivasan R. Emeritus Scientist, NRC Biotechnology, PUSA, New Delhi
9.	8 th June	School of Life Sciences	Recent Trends in Biotechnology	Prof. Bhartendu Nath Mishra, IET, Lucknow
10.	13 th June	Department of Sanskrit	Role and Opportunity for Sanskrit during Corona times related to Science, Health and Society.	Prof. Balram Singh, Boston University, USA.
11.	14 th June	Department of Sanskrit	Importance and Relevance of Geeta in today's perspective.	Shri Ashok Sharma, Senior IAS, Director- Women and Child Development, Gujarat Government.
12.	15 th June	Department of Sanskrit	Research Methodology in Languages.	Prof. R.D Sharma VC, Jammu University
13.	16 th June	Department of Sanskrit	Bhartiya Chintan Parampara aur Karmvaad.	Prof. Manoj kumar, BRA University, Muzaffarpur.
14.	17 th June	Department of Sanskrit	Relevance of Yoga and Ayurveda in present scenario.	Prof. Sudhir kumar Arya, JNU.
15.	19 th June	Department of CS and IT	University- Industry linkage	Sh Vikas Manoria Sr Solution Architect in IBM Bengaluru
16.	20 th June	Department of Social Work	Community Enagement & Institutional Social Responsibility	Prof. W.G Prasanna Kumar Chairman, Mahatma Gandhi National Council of Rural Education
17.	22 nd June	School of Life Sciences	Contemporary Issues in Biosciences An Efficient Approach to Genome Editing for Crop Improvement	Dr. Sachin Teotia Sharda University Greater Noida.

S. No.	Date	Department	Topic	Guest
18.	27 th June	Department of Botany	Emerging Trends in Plant Sciences Plant Growth and Development in Space	Prof (Dr.) Baishnab Charan Tripathi Shardha University Greater Noida.
19.	27 th June	School of Physical Sciences	E-Lecture Series	Prof. Venkatesh Singh CUSB, Gaya
	29 th June	School of Life Sciences	Post-COVID-19 Pandemic- The New Normal: A Call for Young India as Global Leaders	Prof. Amrendra N. Mishra VC, Khallkote University, Odisha
20.	1 st July	School of Physical Sciences	E-Lecture Series Recent Advancements in the Field of Physical and Mathematical Sciences	Dr. Alok Kumar Jha Department of Materials Science and Engineering Kyushu Institute of Technology, Fukuoka, Japan
21.	4 th July	Department of Bio- Technology	Listatin Process and Production of Plate to Bioreactor	Dr. Kashyap Kumar Dubey Central University of Haryana
22.	4 th July	Department of CS & IT	ETTCS2020 Data Science and Machine Learning	Prof. T.V Vijay Kumar JNU
23.	5 th July	School of Physical Sciences	E-Lecture Series Effect of Space Weather on Ionosphere	Prof. Abhay Kumar Singh BHU
24.	6 th July	School of Life Sciences	Artificial Intelligence in Healthcare	Dr. Rajesh Ugale Nagpur University
25.	7 th July	School of Physical Sciences	E-Lecture Series An Introduction to Mathematica	Dr. Rajesh Kumar Pandey BHU
26.	9 th July	School of Physical Sciences	E-Lecture Series	
27.	10 th July	Department of Botany	Emerging Trends in Plant Sciences Studying Virus Population in Plants using Modern Approaches	Prof. Virendra Kumar Baranwal Indian Agricultural Research Institute

E-Workshops: Around 6 Workshops were organized. Details are presented in Table -2.

Table-2 : E-Workshops

S. No	Date	Department	Topic	Resource Person
1.	23 rd May	Department of English	One-Day Online Workshop on Teaching-Learning through Moodle Jointly organized by SoE, MGCU and SoE, BBAU.	Dr. Madhusudan J V Dept. of Education & Education Technology School of Social Sciences, University of Hyderabad
2.	9 th June- 15 th June (Six Day Workshop)	Department of Education, Mahatma Gandhi Central Department of Education & IQAC, East Calcutta Girls' College Lake Town, Kolkata, West Bengal West Bengal State University, Barasat, Kolkata, West Bengal	One Week National Level Online Faculty Development Programme Entitled 'Paradigm Shift in Teaching-Learning Pedagogy & Scope of Research Methods in Post COVID Era' 'Introduction to Online Learning Pedagogy' 'Challenges and Transformation in online teaching learning pedagogy' 'Effective Techno Pedagogy' 'Qualitative Research & Preparing a Qualitative Research Proposal' 'Grounded Theory Design' 'Phenomenological Research' 'Content Analysis' 'Case Study Research' 'Developing Unstructured Tools for Qualitative Research' 'Art Integrated Teaching' 'Writing Qualitative Research Report' 'Mixed Method Research' 'Introduction to Quantitative Research' 'Preparing Quantitative Research Proposal' 'Writing Quantitative Research Report'	Prof. Subhas Chandra Roy Head, North East Regional Institution of Education, NCERT, Shillong. Dr. Gourav Singh SOE, IGNOU, New Delhi. Prof. Ramakanta Mohalik, Department of Education, NCERT, Bhubaneswar. Dr. Madhusudan J V University of Hyderabad. Prof. Pankaj Arora, Department of Education (CIE), University of Delhi. Dr. Abhijit Guha Ramakrishna Mission Sikshanamandir, Belur Math, Hawrah, West Bengal. Prof. J N Baliyan Central University of Jammu. Prof. Rakesh Rai Head, (A Central University, Kohima), Campus, Nagaland. Dr. Subhash Misra Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University. Prof. Anjali Bajpai Department of Education, Banaras Hindu University, UP Dr.(Mrs) Rasmi Rekha Sethy, Department of Education NCERT, Bhubaneswar. Prof. Rajendra Pal Department of Education, Central Institution of Educational Technology, NCERT, New Delhi. Prof. Kaushal Kishore, Department of Education, Central University of South Bihar. Prof. Vishal Sood Central University of Himachal Pradesh. Dr. Alok Gardia Banaras Hindu University. Dr. Sudeshna Lahiri University of Calcutta, West Bengal.

S. No	Date	Department	Topic	Resource Person
3.	11 th June	Atal Bihari Vajpayee Central Library, Mahatma Gandhi Central University	'Read Quality- Publish Quality- Write Effectively'	Mr. Pranav Shukla Senior Account Manager- South Asia, Elsevier Shrimati Sangeeta Mehta Sales Director: Books, Elsevier Mr Vishal Gupta Customer Consultant, Elsevier South Asia
4.	18 th June- 23 rd June	Department of CS & IT	One Week Workshop RCCT 2020	Prof. A.K Tripathi IIT, BHU
5.	22 nd June- 25 th June	Department of Education #MGCU	FDP on Yoga for Well-Being & Life Skills	Swami Atmapriyanandaji Maharaj Hon'ble Vice Chancellor Ramakrishna Mission Vivekananda University Belur Math Dr. Ishwar Bharadwaj Dean Faculty of Medical Science and Health Professor in Department of Yogic Sciences Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidya, Haridwar Dr. Ganesh Shankar Professor and Head (Yoga Studies) and Dean Educational Studies Dr . Harisingh Gour Central University, Sagar Prof. M.K.Sridhar Registrar S- VYASA University Bengaluru Mr. Manoj Soni University Department of Yoga Ranchi University, Ranchi Prof. T. Mrunalini Dean School of Education Osmania University, Hyderabad Dr. J.Jayachithra School of Education Algappa University Tamilnadu, India Dr. Parinita Singh University Department of Yoga Ranchi University, Ranchi Prof. K.B. Rath Professor in Education Regional Institute OF Education Ajmer, NCERT Dr. Naosekpm Nilkamal Singh Department of Yoga Manipur Central University, Manipur Mr. Sourav Nilesh University Department of Yoga Ranchi University, Ranchi
6.	22 nd June	Department of Social Work	Research in Social Sciences	Dr. S.F Chandra Shekhar Siva Sivani Institute of Management, Hyderabad Dr. M. Raghvender Sharma Osmania University, Hyderabad

Swami Vivekananda Series of Reflective Discourses for making India Self-Reliant Phase-II Public Policy Discourse-2020

The field of education may never be the same in the wake of COVID-19. In these unprecedented times all over the world, there is growing consensus, concerns and worries about the education of children and public education. In the era of neo-liberal economy public education is shrinking like anything. In the name of globalization various forces are entering in public education spaces and constantly forcing for skills or making perfect candidates who seems like they have come out of cookies, cutters and factories. Institutions are turning like factories; most of our institutions are aiming at turning students into individuals who are able to fend for themselves rather than moulding sensible, humane and citizens with civility. An important part of education, particularly higher education is to learn to ask questions and to develop the capacity for reasoned arguments and critical thinking. Postcolonial India is seriously distancing the people from policy formulation. There is a legitimizing process between manufacturing of the policy and involvement of the people in the process of manufacturing. In fact the public policies have little relevance to our contexts, and the welfare of the people. There is a wide gap between the policy makers and the peoples' needs. One the one hand, we are celebrating the so-called 'growth' and on the other hand there is a rising visible and invisible inequalities in society across the cultures. The need of the hour is, we need to ask ourselves, what inclusion is all about and what inclusion is not about in celebrating the so called growth? The present crisis of the unprecedented time has given us a space to reimagining public education, public policies, and re-examination of the intentions of the state and policy makers, official notions, concepts, methods and most importantly, how democratic the practices of institutions and how democratic the participation of people across the communities are. Keeping this view, A Public Policy Discourse-2020 titled Swami Vivekananda Series of Reflective Discourses for making India Self-Reliant Phase-II Public Policy Discourse-2020 was organized by School of Education, Mahatma Gandhi Central University in collaboration with Department of Education North-Eastern Hill University, Tura Campus, Meghalaya, School of Education and Training Central University of Tamil Nadu Thiruvavur, Tamil Nadu. The aim of this online public policy discourse was to facilitate the dialogue among the stakeholders of education about the formulation, dissemination and implementation of public policies and reimagine, redesign the whole structure

of public education in wake of COVID-19 for the wellbeing and welfare of people across communities. Details are presented in Table 3.

Table -3 : List of Lectures in Public Policy Discourse-2020

S No.	Date	Topic	Resource Person
1.	26 th June, 2020	National Public Policy Discourse on Re-imagining Public Education	<p>Prof. Kumar Suresh Professor of Educational Administration Department of Educational Administration National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), New Delhi, India</p> <p>Prof. Nagaraju Gundemeda Professor of Sociology School of Social Sciences University of Hyderabad (UoH) Hyderabad, India</p> <p>Prof. Subhas Chandra Roy Professor of Education The North East Regional Institute of Education (NERIE), NCERT Shillong, Meghalaya, India</p> <p>Prof. Amruth G. Kumar Head, Department of Education School of Education Central University of Kerala Kasaragod, Kerala, India</p>
2.	27 th June, 2020	National Public Policy Discourse on Re-emerging ICT Policies in Education	<p>Prof. Saroj Sharma Professor of Education University School of Education Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University Dwarka, New Delhi, India</p> <p>Prof. E. Ramganes The Director, Institute of Entrepreneurship and Career Development & DDU Kaushal Kendra, & Head, Department of Educational Technology, Bharathidasan University Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu, India</p> <p>Prof. Prasant Panda Head, Department of Economics Central University of Tamil Nadu Thiruvavur, Tamil Nadu, India</p> <p>Dr. Gaurav Singh School of Education Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi, India</p> <p>Dr. Madhusudhan J.V School of Social Sciences University of Hyderabad (UoH) Hyderabad, India</p>
3.	28 th June, 2020	National Public Policy Discourse on Mental Health and Well-being Policies	<p>Prof. Sujata Srivastava Faculty of Education & Psychology The M.S University of Baroda, Vadodara, India</p> <p>Prof. S. Kadhiravan Controller of Examinations (FAC) Dean, Social Sciences Head, Department of Psychology Periyar University, Salem, Tamil Nadu, India</p> <p>Dr. Gopal Krishna Thakur Head, Department of Education Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyalaya, Wardha, Maharashtra, India</p> <p>Dr. Sanjay Sharma School of Educational Studies Dr. Hari Singh Gour Central University Sagar, Madhya Pradesh, India</p> <p>Dr. Shilpi Ghosh Department of Education, Vidya Bhavana Visva- Bharati, Santiniketan West Bengal, India</p>

S No.	Date	Topic	Resource Person
4.	29 th June, 2020	National Public Policy Discourse on Deep Ecology and Environmental Policies	<p>Prof. K. Purushotham Reddy Eminent Environmentalist, Academician and Political Scientist Osmania University (OU), Hyderabad, India</p> <p>Prof. Arbind Kumar Jha Dean, School of Education Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University (BBAU) Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India</p> <p>Dr. V. Nithya Syndicate Member Bharathidasan University Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu, India</p>
			<p>Prof. Om Prakash Singh Department of Environmental Studies North- Eastern Hill University Shillong, Meghalaya, India</p> <p>Dr. Sudeshna Lahiri Associate Professor Department of Education University of Calcutta Kolkata, West Bengal, India</p>
5.	30 th June, 2020	National Public Policy Discourse on Inclusion and Disability Policies	<p>Prof. Rajani Ranjan Singh Dean, Student Welfare Dr. Shakuntala Misra National Rehabilitation University, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India</p> <p>Dr. Pratima Kumari Associate Professor National Council of Educational Research & Training (NCERT), New Delhi, India</p> <p>Dr. Subhash Misra School of Education, Baba Saheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University (BBAU) Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India</p> <p>Dr. Boopathi P School of Social Sciences and Humanities Central University of Tamil Nadu (CUTN) Thiruvavur, Tamil Nadu, India</p> <p>Dr. C. Ramamuni Reddy School of English Language Education The English and Foreign Languages University (EFLU), Hyderabad, India</p>

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. S K Sharma, Vice Chancellor of Mahatma Gandhi Central University, East Champaran-845401 (Bihar). The article has been contributed by Prof. S K Sharma, Vice Chancellor of Mahatma Gandhi Central University, East Champaran, Bihar. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.mgcub.ac.in, E-mail : vc@mgcub.ac.in

MANAV RACHNA UNIVERSITY AND MANAV RACHNA INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH AND STUDIES, FARIDABAD

COVID-19 which was announced as a global pandemic by World Health Organisation (WHO) on 11th March, 2020, took no time to shake the world by creating a huge wave that spared no country in its wake. The world is witnessing one of those phases which will be written down in history as the time when people battled, endured and grieved in their own countries, but came together in their suffering and combat. The fear of novel Corona Virus has spared none for it knows no discrimination – rich or poor, old or young, white or black, male or female. Hence, it became imperative for several governments around the globe to take necessary measures to contain the spread of COVID-19 lest it take away the entire country like a bushfire.

The Indian Government has emerged as one of the most proactive Governments across the world in taking strict actions. Following in the footsteps and observing the situation around, Manav Rachna Educational Institutions (MREI) took into account the advisory issued by the Directorate of Education of Haryana. Ensuring that our actions were consistent with universities in more affected areas in the world, and also with the recommendations of leading health officials on limiting the spread of COVID-19, MREI suspended classroom teaching for the students. Where the universities & other higher educational institutions faced the prospect of losing an entire semester or more, keeping the well-being of its students and faculty members in mind was of paramount importance.

To ensure that there is no academic loss, MREI has stayed vigilant and adapted its strategies in tandem with the changing conditions due to the pandemic. From suspending physical classroom teaching to going digital in a matter of just a few days, ongoing academic pursuits of our students has been the most important consideration for us. With nationwide lockdown and circumstances not showing any clear indications of restoration of normalcy, we undertook a comprehensive exercise to identify the appropriate solution. After creating classes on Microsoft Teams, tagging the students and faculty members, establishing a suitable time table, conducting the classes and monitoring them

closely, the change in methodology was adapted well and has run smoothly all this while. It is felt during the transition that faculty needs to gear up for new *avatar* and equip himself/ herself for the fast approaching wave of education.

The global and personal impacts of COVID-19 have been immense. In this dramatic context, the entire MR community was asked to do what was needed to keep the university moving. Manav Rachna has taken a number of measures in support of social distancing protocols and imagined new possibilities for keeping COVID-19 in check, including piloting a remote working arrangement for faculty, staff, graduate students and post-doctoral fellows. During these unnerving times, MREI has been guided by three core ideas: the health and well-being of our student community, our responsibility to their academic progress, and our responsibility to help check the spread of COVID-19. Keeping these in mind, the following measures have been undertaken:

ACADEMIC REGIME AT MANAV RACHNA DURING LOCKDOWN

Training of Teachers

The university suspended classroom teaching almost 10 days before the nationwide lockdown was declared whereas it was fully functional for faculty members and other staff until the declaration. Taking cognizance of the quickly changing scenario of the country, it was decided that teaching will have to move online lest the semester be compromised with. Keeping this in mind, the empty classrooms were utilized to conduct an extensive week long training for faculty members so that they can familiarize themselves with facilitating learning online.

Devising a Plan

It was clear that online sessions will have to be longer than the usual 50 minute lectures to account for unforeseen technical or connectivity issues which could arise with any participant. A timetable of 2-4 lectures of 1 hour duration was planned and it was decided to give 2 assignment per subject to the students.

Teaching

The classes are being conducted on several platforms like ZOOM, Google Classrooms, Skype, Blackboard and Microsoft Teams using audio-video, power point presentations and virtual white boards using various teaching resources

including Whatsapp. Some of the more tech-savvy teachers also have access to writing tablets which come in handy for practical and coding based subjects. The online platform has not only engaged the students to avoid any loss of studies but has also given the faculty members an opportunity to purposefully engage with them. Most of the stakeholders have shared a positive feedback towards this system. This timely shift has ensured that there is no academic loss and students are able to focus on their studies.

Attendance and Track Record

The attendance is marked online on ERP like in usual circumstances and the progress of students is being monitored through assignments. The number of assignments have seen an upsurge to ensure that the students utilized their time well. The faculty members record their online lectures while in session and the recording is shared with the students to revisit if required. This also comes in handy for students who can't attend the session due to technical issues or other reasons.

IT Infrastructure

Considering the vast expanse of Manav Rachna Universe, one can for a moment think of the glitches that might affect these sessions. However, we are only marginally challenged as Manav Rachna is backed by an extremely effective and dedicated IT team that is working day in and day out to minimize troubled connections.

Mental Health

Manav Rachna's unique initiative of mentor-mentee is also conducted online which provides counselling to students in these trying times of social isolation. Teachers are just a call away and are ready to discuss issues not only with the students but also with the parents if they want.

ONLINE ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION AND NEW SEMESTER

Manav Rachna University (State Private University)

For all the ongoing courses, a weekly assessment on the basis of assignment is being conducted which shall form a part of the final assessment itself. Several mechanisms have been devised by the faculty to assess the students by giving them Quizzes, assignment, Simulation exercises, etc. which has helped

in the delivery of online education. In order to ensure quality of assessment several workshops have been conducted to equip the faculty with sufficient understanding of importance of student learning and how to measure it in terms of quality and quantity. It is felt that the process has stabilized and amounts to real continuous evaluation, and grades will be calculated based on the summation of all these weekly assessment marks conducted during the online delivery of classes. The practical examinations are being conducted in collaboration with IIT Delhi in virtual mode. The End Term Exam Examination for lab if required will however be put on hold and will be conducted post the lifting of lockdown. The University has also decided that in order to save precious time of students during this lockdown shall start at the next semester from middle of May, immediately after all the examinations of current semester are over.

Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies (Deemed-to-be University)

The second internal examination will be conducted online after the conclusion of online classes for the ongoing semester, whereas the End Term Examinations will be put on hold. It has been decided that these examinations will be conducted after the lifting of lockdown but in the meanwhile, the next semester would begin to avoid loss of time and academics.

INTERNSHIPS AND THE NEXT SEMESTER

COVID-19 might have isolated us from each other but we have never been so united. In the spirit of 'The Show must go on' and with the instructions received from all the regulatory bodies (Govt. of India, AICTE and UGC) that no student shall join summer internships, MREI did not want this time to go to waste. Due to a high uncertainty about lockdown and resumption of campus operations of the university, it has been decided that the next i.e. odd semester be made functional from 3rd week of May, 2020. In this regard, help from Industries has been sought to provide online projects, especially software based projects. Many industries have come forward in giving design projects to the students and the same can be later be fabricated once the universities open. Some other measures taken are:

Registration for the Next Semester: A complete list of all courses (Compulsory, Departmental Electives and Centrally Notified Elective

Courses) will be notified to the students on ERP, enabling them to register in the ensuing semester.

MOOCs: A complete list of available and approved online MOOCs (for credit transfer) will be notified to students. An attempt will be made to cover maximum courses online through such platform as far as possible. Many electives will be offered through various online platforms in the next semester.

Internships

The time gained due to this step is hoped to be credited to the students later for the purposes of End Term Examinations and Internships. This move was taken to minimize the effect of COVID-19 on our students & partnering organizations. The odd semester shall be concluded by end of September, 2020 and as a result, students will be able to join their internships thereafter as situation will be normal by that time of the year.

Placements

The Corporate Resource Centre at MREI which is the designated placement cell for the universities, has moved its operations online. The placement process is being conducted online with interviews being held on platforms like Zoom and Skype.

FACULTY GROWTH INITIATIVES

A Faculty member plays several roles as a part of academia. He/ she is not only a teacher, an investigator, a researcher, a pioneer in promotion of new concepts, a value generator, but also a social reformer and a true leader in his/ her own right. Hence, a faculty member's quest for knowledge and learning is never ending. In this direction, several initiatives have taken to encourage faculty members to keep their journey continuing:

Peer Training

With some additional time on hand due to work from home, the faculty members have self-motivated to conduct voluntary online sessions to add value to each other. We have seen people come together to disseminate knowledge on topics like Data Analytics, Cash Flows, Innovative Teaching Aids and Methodologies, Meditation, Yoga and what not.

Training Programs on Continuous Evaluation

With teaching – learning taking a drastic shift owing to the lockdown, the need for continuous evaluation and doing it scientifically has been stronger than never before. Comprehensive training programs about continuous evaluation techniques based on Bloom's Taxonomy were held. For faculty members of Manav Rachna Dental College, training on techniques based on Millar's Pyramid for Assessment (or Framework for Clinical Assessment) was conducted.

Individual Research

Research work is an important pillar of higher education and individual engagement talks highly about a person's proactivity and commitment to learning and self-growth. After the initial teething issues and hiccups with virtual teaching subsided, faculty members have been encouraged to work on their individual research and publications.

Training On Outcome Based Education in Online Mode

Several workshops have been organized for the faculty to appraise them about how to achieve the learning outcomes in virtual education system using different delivery mechanisms and assessment tools.

PARALLEL INITIATIVES

MREI as an organization places a huge importance on both innovation and Social Responsibility.

Innovation

The Manav Rachna Innovation & Incubation Centre is a hotspot of enthusiastic young minds who strive to bring value to the world by creating something new.

Start-Up for Fighting Coronavirus

A startup incubated at this Centre under NewGen IEDC, Department of Science & Technology, Government of India, has developed a web application – 'Fighting Coronavirus' as a response to Government of India's 'COVID-19 Solution Challenge'. The challenge invites new innovative solutions from individuals and start ups to strengthen the fight against Corona Virus. This web application is a connected web app for home-care training, lockdown support

and cluster detection during COVID-19, and is accessible from any device. The initiative aims to reduce the stress on healthcare through informed and connected community-care and self-care. It will ensure connecting patients with doctors through tele-consultancy and timely referral to institutionalized facilities, if needed.

Low-Cost Portable Emergency E-Ventilator

A team of researchers from Manav Rachna Innovation and Incubation Centre (MRIIC) has designed a prototype of a low-cost portable emergency ventilator remotely to provide temporary oxygen supply for patients with emergency needs. All the safety and technical parameters of the ventilator have been set as per International benchmarks. The ventilator is highly cost-effective (approximately five thousand rupees). Titled as ANSH, this E-Ventilator has an integrated mobile app that allows doctors to monitor the patient's progress remotely. ANSH uses mechanical linear motion of the Rack and pinion gear mechanism making it the most simple and unique ventilator for the doctors to use in case of emergency. Doctors can control all necessary vital parameters through the app seamlessly and manual controls can be used to monitor automated controls. Manual controls are applicable where judgment and discretion are required. Additional risks arise with the use of manual controls as they can be easily overridden, are susceptible to human error, and are inherently less consistent than automated controls. The app is available for Android platform and works on Bluetooth Technology.

Makershala

Makershala (Technoplanet Lab Pvt. Ltd.), a startup incubated at Manav Rachna Educational Institutions (MREI) has designed a PPE Face Shield for Health Care Staff and frontline professionals involved in treating and monitoring of COVID-19 patients. The Face Shield is very cost effective and can be produced at a much faster rate to meet the current demand. The face shield has been tested and reviewed by the medical team of Sarvodaya Hospital on the occasion of the World Health Day. This Face Protection Shield can be manufactured much faster without many resources and yet fulfills the need of Medical and Health Care Professionals. Considering the shortage of masks, the team worked remotely and used their Makerspace to prototype the product.

Projects Pertinent to COVID-19

Several other projects are in progress like 'ML/AI based Virus detection using Xray Imaging', where the idea is to build a classifier based on X-Ray imaging for positive and negative cases and use it to detect COVID-19 on test subjects.

Another project is 'Data Analytics Prediction for Travel Restriction in Areas Affected by COVID-19' and hope such initiatives will be beneficial in the long run.

Social Responsibility

Through several activities, MREI did its bit to spread awareness within the community:

- a) A Corona Virus Awareness Programme was aired on Radio Manav Rachna 107.8 FM, a 24*7 Community radio operated by MREI at the University Campus.
- b) To commemorate Founder Visionary, Dr. O.P. Bhalla's Birth Anniversary on 4th April, 2020, and to partner with district administration in alleviating the issue of essential supplies amidst lockdown, MREI contributed dry food for 1000 individuals of economically disadvantaged section of people.
- c) MREI Facebook pages for all its institutions which are collectively followed by lakhs of individuals are a regular platform for spreading awareness and regulatory information about COVID-19.
- d) Manav Rachna Sports Science Centre released a series of Home Workout videos which were appreciated by the parent & student community.
- e) The Department of Students' Welfare at MREI is consistently conducting competitions and has been issuing informational emailers as a part of COVID-19 awareness programme.
- f) The student theatre group 'Paigam' regularly holds fundraisers to collect funds for NGOs helping in providing essential supplies to economically disadvantaged section of people. The students have also taken upon themselves to share a 'paigam' with the society through social media in an effort to spread awareness and positivity in tough times.
- g) Some faculty members of Department of Applied Psychology at Faculty of Behavioural & Social Sciences are practicing Psychologists,

empaneled with Government of Haryana to provide one on one counselling sessions during the lockdown. They write blogs for spreading awareness and also participate in Expert Talks.

- h) Faculty members of both the universities and all the schools under Manav Rachna umbrella contributed one day's worth of their salaries to be donated to National and State Relief Funds.

In other parts of the country and the world, higher educational institutes have taken on similar strategies and it leaves us pondering about how the role of higher education has magnified quite considerably. There is almost a certain resurgence of interest in scientific learning. Undoubtedly, the landscape of Asian higher education has been fundamentally changed, and possibly for the better, in some ways at least. Once the world leaves behind this scarring nightmare behind, the face of Higher Education will have changed considerably. It will not be just people travelling miles away from home to study in concrete towers. Online learning will emerge as the biggest winner from this phase – across all education levels.

Looking back, as the world continues to fight the battle against Corona, MREI is doing its bit too. Manav Rachna has ensured that every individual associated with the family including our 50,000+ strong alumni base across the globe is in this together and doing everything in their capacity to heal and help each other. 'Together we can flatten the curve' is our war cry. MREI continues to keep the interests and academic endeavors of its students on top priority. As we sail through these tense anxiety inducing times together, we believe that we will all emerge strong and in good health with the grace of Almighty, and with the magnanimous nationwide support of our warriors who are toiling hard to provide us with essential supplies and services amid this situation.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. I.K. Bhat, Vice Chancellor of Manav Rachna University, Faridabad-121003 (Haryana). The article has been contributed by Dr. I.K. Bhat, Vice Chancellor of Manav Rachna University, and Professor (Dr.) Sanjay Srivastava, Vice Chancellor, Manav Rachna International Institute of Research & Studies, Faridabad, Haryana. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributors only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.manavrachna.edu.in, E-mail : vc@mru.edu.in

MANIPAL UNIVERSITY, JAIPUR

Corona virus COVID-19 has changed the world forever in a span of less than two months. Now the world would not be the same as before. No one has dreamt that a small Virus can change all of us- the way we live, the way we behave (socializing, partying, meeting people, etc.), the way we consume things; make expenditures; do businesses; go to jobs; travel (commute) from one place to another...the impact is so great that the life has practically come to an absolute halt in few days' time in the last four month. This last four months can be called as 'Murderous Period' as with the death tolls going up day by day. People all around the world have become immovable - practically self-quarantined, a situation of self-house arrest because of the havoc created by the deadly Coronavirus. This is a war like situation and even worse than world war I & world war II where every country in the world is panicked to savour its citizens from the hilariously infectious virus with each passing day. Be it China, USA, France, UK, Asia or the whole Europe every government and its citizens are facing a Total Lockout Condition (TLC) of businesses, trades, offices, etc.

The economic scenario around the world is worst impacted due to the TLC. All sectors whether we talk of manufacturing, services like banking, transportation, education, insurance, etc. are so adversely affected that no commerce (transactions) are happening in almost every single field/sector of business. With every passing day governments are becoming helpless and clueless to find what to do to curb and control the Corona monster. It seems that all the fiction movies of hollywood and bollywood (like 'Contagion', 'Krish 3', 'Qayamat'...and even TV Serial '24 - Season 2 India') have come alive and that there is no difference between 'reel life' and 'real life'. The colossal damage to the economic/business world will take at least five years to recover and that too if nothing more dangerous occurs like this in years to come. What progress and growth in terms of economic development and enhanced quality of living the world has seen in past ten years has been wiped off completely within a span of three months, i.e., this February-April, 2020. The saying that "It takes hell of efforts to build something and takes no time to demolish it" has come alive as an ultimate truth.

At the same time with all the adversities and havoc created by the monstrous virus there is still a ray of hope or 'blessing in disguise'...for that matter. A

newspaper reported that in China 70,000 people who die due to pollution every year will be able to survive at least this year. Pollution levels in all the countries around the world has come down like anything- probably to the least level in last five decades. The industrial as well as vehicle pollution in the last week of March 2020 is at the bare minimum level giving nature a space to rejuvenate and revive by cleansing the dirt created in the environment over last few decades. There is a respite from all sorts of pollution on one hand and the Materialistic World Syndrome (MWS) on the other. People will now get an opportunity to rethink about the MWS; MWS is a syndrome that has affected the humankind in last 4-5 decades - 'a competition to grow materialistically anyhow'. People will now have time to spend time with their family members and understand the importance of values, love, belongingness. With time to introspect now we can minimize the MWS to break the chain of endless materialism. Corona is dangerous and lethal, however with the world showing unity and solidarity against it (all the governments, officials, health workers, various agencies and citizen action groups working day and night) will make it disappear in few months for sure if not in few days. We together can break the chain of corona virus and stop its growth to eradicate it & should also think of breaking the endless chain of materialism!!!

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

If something is inevitable, we shall have to learn to live with it and look for silver lining. It is said that every challenge comes some opportunity and we must be vigilant to identify the hidden opportunities. Education sector is one such sector that has numerous activities considering the potential of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The sudden lockdown has forced the educators to consider the alternate ways of engaging the students since the situation is so uncertain that it is difficult for anyone to predict when shall the normal life would resume. The sudden disruption in the middle of the academic session had left everyone pondering to devise effect way of teaching learning. Online teaching learning is entirely different methodology and requires a different kind of skill set for teaching. Further, it is also difficult to engage the students with same intensity as it happens in the conventional teaching mode. The faculty members must devise an innovative approach so that online just does not become a one-way monologue. The faculty member should be able to make the learning interactive and involve students at level. It is a challenge that a faculty member must get used to. Further, the attention span of the students is

increasingly becoming smaller and smaller. Hence, the mode of teaching should be such that students should remain involved throughout online teaching. Keeping the above aims in mind and ensure positive engagement of students in teaching learning, the practices adopted by Manipal University Jaipur (MUJ) are enumerated in the following paragraphs:

Design of Website

MUJ has been alive to the stressful prevailing situation. The university knows various stake holders namely students, their parents, faculty members and even the whole management is experiencing a high level of anxiety and the stress level is building every passing day. The students are worried about their academics and parents are worried about the future of their wards. Faculty members are worried about how to effectively teach students adopting new techniques. Management is committed to implement a solution that is fool proof and can provide a quality experience to all the stake holders. A lot of website namely NPTEL, SWAYAM, E-PG Pathshala, etc are available, wherein our students could have been told to refer and prepare themselves for the examination. However, it would have caused enhanced stress on the students. Accordingly, the university decided to provide students only the balance study material for this semester so that students are not overloaded and continue learning with same zeal in this unprecedented situation. Accordingly, the MUJ designed its own dedicated website <https://edunxt.jaipur.manipal.edu/>. The faculty members rose to the occasion proactively and prepared study material in soft copies within 10 days and uploaded on the website as per daily lesson plan. This ensured that students have remained focussed on the syllabus and the learning has continued uninterrupted. In addition, faculty members suggested to the students online learning material to supplement their learning. The USP of this approach is that the study material uploaded on the websites is available to the students round the clock and they can refer it anytime or download the same to study in their own time. This philosophy was adopted to ensure that students are not missing on studies due to erratic internet or power interruptions.

Online Interactive Classes

The university is fully aware that learning is not complete till the students interact with their respective teachers face to face. To ensure this the university has adopted the modern technology and conducted online classes using Microsoft

meetings platform predominately. For this purpose, to ensure the privacy and data control, MUJ procured unlimited licences of Microsoft meetings and each student and faculty member was given the rights to access the same through university provided log-in credentials. A very few Some teacher also used other platforms namely WebEx, google classroom and TCS glass room, etc. Use of Zoom app was discouraged view data security issues.

Flip Classroom Mode

The methodology adopted for online teaching learning is synonymous to the flip classroom mode. The students were informed beforehand by the respective faculty member regarding the lesson that would be covered in the next class. Accordingly, student came prepared for the class that made the delivery by the teacher quite effective and the students could clear their doubts. This was highly appreciated by the students and faculty members alike; however, some challenges were encountered while treating highly analytical subjects. However, this was also overcome using writing pads and electronics blackboard which could be integrated with laptop/desktop and a teacher could teach almost as effectively as physical classroom environment.

Teaching for Backlog Subjects and Examination

The university has adopted another innovative method to ensure online teaching for the final year students who have some backlogs. This methodology was adopted to ensure that students of final are not overstressed considering their future. Hence intensive classes in flip classroom mode would be conducted for such students online. This would ensure effective teaching and learning and then students can appear for their normal examination scheduled in the month of July, 2020. This would ensure completion of their degree in time and students can opt for higher studies or jobs as per their preference.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Assignments

Assignment is the tool that measures the learning by the students. It is incumbent on the teacher to design assignments in such a manner that ensure that critical thinking is developed by the students and helps the students to apply

the concepts learnt by him/her. The website design is such that a teacher can upload the assignment on the website and announce the same on the website. In addition, the push notification is also sent to the students. The students are required to upload the assignment by due date mutually agreed by the students and teacher. The teacher can grade the assignment online and declare the score achieved by each student. The record of score by the student is automatically stored on the website and the same is visible to the students. The score could also be downloaded by the faculty member for record in excel format and the same can also be uploaded on the university examination portal for calculation of result. This saves lot of mundane work by the faculty members and hence they can concentrate on improving the quality of teaching.

Quizzes and Sessional Examinations

Quizzes and sessional are one of the important components of teaching and learning. This tool is used to evaluate the level of learning by the students. It is one of the methods that serves as a feedback for the students and the teacher. The teacher can evaluate his teaching methodology by the analysis of the performance of the students. The teacher can also get the information on the topic where most of the students have done poorly and accordingly teacher can redesign his teaching methodology. In addition, quizzes and sessional examinations also serves as a feedback for the students and they can hone their skills wherever they find they are not up to the mark. This kind of analysis for feedback to students and faculty members is not easy in the conventional mode. However, all these features have been included in the website and the complete analytics is available to the students as well as faculty member. Accordingly, both can apply the required correction for holistic learning. Further, these quizzes can be conducted using multiple choice question or descriptive questions or combination of both. The worked-out answers can be uploaded on the website by the students and faculty member can grade them online and the grades are visible to the students. The portal generates result automatically, thereby saving lot of manual labour by the faculty member who can concentrate on other productive jobs.

Final Examination

The final examination is aimed to evaluate the comprehensive learning by the students. It has become even more pertinent to evaluate the online teaching outcomes. Accordingly, the university has adopted 'paxa software'. Wherein the

end semester papers would be shared with students a day in advance. The paper would remain in encrypted form and the students can decrypt the paper at the schedule examination time on the given date. The students would key in their responses whether multiple choice or descriptive type in the software in the offline mode. The same would get stored in the software and the faculty member would be able to access the response and grade the end semester papers. Even wherever some diagram or some equation are required to be written, students can solve the complete paper using pen paper and the pdf file can be uploaded within 15 minutes of completion of allotted time for the examination. It is pertinent to mention that whole process can be done offline. The internet requirement would be only while downloading and uploading the paper. This process replicates the complete conventional classroom environment to a large extent.

Internships

The students who have are supposed to undergo internship in summer break as per designed curriculum may not be able to undertake the same view uncertain situation. Hence, the university has requested the faculty members to devise challenging problems for the students so that they utilise their time effectively and hone their skills. This would be a good exercise to initiate students into self-learning and they may devise an approach which is most suitable to their temperaments.

Webinars

The rapid advancement in technology has led to change in every sphere like never before. It has become even difficult for the experts to keep track with every development in their field view plethora of activities. Further, the interdisciplinary development has made it even more tedious for the students and teacher to keep pace with all the developments in diverse fields, which could help them address problem in their area comprehensively. This lockdown period has also been used effectively by the university to conduct webinars by the experts in different fields and has been made available to all the students and faculty. This has also proved another blessing in disguise.

PLACEMENTS

The university had major concern about the placement of the students. Though 90% of the eligible students had already got placed before the

lockdown. It was essential for the university to ensure that those placements are not withdrawn view the prevailing situation and set back to the business in general. The students were equally concerned about their placements. However, university has maintained a close liaison with all the recruiters and has ensured that not even a single offer is withdrawn.

COUNSELLING OF STUDENTS

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected everyone to some extent. Students, faculty members, staff members and parents of students. Though the students are little carefree at this age and may not be affected much directly, however, the general environment has certainly affected them and could have led to some sort of depression which may not be evident to them. Accordingly, the university counsellors have been extending regular counselling to the students. It is also expected that some students may not be forthcoming to discuss about their problems even with the counsellors. Accordingly, university has been issuing regular advisory to the students through literature prepared by the counsellors to face the situation with greater resilience.

PHYSICAL FITNESS

The pandemic has confined all of us to our homes. This is a tough situation for people of all ages. Even the older people do not like to be tied down to their homes and does require some change. The students in this age does require lot of physical activities to keep themselves physically fit. The physically fitness leads to better mental fitness. Accordingly, university has been issuing advisory to students on regular basis regarding physical fitness along with literature and various exercise regimes. This has paid dividends to some extent.

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

It was not easy for the university to implement this online teaching and learning. There were lot of challenges that were required to be overcome. The first challenge was to motivate the faculty members to adopt this new mode of teaching and learning. However, the ethos of the system ensured that all faculty members readily agreed to adopt the process though some of them were little slow to adopt the process. This required the university leadership to patiently initiate such people into the process and this approach fructified with varying efficiency of each faculty members just like any other conventional process. The

university trained all the 500 odd faculty members and this paradigm shift in teaching and learning was adopted despite numerous challenges.

CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the world for ever. The situation is uncertain. The medical fraternity is busy looking for the solution to overcome this. No one is sure when shall the vaccine for the same would be available. Even, if the vaccine is found, we shall have to learn to live with it in the times to come view the very nature of the virus. The situation in India may still worsen, once the lockdown is relaxed. Lifting the lockdown in controlled manner is inevitable view it can't be continued forever else we shall have irreversible economic losses. However, the teaching learning process can always be continued online effectively view technological advancement as and when the situation demands to arrest the spread of pandemic. In addition, this situation has provided us an opportunity to rethink and reinvent ourselves and learn online without restriction of boundaries. This might have pulled people apart to some extent but has brought humanity closer virtually. It is high time to be optimistic and make best use of opportunities created by this challenge.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. G K Prabhu, President of Manipal University, Dehmi Kalan, Jaipur-303007 (Rajasthan). The article has been contributed by Dr. G K Prabhu, President of Manipal University, Dehmi Kalan, Jaipur, Rajasthan. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.jaipur.manipal.edu, E-mail : vc@jaipur.manipal.edu

MIT WORLD PEACE UNIVERSITY, PUNE

The lockdown imposed in the country since March, 2020 due to the pandemic of COVID-19, has not only been challenging for all teachers and students, but has also opened a window of opportunity for all. We, at MIT WPU, started from taking online lectures, arranging webinars to conducting online UG PET and interviews. Work from Home added a new dimension for the faculty. Similarly, our important stakeholder 'student' has also gone through a lot with this change process. MIT-WPU has supported students actively in this critical time.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

All the faculties are in regular touch with the students through e-mail, WhatsApp or phone calls and are answering their queries, concerns and problems from time to time. All the faculties are playing the role of Mentor in a real sense in the period of lockdown to keep the moral of the students high. To ensure that no academic losses are incurred and to facilitate academic engagement of students, Faculty members have taken online lectures of students and most of the students attended the same. A detailed report of each faculty member has been kept in record for easy reference. At times when online live teaching learning was hampered due to technical issues, a recorded video of the module and Assignments was sent to the students on the same day. The students clarified their doubts through email /phone calls. Since the time of lockdown, MIT WPU geared up its administrative and IT infrastructure to work and fight the crisis on different fronts as follows.

Awareness and Preparation

Awareness campaign for protection against COVID-19 was conducted through posters, banners and lectures. Students from other places were facilitated to go back to their native places. Where required the permission passes for their movement was obtained from City administration. Students from abroad were asked to stay indoors and contacted on regular basis. When the flights were arranged by their governments, necessary arrangements were made for their passage to the Mumbai airport. Meetings of all CRs and LR of all years were conducted to understand the issues in conducting online lectures. MIT WPU, within no time switched over to virtual platforms using online software like ZOOM, YouTube Live Platforms, Impartus, Webex portal and other platforms

to communicate with the students as well as their parents and started conducting regular classes on these platforms.

Lectures and Sessions

To continue with its primary aim to impart quality professional education to all the students without any break with the help of online technology so that students do not lose on education front. Faculty and students were trained to use various online platforms for lectures, meetings, viva, etc. Use of any particular platforms was kept flexible according to available band width, familiarity, licensed software, etc. However, to be consistent, care was taken that the platform used for online course was maintained for a particular faculty, school or a program.

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Practicals

Practicals were recorded in stages and videos were shared with the students. This was followed with explanations and discussions.

Tutorials and Case Discussions

In some cases where discussion was required on the subjects, the students were divided in smaller batches and online discussions were conducted.

Placement Opportunities

Internships, campus interviews and placement for passing out students were arranged online where possible. Where internships could not be completed online by the companies, projects were given to the students which could be done from home. Where placement was not feasible, MITWPU approached the companies to defer the offer and got the future dates for joining. Where companies wanted to get the final results, online examinations were conducted as per the UGC guidelines and students' were facilitated to join the companies for final placement.

Study Material

Notes, study material, presentations and related web links for better understanding were shared through MITWPU institutional ERP with the students on regular basis. This was to ensure proper engagement of the students during lockdown period. Faculty members also shared prerecorded sessions, AV clips and resource material through ERP.

Online Conference

Four Days Online Conference for Elimination of Biological and Chemical Weapons was conducted to make students aware about their danger in the light of COVID-19.

Extra-Curricular and Co-curricular Activities

Celebrations like Yoga Day, Environment Day, 'Guru-pournima', and other festivals were conducted online.

Final Examinations

Although MITWPU has procured software for online examination with proctoring through AI, it was used only for internal assessment. Final examination was not conducted and averaging formula for Grades was used as per the directions of UGC and Government of Maharashtra.

Administration

Following administrative services were kept operational:

Care and Maintenance

To protect, care and maintain its assets inside campus with the help of minimum essential security staff and their protection as well.

Administration

To continue all of its services viz, administrative functions, academic functions, meetings, etc. through online systems.

R & D

To promote research to fight COVID-19 in terms of development of sanitizers, PPEs, ventilators and other essentials under Engineering, Product Design as well as Pharmacy Faculty.

Assistance

Measures to assist city administration to combat the crisis.

Contribution to Society

Initiatives and contributions by individual staff members and students.

Campus Medical Facility

Medical facility inside the campus has been kept operational to provide required emergency medical help.

Campus Security

All the security staff has been trained to handle emergency situation in case any, besides precautions to be taken in respect of corona prevention such as social distancing, washing hands frequently, etc.

Research and Innovation

Such time of crisis provides an opportunity for the innovative and genius minds to come up with appropriate solutions which can help the society to overcome the crisis.

- (a) The Vice Chancellor appealed to the Engineering Faculty to think of designing low cost Ventilators which is a need of the hour to protect the COVID-19 victims in the hospitals.
- (b) The Pharmacy Faculty was asked to look into manufacturing of low cost sanitizers for using in the campus. Pharmacy Faculty has taken up the task of providing lab made sanitizers.
- (c) The Design Faculty was asked to think over development of masks with required micron capacity to protect the face and they have offered their 3D printing facility to manufacture masks and shields for doctors. So far as the assignments are concerned, after the completion of module, the students give an Online viva on the completed modules which shall be marked out of and submit it through ERP. With regard to the written assessment, topics have been given to the students through ERP.

Online Tools for Engagements of Students

1. Online Lectures through Zoom, WebEx and Impartus
2. Recorded Video of faculty members
3. PPT
4. Movies
5. Assignments through ERP
6. Law Quiz/ MCQ's

Academic Initiatives Taken by the Faculty Members to Ensure Proper Engagement and Learning of the Students.

1. Faculty members conduct online lectures using Zoom, WebEx, Impartus and YouTube Live Platforms and ensured uninterrupted learning of students.
2. Received positive feedbacks from the students and parents about these online engagements of students by the faculty members.
3. Given online assignments, Case studies and other evaluations to students and also ensured correction of the same. Shared feedback with students about the assessment, shared notes, study material and presentations.
4. For the Project Guidance of the students of Engineering, Management, Pharmacy, Liberal Arts, Science, Commerce, Economics, Governance and Sustainable Studies; faculty members arranged several zoom meeting sessions with the students and discussed on various important points related to projects.
5. For conducting online academic session for the new A.Y, 20-21, all the faculty members have undergone the training of MS Team, the platform that will be used for conducting online lectures. All the faculty members are students were given access to this platform by activating their accounts.
6. Direct engagement with the students through mentor-mentee sessions: MIT World Peace University has put a great emphasis on directly engaging the students through our established mentor-mentee system in which the designated faculty members regularly have a one-to-one interaction with every student to know about their mental perspective during the COVID-19 pandemic. During these sessions, the faculty members guided the students about the approach towards learning and academics, about life and coping skills and reassured them regarding their studies and career prospects. A report in this regard was generated and kept in record.
7. Quality monitoring of the Online sessions: Licenses for Microsoft Teams, Google Suite and WebEx were acquired by the University for the smooth conduct of the online lectures. A methodical approach was taken up by the University authorities wherein the lecture links were circulated among

the entire University staff to ensure transparency and quality control. The senior officials of the University were able to enter in an online class, whenever they wanted to see the proceedings and observe the standards of teaching practices adopted by the faculty members. Regular feedback and reports regarding this were generated on a daily basis.

8. Flipped classrooms and Asynchronous learning: To foster interactivity, various social media platforms were incorporated including WhatsApp, Discord, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, etc. to encourage participation from the students.

This was apart from the mainstay of using WebEX and Microsoft Teams for the teaching process. Flipped learning was incorporated for projects, team work and class discussions. During classes, maximum emphasis was given on using illustrated teaching aids like PPT with a lot of visual cues and less textual information was used. We were able to engage the students for the same number of classes as during regular times, attendance figures were invariably above 80 per cent and were able to complete our allotted number of lectures within the stipulated time for the trimester.

9. Feedback and improvement: Since online learning was an abrupt and new process, it evolved into a more stable version after a period of some time. For this, regular feedback from students was collected on a regular basis about the efficacy of the online teaching process. Their concerns about bandwidth, internet connectivity, ease of understanding the concepts through online lectures were addressed and extra notes were sent to those who missed out on lectures due to connectivity issues.
10. Assignments for continuous evaluation submitted through ERP or E-mail (Formative/ Internal evaluation) during the lockdown period.
11. Few faculties have also conducted MCQ online Tests.
12. The Project/ Internship Viva have been conducted online through various platforms like Zoom and Google Meet for proper evaluation of the students.
13. Online Orientation Programme has been conducted for Faculty of Commerce to welcome the senior batch.
14. The Orientation Programme consisted of online sessions by Experts in Stress Management and Cyber Security.
15. MIT WPU has made free registration available for various courses on platforms like Coursera. Faculties and students are encouraged to complete MOOCs on these platforms to enhance their skills.

16. Designed and developed Short-Term Training Certifications Program.
 - a. Certification Courses in Big Data and Analytics.
 - b. Certification Courses in XR: VR, AR, and MR with Business Applications.
 - c. Certification Courses in Cyber Security Management.
17. All the faculty members facilitated as well as participated in Online Skill Development Interactions with experts from leading industries and corporate houses.
18. The faculty members coordinated & distributed EdX5000 Coupons for the MIT WPU Students and Staff online : EdX Remote Access Program -Digital Welcome Kit along with 5000 unique enrollment codes from EdX for MIT WPU.
19. We organized more than 150 webinars on important and relevant topics such as New Learning Development Program, Hands-on Workshop series on Hackathon, Innovation Connect, External World and Future of Education, Implementation of Value Based Universal Education System, Education and Career Education Abroad, 5-G Wireless an Imperative for IOT and so on. As per the MIT-WPU method, all faculties are mentors for our students and are in touch with their mentees through call or WhatsApp or other social media. Besides, academic leaders have taken meetings of Student Council of all departments and have conducted CR/ LR meeting on regular basis in lockdown and on that basis they have organised some activities for students such as:
 1. '7 Days Yoga Challenge' activity was initiated to keep students, faculties and others fit and active in this lockdown period. Along with MITWPU students and staff members, non-MIT WPU people also participated in it through YouTube, Facebook, etc. in big numbers i.e. more than 1000 participants. This session was conducted from 9th April to 15th April, 2020.
 2. One week Session 'Yoga for Better Health' was conducted by to address the increasing stress, frustration, depression among students which was reported. This session was opened for all staff and students of MIT WPU. Daily 30 - 40 minutes of the session on Mudra Dhyana and Pranayama/Deep Breathing was conducted from 27th May to 2nd June, 2020. A very good and positive response was received for

this initiative. Total 95 participants [MIT WPU Students + Faculty] benefitted from this activity.

3. One Faculty member is counselling the students who are facing some psychological issues at a personal level. It is done through normal calls, video calls, messages, etc. as well as she is in contact with few parents. Dealing with a lot of critical issues which students are facing staying at home. She inspired students and they formed a group name 'Happiness Mantra'. On the group they keep on doing positive talks, discussions, activities which are helping the students to stay happy. 2 hours NO MOBILE Usage challenge is one such activity which she has started and it's working very well. Students are doing digital detox on their own.
4. Google link of Students achievement and Innovation has been created and shared with all students to motivate them.
5. Students have participated in various activities such as Preparing a Monograph on various topics like Mumbai, Banaras, Delhi, Swami Vivekananda, Ayurveda, etc., they have written articles on the topics like Case Study of Yes Bank, e-Vehicles, HUL and GSKCH Merger, Impact of COVID-19 on Indian Economy, Projecting Social Reforms through Advertisements, etc. under the guidance of a faculty member.
6. As all the students are at home, either they are attending online Certification Programmes or learning some life skills from their parents. An appeal was made to submit a write-up and photographs for sharing their experiences and learnings with others.
7. One Faculty initiated Instagram Page and Facebook Page so that students' activities during academic year could be showcased by then creating awareness campaigns for the Program, Experiential Learning opportunities to students, Internships and Placements.
8. Students and alumni whom all are facing issues at a personal and professional level were counselled through calls and messages as well creating interactive video conferencing sessions and connecting students to each other for helping each other have similar difficulties and issues could be resolved by talking to each other and staying connected.

9. One Faculty organised 4 webinars of Event industry experts as well as networking with industry experts. The webinars were co-ordinated by the faculty and the students. The webinar series was a great success and was attended by approximately 100 students every time.
10. Our Theatre Society took part in an Online Poetry Competition and their submission relating to the hardships faced by the healthcare workers, the migrant labourers, etc. and for this poem submission, Theatre Society won the Special Mention in the Online State Level Poetry Competition.

Faculty members have written blogs on various topics such as Career after 12th and Road Ahead.

12. One Faculty member has written a newspaper article on Key takeaways from COVID-19.
13. Along with this, students were given virtual internship during the lockdown period. FY students were engaged with a pre-internship training module and TY placement registered students were given online grooming session as well as new placement opportunities.
14. Students have also actively participated in various webinars organized by Center for Industry Academia Partnerships and have expressed their satisfaction towards MIT WPU for organizing the same. Students have also thanked MIT WPU for making platform like Coursera available for them to pursue online certifications.
15. Many faculties have also enrolled and completed various online courses on different platforms which will be useful for effective teaching.

Admission for the Assessment Year 2020-21

1. Faculty members conducted Admission Interviews for various streams using online platforms such as Google duo and Whatsapp Video Calling, in all over India.
2. Conducted webinars to brief the aspirants about MIT WPU and various programs offered at MITWPU.
3. Conducted counselling sessions for admission process.

Communication with Students

1. Using various online platforms, faculty members are constant in touch with students for guiding and counselling them on various issues like examination, SIPs, etc. and are trying to manage anxiety of students and parents as well.
2. In every 15 days, meetings of student council (CRs and LRs) of all the years have been conducted by the HOS and Academic Head of the school of understand and resolve student's problems during lockdown period.
3. Through the Mentor Mentee platform, every faculty member contacted a group of 15-20 students and asked about their well being.
4. Report of daily interaction of mentor mentee is also maintained by respective program head and CR / LR of respective division.

Social Awareness Initiatives

1. Students have taken the initiative to spread awareness about CORONA in following innovative way. They shared this through facebook, instagram and other social media sites.
2. Mr. Suranjan Mukherjee a student of MBA HHM has distributed masks, food items to poor families at Kolkata. Ms. Swastika Kachore has donated Rs. 2000 to PM Care Fund. Aishwarya Rawat has distributed masks and food grains 5kg rice 5kg dal to the poor n needy people and Also hand sanitizers.
3. Dr. Aayushi Ghael and Dr. Sakshi Pawar, students of MBA-Hospital and Healthcare management have registered themselves as volunteer for COVID-19 under NITI Aayog.
4. A student, Ms. Urjita Falnikar has taken initiative for distribution of lunch to underprivileged living on streets in Manjalpur, Vadodara Gujarat. They collected the food from the families,made food packets and distributed to people living under Lalbaug Bridge in our locality on 1st April, 2020 (Wednesday)
5. A student, Ms. Nisha Nandhini was a part of a team that has spread social awareness messages through advertisements. She translated the advertisement from Hindi to regional language Tamil and given dubbing for voice over of the speaker. Ms Nisha, under her father's guidance helped draft a script about the efforts taken by Tamilnadu police during this

epidemic as another social message on behalf of the police force under the commissioner' orders.

6. Kewal Shah, Student of law distributed over 5000 masks and donated 5 Lakh's in the name of Shah Foundation. All the major distribution was done near the Airport are slums of Mumbai, India.
7. Atharv More student of FY along with his friends has started a donation drive in his home town i.e. Aurangabad. They have donated food kits to 60 families till now and will continue to do so in the future. The food kit distributed by them consisted of: 2.5kg Wheat, 2kg Rice, 750gms Daal, 100gms each of Haldi, Lal mirch and salt, 250gms Oil. These are the basic food needs which they provided to the needy and poor people in Aurangabad.
8. Ayushee Subhadarshini, an FY Student donated money to the PMs fund from her personal savings.
9. Shivam Balwadkar, student of SY distributed 200 masks to senior citizens of Pune city also he is providing fruits and vegetables facilities to the needy members of Baner and Balewadi.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. N T Rao, Vice Chancellor, MIT World Peace University, Pune, Maharashtra-411 038. The article has been contributed by Dr. N T Rao, Vice Chancellor of MIT World Peace University, Pune, Maharashtra. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.mitwpu.edu.in, E-mail : vc@mitwpu.edu.in

NAGALAND UNIVERSITY, LUMANI

The whole world is facing an unprecedented situation and is staring down the COVID-19 Pandemic with uncertainty which calls for unprecedented steps in all spheres. As the entire nation is under lockdown, it is important that the Universities and colleges engage its faculty and students gainfully in the academic activities. COVID-19 pandemic would definitely have a lasting impact on the trajectory of learning innovation, compelling Universities worldwide to search for innovative solutions in a reasonably short period of time. While most initiatives available are limited in scope, COVID-19 pandemic would pave the way for much larger scale initiatives.

However, the current pandemic has created an opportunity to equip the students with technological skills in an unpredictable scenario. Therefore, there is an urgent need to utilize digital platforms as temporary solution to the crisis of lockdown during the pandemic. This could further become a prevalent and significant trend to future education. Besides the digital learning initiatives, universities would also need to bring in flexibility in research plans because research activities, methods and outputs will be substantively altered to adapt to the existing conditions.

Since learning has to continue in spite of the lockdown, Nagaland University has taken several measures to engage its students through technology-driven initiatives to ensure that their academic activities carry on without much disruption. But unlike in developed countries, most students in Nagaland rely on lessons and assignments sent via WhatsApp. Students belonging to economically weaker sections cannot afford to keep pace with the rest because of the cost of digital devices and data plans.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

The following are some of the innovative ways undertaken by Nagaland University for protecting the academic interest of students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. The student community is being gainfully engaged through various means such as:
 - (a) Enabling them to learn from home via interactive apps and get access to learning materials through television broadcasts and Google classroom, video instructions.

- (b) Faculties and students encouraged to learn new digital skills.
- (c) Providing online education in a range of formats and new learning modalities through medium such as Zoom App, YouTube, Facebook, WhatsApp, E-mail, Google Classroom, etc.
- (d) Providing educational assets including videos, assessment tools and counseling services with the help of social media apps.
- (e) Reduced on-campus research activities.
- (f) Providing counseling and healthcare services to students to respond to their academic, physical and mental health concerns.
- (g) Limiting the interaction of students within larger groups to diminish chances of COVID-19 transmission.
- (h) Sharing learning materials and support by creating WhatsApp groups, department-wise and course-wise.
- (i) Use of SWAYAM Platform for e-learning.
- (j) Scanned study materials delivered via e-mail and WhatsApp.
- (k) E-PG Pathsala study material links shared with students..

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

The University has chalked out measures for academic assessment and evaluation during the pandemic. For Undergraduate courses, students of 2nd and 4th semester may be promoted based on continuous internal assessment. Examinations for 6th semester students may be conducted. For Postgraduate courses, students of 2nd semester may be promoted based on continuous internal assessment. Examinations for 4th semester students may be conducted. Assessment shall be carried out both online and offline, i.e. assignments shall be submitted by the students using online mode and evaluated by the teachers through offline mode.

PLACEMENT SERVICES

Steps are also being taken by the University to make avenues for online placement of students. For campus placements, the Placement Cell of the University would be in touch with the firms or companies concerned and, as per requirement, online interaction through means such as telephonic interview, video conferencing, etc. shall be facilitated. So far the University has received several job offers to its students during the academic year prior to COVID-19 pandemic and none of such offers has been dropped by the companies/firms

as a result of the pandemic. Also several internship offers were made to the students during the current academic year and none of them have been dropped by the companies/firms. We are of the opinion that it would be appropriate and beneficial to the student community if the Ministry of Human Resource Development and the University Grants Commission could facilitate region-based online recruitment drive, considering the extraordinary circumstances prevailing in the country.

CONCLUSION

Nagaland University is encouraged by the immense support from the skeletal administrative staff available in the campus during the lockdown period due to which the affairs of the University has been going on unhindered despite the constraints caused by the unprecedented situation. We are optimistic that if Universities emerge from COVID-19 with trust from all stakeholders, especially the student community, post-pandemic higher education could look very different with online education having a key role in the teaching-learning processes.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. Pardeshi Lal, Vice Chancellor of Nagaland University, Lumani-798 627 (Nagaland). The article has been contributed by Prof. Pardeshi Lal, Vice Chancellor of Nagaland University, Lumani, Nagaland. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.nagalanduniversity.ac.in, E-mail : vc@nagalanduniversity.ac.in

NARSEE MONJEE INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES, BENGALURU

Progress of our academic operations at Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies (NMIMS) post the pandemic started off from where we ended the Academic Year (AY) 2019-2020. While AY 2019-20 was completed under pressure in the wake of the lockdown, we have begun AY 2020-2021 with the full knowledge that this is the new normal and Online Teaching-Learning Process (OLTLP) is here to stay. Consequently, we have impressed upon faculty and administrators that they have to continuously improve with the ultimate objective of rendering the OLTLP as lively and engaging as face-to-face (F2F) classes. In this effort, the university initiated special sessions by people experienced in the OLTLP including our Vice Chancellor as well as experts from outside. We organised mock sessions in small groups so that faculty learn from each other. Further, we are motivating faculty to collaborate with colleagues with whom they are comfortable, to walk into each other's classroom and give feedback on the class proceedings, the effectiveness of use of online tools such as polling, and breakout rooms as well as their areas of strength and improvement. We believe that this peer feedback will benefit every faculty enormously.

We have given faculty the freedom to choose the online platform from amongst MS Teams, Zoom and Google Meet. While, initially Zoom was lauded as being more user friendly, MS Teams has gained ground as it is more robust and conducive for the collaborative teaching learning process. Youngsters these days are technology savvy and although there are challenges for students in terms of the monotony of looking at the screen for long hours, technical glitches, etc. they have come round and accepted OLTLP as the new normal.

We believe that even though lockdown restrictions will be gradually removed, social distancing norms are here to stay. This would warrant a blend of online and F2F classes and therefore, blended learning is the mode of the future. We are preparing ourselves for the same across postgraduate and undergraduate programs. Regarding assessment and examination, there is an emphasis on continuous low stake feedback in the OLTLP and open book

Take Home Exams (THE) that will test critical thinking and responding to ambiguity which are key to Masters level learning.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. Suresh Mony, Director of Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies (NMIMS), Bengaluru-560 034 (Karnataka). The article has been authored by Dr. Suresh Mony, Director of Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies (NMIMS), Bengaluru and has been provided for publication in this Book by Mr. C. Ramakrishna, Executive Director, Association of Management Development Institutions in South Asia (AMDISA), Hyderabad-500 046. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.nmimsbengaluru.org, E-mail : Suresh.Mony@nmims.edu

NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY, DELHI

In today's advanced technology and digital world, e-learning is a boon and plays a vital role in the development of an individual as well as the future of the nation. The impact of advanced technology has witnessed the shift from conventional learning methods to e-learning methods. E-learning is considered as a revolution which is breaking various educational barriers as it is highly beneficial for the intellectual growth of an individual and helps in generating an intellectual society.

COVID-19 has forced universities across India, and the world indeed, to suspend physical classrooms and shift to online classes. The pandemic has transformed the centuries-old, chalk-talk teaching model to one driven by technology. This disruption in the delivery of education is pushing the educationist to figure out how to drive engagement at scale while ensuring inclusive e-learning solutions and tackling the digital divide.

On the other hand a multi-pronged strategy is necessary to manage the crisis and build a resilient Indian education system in the long term. Today world has the latest e-learning trends in the education system. Various blended learning tools have been developed by National Law University, Delhi (NLUD) during the COVID-19 lockdown period for the students and the faculty as enumerated hereunder.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Regular Classes through Online Teaching and Interaction of Teachers and Students NLUD faculty are taking routine classes through online tools. Initially, classes were attended by students on Zoom. But now, Google Meet is being used for online classroom learning.

TCS iON-LMS Module for Teaching Learning Aid

The University has subscribed TCS iON LMS system for uploading subject based teaching material and other tools. The faculty members upload subject based teaching material prepared by them with the help of unique user ID. Students having access to this platform and frequently use this material during their ordinary course of study.

Shared Google Drive for Routine Learning and Teaching Exchange Material

The University faculty has created a shared Google drive, where day to day notes of classes are kept for the purpose of sharing with students.

Digital Succour : Research and Educational Tools @NLUD

Accessibility of Digital Contents at NLUD Library

NLUD subscribes 23 electronic databases supporting legal education and research. The University has extended access of such databases to students and faculty with the help of REMOTEX software, which helps accessing databases to its students and faculty from their home. More than 22500 eBooks subscribed by the University are accessible to all students through REMOTEX software available in subscription based databases. More than 20000 law and social science journals subscribed by the University can also be accessed at home by our students and faculty members as well as books from Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, etc.

NLUD Initiative for MOOCs and Open Learning Platforms

NLUD has prepared more than 460 modules in the subject of Law which are available for free - online for everybody. NLU, Delhi has also prepared 480 modules in 16 subjects for Criminology under ePG Pathshala Project. Apart from UGC MOOCs, NLU, Delhi faculty have also developed various MOOCs under SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active-Learning for Young Aspiring Minds) on Research Methodology, Corporate Law, Environmental Law, ICT, IPR and Access to Justice. The timely efforts made by NLUD are now in demand being used by not only NLUD students but also law students from India and abroad as it is available for free.

Open Access Information Resources @ NLUD Online Research Guide for COVID-19

The University Library has created a Guide for free access to Open Online Resources for Faculty and Students. The guide mentions sources of various open education resources and teaching learning materials, which are useful for continuing learning and research processes during COVID-19 period. The guide elaborates about three web portals created and maintained by our Library i.e.: www.publicdomainresources.webs.com, www.openaccessresources.webs.com.

com and www.openaccessbooks.com which provides access to legal information material (Case Laws; Legislative Material; Parliamentary Reports, Law Reform Reports and other legal scholarships). The University is committed to assist its students and faculty with best available information not only in commercial databases, but also information available in public domain. We are proud to share that these web portals are available for free under open access and any educational institution or individual, research scholar can access and take advantage of such web portals. With the help of these web-portals, one can access open access books, journals, articles, etc.

CONCLUSION

The challenges thrown open to all universities in India and abroad by COVID-19 have been very competently faced by HEIs across the globe. The efforts made by the universities by shifting to online teaching and learning mode provided a new platform for the benefit of the faculty and the students. Admittedly, it may not be a substitute for classroom teaching and research, but in times to come all HEIs will have to adopt blended learning tools and online teaching and research is going to be the new normal. The universities have learnt during this period of COVID-19 that time changes very fast and the next morning is not the same. Accordingly, the universities have to be future ready.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. Ranbir Singh, Vice Chancellor of National Law University, New Delhi- 110078. The article has been contributed by Prof. Ranbir Singh, Vice Chancellor of National Law University, New Delhi. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.nludelhi.ac.in, E-mail : vc@nludelhi.ac.in

NORTHERN UNIVERSITY, BANGLADESH

The scenario has changed dramatically and apart from the human and economic costs of this pandemic, I see many positives emerging from this disruption specifically for academic institutions.

- Engaging in immediate, instantaneous connectivity with students by the teacher through online. Instant communication possible for university administrators with faculty, officials and staff.
- Flexibility in class routine scopes for 100 per cent students attendance in online classes and the scope for the students to look to the recorded classes.
- Rapid rise in the number of webinars being held by the departments which go live broadening the horizon globally.
- Information of holding of classes, attendance of students and monitoring the quality of classes are now easily available to University administrators.
- All official documents being transformed in e-file are being processed with incredible speed.
- COVID-19 has provided a level playing field for all universities as the role of big, gorgeous and spacious is campus not required as of now.
- It has expedited the transition to virtual classes and virtual administration freeing the individuals involved a huge chunk of time.
- The administrators can now achieve more in less time.
- Universities can now downsize their staff and or re-organise for broader work spectrum commensurate with their broader goals. The substantive savings of the universities in terms of rental, transportation and other related costs are being passed on to students by reducing their tuition fees substantially and investing in infrastructure for online connectivity and networking devices.
- Reduced transport pressure on roads augmenting the environment and incidence of road accidents.
- Provides scope for transparent appraisals of faculty, officials, and staff.

- Has realised family friendly status of universities by providing everyone the scope to work from home.
- Allowed Universities to enlist students beyond their traditional catchment area, leveling the urban rural disparity.
- Provided the universities a global opportunity to go global.
- May ensure holding of virtual classes even in post pandemic period.

At Northern University Bangladesh, we are now fully online so far classes are concerned.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. Anwar Hossain, Vice Chancellor of Northern University Bangladesh. The article has been authored by Prof. Anwar Hossain, Vice Chancellor of Northern University Bangladesh and has been provided for publication in this Book by Mr. C. Ramakrishna, Executive Director, Association of Management Development Institutions in South Asia (AMDISA), Hyderabad-500 046. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.nub.ac.bd, E-mail : vc@nub.ac.bd

O P JINDAL GLOBAL UNIVERSITY, SONEPAT

COVID-19 has been one of the most unprecedented and unfortunate crises of our times. Amongst many other sectors, higher education has also been significantly impacted. However, O.P. Jindal Global University (JGU), a private, not-for-profit, philanthropic and global university in India realized that to ensure that we live up to our commitment to our students and the community, and create a sustainable way forward for the Indian higher education landscape, we will have to show adaptability, agility and innovation. While academic continuity planning was of prime importance, we also understood the need for emotional support, healthcare infrastructure, building awareness, and creating new opportunities for learning. Therefore, amongst multiple initiatives JGU developed during the last few months, below is a summary of the 10 key reform initiatives undertaken at JGU to build resilience, ensure continuity, and create an impact within the higher education sector of India in times of COVID-19.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Academic Continuity: Transition to Online Classrooms

JGU transitioned to online classrooms in less than a week after the official announcement of an emergency national lockdown in India. The Information Technology (IT) department at JGU worked closely with Microsoft India to utilize MS Teams as the chosen platform for online classrooms. Since then, JGU has successfully delivered over 400 courses in which over 5000 JGU students participated. A Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, and an IT taskforce allowed for efficient support to the continuity of classes. Additional infrastructure was enabled to provide residential faculty members additional internet bandwidth and uninterrupted power supply for critical devices. This initiative culminated in the completion of over 8500 online classes. After a detailed audit conducted by Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), JGU became the first Indian university to receive the 'E-Learning Excellence for Academic Digitisation (E-LEAD) Certification' from the coveted QS IGAUGE for E-learning excellence.

Knowledge Creation: Webinars

As a part of JGU's institutional goals to continue to engage in dialogues which could create a wider social impact, and also create awareness, JGU has conducted over 300 webinars since April. The webinars covered a wide range of topics from law, to environment, which are very pertinent to these times of the pandemic. Keeping in mind the current socio-economic and political issues in India, and global issues around the world created by COVID-19, special dialogues were created with important stakeholders from within the Indian community as well as other parts of the world on areas such as the impact of COVID-19 on Higher Education in India and across the world, the transition of Universities to online learning, and the role of the Indian Government, Judiciary and Journalism in times of the pandemic.

Emotional Wellness–Building Strength, Support and Awareness

'COVID-Anxiety' has been directly proportional to the COVID-19 cases in India. Therefore, furthering our pursuit to ensure the emotional wellness of everyone at JGU, in addition to our existing activities at JGU's Centre for Wellness and Counselling Services (CWCS), we collaborated with Your DOST, one of India's leading online mental health and emotional wellness platforms. They support the JGU community with access to 24x7 counselling through psychologists, counsellors, career coaches, audio/video sessions, access to the discussion forums and multiple articles dealing with relevant issues, and access to a discussion forum for JGU. Additionally, the Jindal Institute of Behavioural Sciences in collaboration with the JGU Centre for Wellness and Counselling Services conducted a weekly webinar series on Mental Health and Wellness.

Launch of Online and Blended Learning Mode Degrees-Upgrade

Given the continuous state of lockdown across the world, especially in India, JGU worked on creating more online education opportunities. JGU partnered with upGrad, India's largest online higher education company. As a part of this initiative JGU launched two online programmes-LL.M. in Corporate and Financial Law, and an MBA degree in Digital Finance and Banking (DFB).

Learning and Development–Access for JGU Community to Online MOOCS and E-Resources

As members of JGU transitioned into studying and working from home, we wanted to enable them with opportunities to learn and improve skills that would

make them more effective in their day to day tasks. JGU in collaboration with Coursera provided the students, faculty and administration of JGU access to approximately over 4000 online courses with no charges to them. To offer a wider range of learning and development, JGU also collaborated with EdX to offer approximately 650+ online courses to the JGU community. Also, the JGU Library collaborated with external stakeholders to enable the JGU faculty and staff with easy, and in many cases free-of-cost access to e-resources and the stakeholders include Bloomsbury/Hart publishers, HBR publications, University Press Online, and Springer Nature.

Healthcare Infrastructure Upgrade

JGU has health care services headed by an eminent consultant surgeon and an experienced retired civil surgeon, and a team of well experienced residential medical officers are available 24/7 for providing health services to the JGU community with care, compassion and commitment. JGU also has an on-campus pharmacy. Further, it has upgraded the infrastructure to have Indoor and Flu wards which are fully equipped with Medical Gas Pipeline System (MGPS), Multipara Monitors, ECG Machines, Ventilators and Defibrillator to handle any emergency at the JGU campus. There are also referral services to Multispecialty hospitals.

Scholarship Opportunities–Created Research Scholarships

To provide the students of JGU an opportunity to advance their research skills and experience, JGU developed the Graduate Research Immersion Programme (GRIP) Scholarships. GRIP Scholars will be selected through a competitive process from among JGU students graduating in 2020 and the programme will provide a unique opportunity to these GRIP Scholars to work closely with our most experienced and highly qualified global faculty. These Scholars will be provided with comprehensive support from the university to further develop their intellectual competencies, academic and professional capacities, and entrepreneurial skills.

Global Immersion–Expanded International Collaborations

Given the restrictions imposed on international mobility due to the pandemic, JGU focussed on innovating new ways to expand collaborations in order to provide the students of India an opportunity of continued international exposure. JGU collaborated with the University of Arizona to create the

'Global Immersion Fellowship for Talent and Educational Development' to enable Indian students with an opportunity of international exposure without leaving their home country during the COVID-19 pandemic. The GIFTED Programme is an innovative way of promoting excellence in international higher education and could profoundly impact the future of knowledge creation, collaborative learning and global engagement. It is a flexible option to allow students in India to earn a full U.S. degree, or U.S. transfer credits, with full access to the JGU facilities.

Admissions Mobility–Adopted AI-Enabled Jsat

To alleviate the anxiety of students of India regarding their pursuit of higher education, JGU transitioned to a fully online system to conduct the admission process for all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. JGU adopted an AI-Enabled home proctored examination held under the aegis of the Jindal Scholastic Aptitude Test (JSAT). The test will be administered by Pearson Virtual University Enterprises (VUE).

Established Office of Digital Learning and Online Education

Given the transition to online education demanded by the current pandemic, JGU established an Office of Digital Learning and Online Education. This new office aims to build an institutional vision for the future of education through innovation, teaching, research, and experimentation in new modes of online education and blended learning. The ultimate objective of this office is creation of high quality global online education through collaborations with leading online learning platforms, university and industry partners.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. (Dr.) C Raj Kumar, Vice Chancellor of O P Jindal Global University, Sonapat- 131 001 (Haryana). The article has been contributed by Prof. (Dr.) C Raj Kumar, Vice Chancellor of O P Jindal Global University, Sonapat, Haryana. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.jgu.edu.in, E-mail : vc@jgu.edu.in

OP JINDAL UNIVERSITY, RAIGARH

COVID-19 pandemic has affected every sector of life across the globe, be it economy, businesses, manufacturing, or education. The rapidly evolving situation around the pandemic poses a whole lot of challenges to the functioning of higher education institutes in the country and whole world. Probably universities and regulatory bodies never thought of such a situation and we did not have a contingency plan in place. Universities, under such unprecedented situations, didn't have many options and were forced to go online. This sudden paradigm shift is set to disrupt the university functioning and creating lots of issues, challenges, and conflicts, but at the same time it offers an opportunity to evolve ourselves and transform the Higher Education Sector across the globe.

After the declaration of closing the institution on 16th of March, 2020 by the government of India and a further announcement of lockdown 1.0 on 24th March, 2020 followed by lockdown 2.0 and 3.0, the OP Jindal University (OPJU), Raigarh quickly adapted to the challenging situation and continued all its operation without any interruption. This paper illustrates the evolution and adaption of new online functioning model for the effective engagement of OPJU students and; their examination and placement during COVID-19 and lockdowns. For each item we have described the situation, handling mechanism and finally the observations.

GAINFULLY ENGAGING THE STUDENT COMMUNITY

The Situation

At the time when students were asked to leave the campus, the university session was running and the courses were in the middle of completion. At the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak there was a scenario of fear and despair in the society; and students were mentally upset and stressed. It was really challenging to complete the course with meaningful engagement and at the same time take care of students' emotional and mental status.

Approach Adopted

At OPJU we quickly evolved a model and framed SOPs to minimize the academic loss and actively engage the students in online classes, laboratories, evaluations and different related activities.

Online Teaching-Learning

OPJU was quick to adapt to the situation and shifted to the online mode of teaching-learning. Faculties started using Zoom, Google Hangouts/meet, Skype, Google classrooms, Moodle Learning Management System (LMS), Virtual Labs, Google forms, YouTube, etc to deliver classes, submitting assignments, and conducting laboratories. Everybody quickly learned screen sharing, annotations, lecture recording etc and managing cyber security and safety issues as well.

Usually any change is resistive and changing the mindset is difficult, especially of the faculties. We conducted many online faculty development programs to gear up to adapt changing pedagogies and helped quickly re-orienting faculties to the online mode. A weekly plan of the online class schedule for each class was updated in the Google sheet and was monitored by the respective deans of different schools. Even Deans, HoDs and VC used to join different classes randomly for 5-10 minutes to observe the class conduction and their feedback really helped improving the quality. Ph.D. course work and progress of all the Ph D scholars are being delivered and supervised in an online manner. As we were already using Virtual Programming Lab (VPL) over the model with jail server for programming laboratories so it didn't cause any problems except writing a lot of test cases. For many other labs, we used virtual labs available online and recommended by AICTE.

Continuous Online Evaluation

Research findings suggest that students learn better by attempting more and more quizzes and so at OPJU we started paying more attention to quizzes, case studies and short assignments for continuous evaluation.

The Moodle proved to be a very useful tool at OPJU in uploading course material, assignments, case studies, and quizzes. The students submit the assignments on Moodle that are evaluated by faculties and feedback was shared immediately. Daily short quizzes on all subjects of 10-15 questions with 25-30 minutes, with gamification, were very effective.

Webinars and Virtual Sessions

Our faculties are in continuous interaction with students and parents and spreading awareness about COVID-19 safety and precautions through emails, whatsapp, social media posts, and creatives including videos, graphics, etc.

To make students and faculties emotionally stable and to expose them to contemporary and future needs of the industry and market, we organized many webinars and sessions. During COVID-19, till now, OPJU has hosted 50+ webinars on the following topics:

- COVID-19 awareness sessions
- Faculty development programs
- Career counseling sessions for students
- Stress and anxiety management
- Impact of COVID-19 on Higher Education
- Expert technical sessions on different topics and fields
- Yoga and meditation therapy and many more...

Observations

- i After an initial inhibition, the students and the faculty both became accustomed and comfortable with online classes. Over the period of time, many faculties were enthused and explored many different new tools and platforms to enhance the teaching-learning experience.
- ii Students' attendance also improved in the online class vis-à-vis traditional class. Students also appreciated the sharing of lecture recordings and class notes/PPTs over Moodle / google drives.
- iii. We observed that by privately messaging one another behind the scenes, students were able to discuss and learn many things, which is not possible in traditional class.
- iv Classwise WhatsApp groups proved to be very effective in sharing the class scheduling details. Assignments deadlines, and keeping in touch with the students one on one.
- v. The research data shows significantly increased research contribution of the scholars during lockdown.

EXAMINATION AND EVALUATION

The Situation

To conduct examination is a major challenge for universities in India if the lockdown continues and/or universities remain closed for the next few months. Final year students are more worried and concerned because many of them want

to join jobs or higher education. UGC too recommended conducting online examinations if the university has the required resources and competencies. We at OPJU are having good IT infrastructure and competent manpower, however maintaining the sanctity and integrity of examination is the most important parameter to take care of.

Approach Adopted

We have decided that the university will conduct end semester theory examinations in an online mode for its final-year students during 15-31 June, over OPJU Moodle. We may follow the same online examination model for the intermediate semester as well. The practical examination, projects/dissertations, and viva-voce will also be conducted in an online manner.

We studied many paid proctored solutions for the examination but none addresses the issues of poor bandwidth and cross-functionality across devices and platforms. All these platforms are too demanding in terms of network bandwidth and device capabilities. Ultimately we started working hard to create a robust and secured platform and mechanisms to handle all the issues and problems of bandwidth, poor connectivity and diverse gadgets on our own using OPJU Moodle Cloud.

As a pilot and Proof of Concept (PoC), we have already successfully conducted a mid-semester examination of some of our students in the last week of April, 2020. Special sessions have been carried out by the senior faculty and leadership team to guide the faculty for setting question papers while maintaining the sanctity of the exams. This Pilot project was implemented across all the schools of the university for around 40 subjects and it was a great success. Two types of questions were asked in the mid-semester examination i.e. Objective type (Multiple choices, True False, Matching, One word) and subjective type (Short and Medium Answer). A dashboard was made available to the faculty members to evaluate the subjective questions and compile the grade sheet in an automated fashion.

We have systematically structured and divided the slots for online viva-voce over zoom which will be taken by Faculty in-charge and external experts from industries. Project and Dissertation too are being presented in an online manner in one on one session with the candidates. We will conduct the Research Degree Committee (RDC) meetings too in an online mode if the situation demands.

An online progress tracker is in place to gauge the progress continuously and address the issues.

Observations

- i. We observed that if faculties are motivated and trained properly they can create a very good questions suitable for online assessment.
- ii. We must have a dedicate a team of expert resources for handling any eventuality with moodle system and students' problems at the last moment and last mile.
- iii. Faculties must be trained on using moodle and students must be given multiple exam kind of assignments to make them comfortable and at the same time to test the performance of the exam server.
- iv. RAM and server computing power requirements must be calculated correctly and also the staggered logging and long password plays a very important role in server peak time performance.

PLACEMENT

Functioning of Career Development Centre(CDC)

The Situation

By the time lockdown started our approx 80% of students had already been placed but students and parents were anxious by the news items and social media posts regarding revoking, revising or delayed joining by many companies. At OPJU the internship is an integral part of the curriculum and apart from training and placements, CDC takes care of internships as well. In the new COVID-19 scenario, except IT, E-comm, and a few other companies, almost all industries are unwilling to take Interns.

Approach Adopted

We at OPJU could sense the campus recruitment challenges during the pre-lockdown period itself and shifted our strategies accordingly. In the sudden change of scenario, we were forced to cancel a few of the scheduled drives, but soon we started figuring out the companies whose business is on the rise during COVID-19 and quickly adapted to the new online norms. We started contacting companies them and extended them all the help and support for conducting virtual campus drives, from arranging online tests over OPJU MOODLE to Group Discussions (GDs) and Personal Interviews (PIs) in a virtual online fashion.

During lockdown we interacted with our recruiters and had talks with them one on one. Most of them are having opinion honour the offers made but joining may be delayed depending on the COVID-19 situation.

Career Development Centre (CDC) is helping students sharpening their skills and making them ready for the post-COVID-19 employment scenario. We are leveraging online tools for conducting mock interviews, preparing digital portfolios, reviewing resumes, and grooming them. We are interacting with each individual student and helping him revising career goals and preparation.

Internships

COVID-19 situation and subsequent guidelines from UGC and AICTE encouraged us to evolve our own model for internships, which is apt for the situation and changing scenario. We had many discussions with Deans/HoDs/faculties, brainstormed the situations, opportunities and options; and evolved a model, which offers different internship options to the students as below:

- i. **Physical Internships:** The students can opt for physical internships with a company-provided proper care of social distancing, sanitization, and company for COVID-19 situation assures safety.
- ii. **Virtual/Online Internships:** The students can opt for online/virtual internships, in the form of Work From Home (WFH) model, offered by various companies or by various websites like Internshalas, lets-intern, etc.
- iii. **Online Courses:** The students can opt for any relevant course from a credible online platform with approx 70-100 hours including hands-on with the technologies. They can club many courses as well.
- iv. **Research and Projects:** We encourage students to work on innovative research and projects. We encourage students to publish papers, join conferences and participate in different hackathons/competitions. Students need to specify a problem statement and get approval from the concerned department. He must submit a weekly plan, project flow, and weekly progress report and complete documentation to the faculty mentor.
- v. **Entrepreneurship and Innovation:** OPJU established an Atal Community Innovation Centre (ACIC) in association with

NITI Aayog, Government of India under the Atal Innovation Mission(AIM).We provide support and mentoring to the students to get into the entrepreneurship domain and make the best use of COVID-19 time. A detailed report - ideation, case studies, feasibility, challenges, finance, etc., is desired to get into this.

- vi. **University Offerings:** As per the guideline of the UGC and AICTE, all the schools of OPJU are offering project-based internship courses to the students like Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Data Analytics, Business 4.0, and Industry 4.0. In addition to above a few internships also offered for digital marketin

Observations

- i Core companies like manufacturing, automobile, service sector, may revise and delay the offers but we don't foresee any problems with IT, sales, marketing, BFSI and retail sector.
- ii. Many edTech companies, analytics organizations, and e-commerce firms have increased hiring and we need to explain this to students to realign their mindset with the changing market scenario.
- iii. Though the physical internship is very difficult but we believe that COVID-19 has opened up an entire spectrum of new Internship models and opportunities for the students, which is far better and broader than traditional internship.
- iv. Some of our students got selected in good companies at very good packages, as high as 10 Lacs Per Annum (LPA), through a completely virtual hiring process.
- v. We feel the need to revisit and revamp the curriculum to the changing market scenario.

THE WAY FORWARD

The COVID-19 pandemic forced higher education institutions across the globe to leverage the technologies and effectively use it to disseminate the knowledge. The situation hard-pressed the much-desired push to the universities to go digital in a full-fledged manner. It really helped OPJU to explore and experience new possibilities to do things differently and with greater flexibility.

We at OPJU strongly believe that during COVID-19 technology has stepped into the breach and now it will continue to play a key role in all operations of the university functioning. We believe that a 6 inch screen can never be a replacement of a 6 feet teacher and 6 feet blackboard in the classroom. However, we would like to and continue harnessing the power of technology-driven solutions in teaching-learning-evaluation, admission, administration, research, etc.

We are in the process of designing a new prototype and post-COVID OPJU will adopt this new blended model, which will be an amalgamation of best of both - online model and traditional practices.

The higher education world post-COVID will definitely be — Different.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr R. D. Patidar, Vice Chancellor of OP Jindal University, Raigarh (CG). The article has been contributed by Dr R. D. Patidar, Vice Chancellor of OP Jindal University, Raigarh and Dr Ashok Bhansali, Director, CDC, OP Jindal University, Raigarh (CG). The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributors only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.opju.ac.in, E-mail :vc@opju.ac.in, ashok.bhansali@opju.ac.in

POSTGRADUATE INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

The Postgraduate Institute of Management (PIM) being the largest state sector postgraduate entity in Sri Lanka, identifies itself as the 'nation's management mentor'. Having been a 'leader breeder' with over 30 years of existence in producing over 300 CEOs, over 3000 senior managers and over 30,000 training professionals, the PIM acted promptly. It was a clarion call for the learning community of PIM to collaborate in the name of humanity. This note describes fifteen academic activities of PIM that move steadily ahead amidst COVID-19.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Flexibility in Blended Learning

There was an encouraging response from the students in a variety of ways. The key was the adaptability of the changing context, which was essential. Instead of physical sessions, all learning involvements have to be converted to online. With a proven online Learning Management System (LMS), named Prajna (Wisdom in Sanskrit), it was an easy transfer (<https://prajna.pim.sjp.ac.lk/>). We also have a locally developed platform with the collaboration of a communication provider, Mobitel and the 'M-learning' through that has been found to be very useful. The way students positively responded to getting involved in sessions using Zoom webinars and lecture recordings using Loom technology has been encouraging. They were regularly guided by a series of messages.

Shift from Online to Hybrid Sessions

We conducted online sessions for an entire term and resorted to hybrid sessions, in becoming the first state sector higher education entity in Sri Lanka to take such an initiative. There is a sample representation of each batch participates physically in sessions at PIM while the rest of the batch synchronously connect through a live Zoom platform as virtual participants. The recording of the entire session is uploaded to Prajna (our learning portal) for future reference.

MBA Final Projects Tailored for Post-COVID-19 Issues

The final year project of the MBA programme of PIM is an invitation for the participants to apply what they have learnt in a practical and value-creating manner. The faculty of PIM who are the project supervisors are much geared

to work with their respective 'learning partners' in identified areas such as business revival, organizational re-structuring, etc.

'PIM Genesis' Providing Advice for SMEs

PIM Genesis, our business incubator, has started providing advice for the affected Small and Medium Scale Enterprises (SME) for their survival and success. There is a dire need to offer such guidance as the SMEs contribute to over 52 per cent to the Sri Lankan economy. With the involvement of PIM alumni in financial and other relevant sectors, this has become very demanding and highly appreciable.

Management Research on Multi-faceted Elements of COVID-19

Each faculty member is asked to develop a study framework in his/her respective specialization with emphasis of key managerial challenges in the post-COVID-19 era. They are supposed to work with an assigned student or a pair of students with a solid literature review and a sound theoretical underpinning.

Doctoral Deliberations on Post-COVID-19

It is expected to have a deep dive into Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) to understand the now common VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity). This will be a vital part of a series of virtual discussions.

Compilation of Case Study Collection

Plans are underway to deploy research students to explore cases of transformation from survival to success amidst COVID-19. With the guidance of the PIM Research Centre, several cases will be documented, presented and published as a PIM case study collection.

Contribution to Social Media

There was a need to switch over to online learning platforms and to conduct assessments through take-home mode. There was a high degree of adaptability demonstrated by the faculty. They did much more.

Linked-in has become a popular platform for the faculty to have constructive discussion on managerial aspects of post-COVID-19. Moving beyond mere posting of facts and figures, value adding conversations have been initiated by several faculty members.

Print Media Presence through Regular Columns

It was heartening to note the contribution of PIM faculty through regular columns in the print media such as Daily Financial Times (www.ft.lk) and Sunday Observer (www.sundayobserver.lk). Despite the limitations of printing the newspapers and circulating among the entire island due to lockdown, the complementary e-papers became popular. The appreciations received by the business community and the applications highlighted were very encouraging.

Participation in Complementary Webinars

Despite the proliferation of webinars of varying standards of quality and relevance, the PIM faculty contributed in an impactful manner through their participations. There were four such webinars organized by the PIM Alumni (PIMA) with the involvement of PIM faculty together with other PIM 'products' who are proven business leaders.

Take Home Examinations with Reflections on COVID-19

As the first response to the island wide lockdown, we decided to convert all sit-down exams planned for the end of the term to be take home exams. With the guidance provided by the faculty, it was a very satisfactory performance with due adherence to plagiarism avoidance requirements (through the similarity index monitored by Turn-it-in software).

Involvement of Alumni in National Level Task Forces

The COVID-19 Task Force appointed by the President of Sri Lanka, the apex body that take key strategic decisions in tackling the pandemic included several PIM alumni such as the current Director General of Health Services. The economic revival task force appointed by the President of Sri Lanka also have key business leaders who are PIM alumni.

Professional Manager–Special Issue

The flagship publication of PIM targeting the practicing professionals, will have a special issue published containing a collection of comprehensive articles discussing a variety of managerial dimensions in the post-COVID-19 progress. The faculty and alumni of PIM have both shown interest in contributing such informative and insightful articles. It will be an issue similar to what we did after Tsunami titled, 'Tsunami Challenged'.

Sri Lankan Journal of Management–Special Issue

Based on the research findings, comprehensive collection of research papers will be published as a special issue of the Sri Lankan Journal of Management (SLJM). Being the only Sri Lankan management journal hosted by EBSCO, it will have a wider reach to share the authentic insights of COVID-19 challenge. This will highlight the salience of success practices such as the use of tracing method to identify virus contacts with the use of military intelligence and healthcare personnel.

PIMARC Symposium in Post-COVID-19 Era

The annual research conference of PIM (PIMARC) will be done in a different manner focusing on the research findings related to COVID-19 in reaching a wider audience of research scholars, learning managers, administrators, decision makers and implementers. Based on the progress of faculty and student research, it is planned to be held in January, 2021 as a collaborative effort with the National Science Foundation (NSF) of Sri Lanka.

CONCLUSION

Time has come for us to shift from 'locking down' to 'looking up' in search of novel opportunities with fresh initiatives. The above fifteen initiatives highlight the need to strengthen the leadership development with right competence and confidence. It requires the coveted role of contributing as the “nation’s management mentor” in continuing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. Ajantha Dharmasiri, Director and the Chairman of the Board of Management, Postgraduate Institute of Management, Colombo, Sri Lanka. The article has been authored by Prof. Ajantha Dharmasiri, Director and the Chairman of the Board of Management, Postgraduate Institute of Management, Colombo, Sri Lanka and has been provided for publication in this Book by Mr. C. Ramakrishna, Executive Director, Association of Management Development Institutions in South Asia (AMDISA), Hyderabad-500 046. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.pim.sjp.ac.lk, E-mail : ajantha.dharmasiri@gmail.com

PUNYASHLOK AHILYADEVI HOLKAR SOLAPUR UNIVERSITY, SOLAPUR

India reported its 1st case of COVID-19 on 30th January, 2020. It was a travel related case from Wuhan, China. Since then (as on 8th April, 2020), more than 5927 confirmed cases and 180 deaths have been reported from 27 States/UTs. Although there is no evidence to widespread community transmission, 20 existing and 22 potential hotspots have been identified. Hon'ble Prime Minister addressed the nation on the eve of 23rd March and National Lockdown was announced on March 24, 2020. The Prime Minister's commitment to fight the global pandemic in India was implemented by millions of civil servants, doctors, nurses, health care workers, police officials and common people across the length and breadth of the country. Punyashlok Ahilyadevi Holkar Solapur University, Solapur (PAHSUS) also took several proactive initiatives to fight against spread of COVID-19 and protecting academic interest of the students.

EARLY SENSING OF COVID-19 AND PREPARATIONS BY PAHSUS

With news coming in from all around the world and first case of COVID-19 in Kerala, university health centre organized an awareness lecture on COVID-19 for all the staff and students of the university on 6th of March, 2020. This lecture was given by Chief Physician and Medical Superintendent of Dr V M Government Medical College, Solapur. University officials sensed the gravity of COVID-19 and decided to act proactively well before the national lockdown was announced. University called upon a joint meeting of all the statutory officers, directors of the school, administrative officers, medical officer, rectors and wardens on 15th March, 2020. This meeting was chaired by the Vice Chancellor. A group discussion was done to chalk out strategy for containment of emergence of COVID-19. Many decisions were taken in this regard.

1. Brief sensitization of all the students on campus about COVID-19 and immediate evacuation of students was done on 15th March, 2020. University Medical Officer briefed all the students and explained them about the rationale behind this immediate evacuation. This helped the wardens for smooth evacuation of the both hostels.

2. All the directors and teachers were asked to start work from home and assigned the different academic responsibilities such as conducting online lectures through various apps such as Zoom, WebEx, etc. They were instructed to prepare and upload the e-learning contents with assignments on Google classroom.
4. It was decided that only 5% non teaching employees will come for regular working from 16th March. These employees were those who belonged to emergency services such as health centre staff, security staff, cleaners and sweepers and statutory officers. Rest all the staff was instructed to work from home and do their assigned task as per directives of their heads.
5. Training was given to security guards for checking the temperature of visitors at the main entrance. For this health centre has provided a non contact infrared thermometer at main entrance.
6. Health Centre of PAHSUS prepared IEC material on COVID-19 and published on university website and also sent to all the schools, departments and affiliated colleges for circulation amongst students.
7. Health Centre has distributed masks, gloves and sanitizers to on campus high risk workers like security guards, sweepers and gardeners for their personal protection

HELP TO SOCIETY AND GOVERNMENT FOR FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

The containment measures to break the cycle of transmission and clinical management of those affected would require large Human Resource (HR). As per the appeal made by Central Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, University prepared an action plan on Involvement of Student Volunteers for fight against COVID-19. A nodal officer was nominated by university for the said purpose. Those students who willingly gave their consent to work for fight against COVID-19 was registered and WhatsApp group-COVID *Warriors*; was created and all the volunteers were included in this group. These volunteers include NSS, NCC students, students from Department of Allied Health Sciences, Alumni students and some of common citizens of Solapur. These volunteers are ready for any sort of activity ranging from field work, surveillance work, lab based work, awareness creation, etc. Various instructional videos, awareness material published by MoHFW is regularly

uploaded on this group and members are instructed to spread all these materials and videos to as many contacts as possible. It is expected that one member should reach to at least 250 persons and create awareness. Similarly all these members had been made aware of 'AAROGYA SETU' app launched by MoHFW and spread it to maximum number of people.

PAHSUS runs various paramedical courses through different affiliated hospitals and institutes. University has started a making a comprehensive list of all the current and past paramedical students and planning to train them about COVID-19. List of these students will be given to the district health authorities. District authorities can utilize this workforce whenever and wherever necessary.

School of Allied Health Sciences had made strategic plans for maintaining health of students in the testing time of COVID-19. Students of Nutrition and Dietetics department are developing special diet plan for lockdown period where it is difficult to get fresh vegetables. Also diet planning for boosting immunity is under process. These diet plans will be distributed to all students and staff for their reference and use. Similarly department of Yoga is actively giving online training in yogic asanas for improving breathing capacity and coping up with mental stress.

Action Plan for Setting up of COVID- 19 Testing Lab in Collaboration with Ashwini Rural Medical College, Solapur

A meeting of all the Vice Chancellors was held on 6th of April, 2020 with the Minister of Higher and Technical Education Shri. Uday Samant to discuss the issues related to COVID-19. The Minister directed all the state universities to set up a state of art molecular diagnostic lab for COVID-19 testing. The same was confirmed on next meeting with Hon'ble Chancellor in the video conference on 7th of April. Hon'ble Chancellor asked all the universities to utilize the disaster management fund for the said purpose.

With these developments PAH Solapur University is initiating the process for establishing the Molecular Diagnostic Lab which will cater to the needs not only of Solapur district but also neighboring districts of Marathwada and Western Maharashtra Region as well as Northern Karnataka Region.

Approach Adopted to Deal with Mental Health of Students and Staff During Lockdown Period

This could probably for the first time that many of us are experiencing the lockdown phase and that too of prolonged period. To cope up with the stress, anxiety and panic created due to the COVID-19, University approached Solapur Psychiatric Society for counseling and online help to the students and staff. Solapur Psychiatric Society responded very positively and they send a detailed timetable for online consultation. This time table consist name, contact number and their time for online consultation. This time table was send to all the students and staff of colleges. Students are encouraged to take help of this facility.

University has prepared detailed action plan to deal with COVID-19 Lockdown and post lockdown phase in the university campus. This plan focuses on three priority areas- safety of students and staff on campus, cleanliness and hygiene maintenance on campus, restructuring of workplace and redesigning work policies for effective social distancing. For this process of designing Standard Operating Procedure (SOPs) for work resumption after lockdown period is under process.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Approached Adopted for Conducting Academic Activities

For academic purpose the following methods adopted by all departments and colleges:

- Online classes were initiated for all the courses.
- Digital adoption for core activities has been started by teachers and students. Interaction is being done on SKYPE and other online media.
- Faculty members are looking after the course work of MOOC courses also. The number of students enrolled in MOOCs is around 300.
- About 79 teachers have submitted the monitoring report to NAAC coordinator.
- Expert lectures are being organized on how to prevent COVID-19 .

- Some period of COVID-19 was declared as summer holiday after which the university will resume online classes and conduct online examinations for final years students.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr Mrunalini Fadnavis, Vice Chancellor of Punyashlok Ahilyadevi Solapur University, Solapur 413 255 (MS). The article has been contributed by Dr Mrunalini Fadnavis, Vice Chancellor of Punyashlok Ahilyadevi Solapur University, Solapur and Dr. Abhijeet Jagtap, Medical Officer, Punyashlok Ahilyadevi Solapur University, Solapur (MS). The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributors only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.su.digitaluniversity.ac, E-mail : vco@sus.ac.in

PURNEA UNIVERSITY, PURNEA

At Purnea University, we have issued notifications for obtaining on line lectures/PPT from teachers/Guest Faculties for loading our websites. We have conducted over 10 zoom video conferencing meetings involving principals/senior officers/coordinators of special courses. The results are encouraging as we have obtained about 2500 lectures from Purnea University. On the advise of Principal Secretary (Rajbhawan) these lectures were pooled and made available to other universities as courses are common in all Universities in Bihar. The sailing is not as smooth as it looks. Sometime, we are not getting good lectures as some teachers are not tech-savvy for online teaching. But some lectures are very good and we are planning for getting copy right. Sometimes many lectures are coming at a time creating problem to sort out subjects or understand which course unit it belongs to or which semester, etc. So we have formed various committees and issued several office orders to handle, sort out, customize, make student friendly and user friendly lectures loading on website. Some of these committee are 'Digital Lecture Screening and Uploading Committee', 'Uploaded Lecturer Monitoring committee', 'Formats of Submission of Lectures/PPT', 'Website and Social Media Committee' and 'Daily Pressnote Release Committee' (to popularise these lectures), Plagiarism Committee (many teachers are copying these lectures from website). So, there is a lot to do, But I feel this process should go on as we are going to offer valuable notes to our students. It takes more time to prepare 50 minutes PPT than to deliver a 60 minutes lecture. I feel this is one of the important findings of lockdown.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. R N Yadava, Vice Chancellor of Purnea University, Purnea - 854301, Bihar. These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Prof. R N Yadava, Vice Chancellor of Purnea University, Purnea, Bihar. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.purneauniversity.ac.in, E-mail : purnea.vc@gmail.com

PP SAVANI UNIVERSITY DHAMDOD, SURAT

Pandemics are a relatively older phenomenon than we would commonly know but are starkly visible upon closer inspection of history. Some date back to centuries while some can be traced back to decades. Such pandemics and epidemics have a history of changing the course of history and the novel Corona Virus *aka* the COVID-19 is not going to be any different. While the origins of this virus lie shrouded in mysteries, one of the things that is most definite is that it has fundamentally changed how the world has been functioning up until now.

This public health emergency has everyone up their stacks and has shook the very foundations of human experience. In a short span of four months, the Corona Virus has put to the halt the behemoth juggernaut of human civilization. Researchers all over the globe and across the domains are working round the clock to find a cure for this. But all we have as of now as a cure is simply physical distancing and locking down places of human social intimacy. In just a few weeks, the world has gone from accumulating in public places to accumulating daily essentials, from crowding in spaces to assembling in queues. The workplaces have come to a standstill with everyone switching on their devices to work from home. Never before had anyone thought of an outbreak to be on this scale and of this magnitude.

With nationwide lockdown, Education was amongst the sectors worst hit. Educational institutions all over India closed down in an unprecedented move against the pandemic. As the news of the spread of the virus spread, the State governments responded by closure and suspension of academic institutions and academic activities till further notice. The domino effect of closures and suspensions adversely affected the learners. An estimate by UNESCO revealed that over 90% of the world's student population has been affected by this pandemic.

Academic activities across the length and breadth of our education system have been disrupted, which includes the postponement of several crucial exams like the Board Exams, the JEEs, IEEEs, NEET among many others. The timing couldn't have been worse. The pandemic came at a time, when our academic year was on the cusp on ushering in a new one. This has largely rendered many people clueless in terms of an unforeseeable future, which in turn has led many

learners and their parents wary of their future in addition to feeling helpless and powerless. With the pandemic showing no signs of stopping, the governments across the states braced themselves for another spell of Lockdown.

With the pushing of lockdown further, the fear of academic disruption loomed ahead. As a result, novel and innovative ideas kept pouring in to continue the spirit of learning. Thankfully to the technological era that we live in, Internet came to the rescue and provided a much-needed support to educational institutions globally. From online classes to online exams (in few cases), the paradigm shift from physical classrooms to online classrooms was the immediate and innovative transition for the educational institutions to facilitate learning. The bodies rushed into action and brought out various advisories and instructions on how to carry on learning with the E-Learning Portals and Online Learning Management Systems.

The authorities and governing bodies have been constantly and consistently providing guidance and support in this crisis. The timely updates on various problems faced by this sudden transition to online teaching and evaluation has been of great help to many academic institutions in carrying on their academic session. The clarion call by UGC and other governing bodies to transit to MOOC and other LMS (Learning Management Systems) was instantly and well received by educational institutes across India. This period experienced the transition to Online Classrooms and video-conferencing as a viable replacement to physical classrooms. With academic activities slowly getting back on track, the learner community has experienced a steady growth in their pursuance of learning.

Out of the many notable things that the governing bodies have done is the assurance of providing support to facilitate the mental well being of students during this extremely uncertain time. The UGC, spearheading this task, has directed the HE (Higher Education) institutions to make sure that the mental well being of learners is looked after. The UGC has written to various heads of Universities and colleges to set up helplines to provide emotional and mental support to address the psycho-social concerns of students. It has asked for counselors to monitor and manage these helplines. UGC has suggested the faculty to stay in touch with students over various communication tools like emails, Social Media, and other digital media platforms. The suggestion of formation of help groups has furthered this cause of UGC to ensure that the students are calm and devoid of stress. Working in tandem with Ministry

of Health and Family Welfare, the UGC has asked the former to disseminate various learning resources and practical tips to take care of mental health during the lockdown.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Strategy of the University in Dealing With the Crisis

At our University, P.P. Savani University, the managing and faculty members decided to make the transition to online learning in a timely manner following the guidelines of apex bodies. The transition was swift and soon we found ourselves taking online classes via video-conferencing. As was the case with most educational institutions, we too were on the last leg of completing the semester and found ourselves left in the lurch. However, with dedicated faculties, the quick transitions helped us a bit to gain lost ground. As this was completely novel for students and faculties alike, there were initial hiccups. But as time passed, we were able to overcome them organically. One of the noteworthy things that happened was the almost surreal organic engagement and development of teaching methodology and pedagogy. What began as recording lectures on YouTube progressed to transferring the learning content to online platforms like Google Classroom and has now become an effective tool in engaging students, and generating curiosity amongst them. With a plethora of resources opened for free access, the students are able to explore more and thus learn more. Initially, the YouTube lectures served as online content and later on Google Classrooms, Video-Conferencing via Zoom, and Google Meet facilitated the online classes. This has now matured into three levels viz. uploading video lectures on YouTube by faculties, further instructions on Google Classrooms (as written information has much higher retention rate), and Online lectures on Video-Conferencing apps for further clarifications. Engaging video lectures, innovative quizzes and assignments on Google Classrooms, and a light hearted approach to video conference classes has propelled the students to look forward to online learning sessions. The students have reported a pleasant change in their attitude towards learning via online platforms.

Taking advantage of Coursera's Coronavirus Response Initiative, the University has enabled Coursera, a popular MOOC, to facilitate learning beyond syllabus. The students and faculties have been provided with the MOOC's online learning courses which span over 3000+ courses to choose

from at no cost. Students and faculties have actively registered on the MOOC and are immersed in online learning.

Additionally, the faculties and counselors have remained in constant touch with the parents and guardians of the students assuring them with timely information. This value-based approach has relieved many parents of their worry regarding the academic future of their wards.

The engagement of faculties has been noteworthy. From assignments to practical tasks, from online practical to live evaluation via video conferencing, the faculties have emerged with sustainable methods in carrying on the spirit of learning. Faculties have taken special efforts in familiarizing themselves with the Online Learning Ecosystem and are constantly striving to deliver their best. The conduction of informative Webinars of National and International Stature further enhanced this cause. P.P. Savani University has hosted several Webinars which aimed at providing a rich academic experience with faculties and experts across the borders. Taking this opportunity, the University has conducted Webinars not only limited to syllabus but also going beyond the syllabus to promote enhanced learning. This academic exercise was not limited to students but was also inclusive of faculties, and professionals.

P.P. Savani University takes pride in the socio-cultural development of students which has been evident from the rich history of Kala Goonj, the university's annual fest of socio-cultural activities. As a part of this, the faculties engaged the students in various socio-cultural activities by encouraging them to showcase their cultural skills and talents. A variety of socio-cultural messages were showcased by the students in the form of poetry, songs, videos, and dance forms. Informative messages in the form of videos were made by the students for public awareness. Through these messages the students appealed the public to stay at home, taking care of hygiene, maintaining physical distancing, motivating during the stay-in at homes, upholding the law, and becoming ideal citizens.

Having noted the benefits of online learning, one cannot dismiss the importance of physical classrooms wherein the interactions, free-flowing and engaging discussions take place. Face-to-face teaching is a great enabler and allows for more active interactions than the video-conferencing. The students have also reported failed internet connectivity for continued interaction,

the lack of face-to-face interaction with the faculty, and the requirement of practicals, especially in the areas of Life Sciences, Engineering, and Paramedical. Despite these shortcomings, our University, Management and Administrative Team, and Faculties are devoted to provide the best learning in such a time of crisis. The entire university is constantly devising strategies to keep pace with the development in Online Learning technologies to facilitate holistic student development.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. Parag Sanghani, Vice Chancellor of P.P. Savani University, Surat – 394125 (Gujarat). The article has been contributed by Mr. Himanshu Khobragade, Assistant Professor, P.P. Savani University, Surat-394125 (Gujarat). The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.ppsu.ac.in, E-mail : parag@ppsu.ac.in

RAJIV GANDHI UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCES, BANGALORE

Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences (RGUHS), Karnataka a premier Health Science University in India, was established on 1st June, 1996 at Bangalore by the Government of Karnataka through the Act of Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences, Karnataka Act 1994 to encompass all the existing health science colleges and institutions which were earlier affiliated to the conventional universities in Karnataka with a purpose of ensuring proper and systematic instruction, teaching, training and research in modern and Indian systems of medicine.

The phenomenal increase in the number of institutions and students admitted to various courses of medical and allied health sciences warranted the need to regulate, monitor and standardize the curricula as well as the evaluation systems. The product of medical and health science professional education was to meet the societal needs for better healthcare. Hence, RGUHS had the vision to bring in uniformity in the standards of teaching and have a common curriculum for the various courses offered in different colleges across Karnataka. The medium of instruction is only English.

RGUHS is considered one of the top universities offering the best medical education in India with initiatives to make its syllabi for different courses of world class quality taking it to the forefront of Medical education in India. Based on the ever-changing scenario and also on the needs of the society it has been restructuring its programs and also starting new ones so that quality healthcare reaches the nooks and corners of the country.

During this COVID-19 pandemic, Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences prepared a charter to prepare its health care professionals with the ways and means available to resolve and combat the impact of the Corona in an effective way. Thereby narrating the innovative ways adopted by our University in three major ways namely:

1. Gainfully engaging the students' community.
2. Online training/ capacity building.
3. Manpower preparedness for COVID-19 containment as volunteers.
4. E Posters from all students.

GAINFULLY ENGAGING THE STUDENTS COMMUNITY

- Effectively protecting the interest of the students using a new paradigm for teaching and learning. It is a shift away from top- down lecturing and were more interactive. Collaborative Instructions in which students and instructor co-create the learning process. The instructor role is changing from 'sage on the stage' to the 'guide on the side'. This online teaching is being conducted by using various technological tools such as Google Classroom, Google Hangout, Cisco Webex, Youtube streaming, college Website, e mails, Internet and social media platforms, such as WhatsApp, Facebook groups, Medwhiz, zoom, etc. From this students actively construct new knowledge as they interact with their environment. This was student centered approach created in which students co-create their learning experience by giving feedbacks. This approach empower students as active learners instead of passive recipients absorbing information and reproducing it for standardized tests.
- Teachers connect with the students in ways that address their own learning needs by moderating discussions and activities in a way that collectively led students towards the larger learning goals of the class.
- Online classes has provided an excellent platform for course delivery in time allocated, allowing for the accessibility to students at anytime from anywhere.
- This online learning made student convincing enhance learning, think and reflect before communicating, increase the students interaction less passive listening and more active learning; a great sense of connectedness, synergy. Number of online classes conducted so far along with per centage of students attended is given in Table-1.

Table -1: Number of Online Classes during Lockdown and Percentage of Students Attendance

SL No	Faculty	Online classes	% of students Attended
1	Medicine(53)	11008	90-95%
2	Dental(30)	8348	90-95%

SL No	Faculty	Online classes	% of students Attended
3	Homeopathy(15)	2,039	82-83%
4	Ayurvedic(75), Naturopathy (7), UNANI (6)	18,143	90-95%
5	Pharmacy (71)	12,928	90-92%
6	Physiotherapy (79)	4,439	95-96%
7	Nursing (390)	1,236	70-73%
8	Allied Health Sciences (91)	2,280	85-89%
Total no of online classes conducted during COVID-19 Pandemic			

- **Improved Administration:** Time to examine students work more thoroughly; ability to document and record online interaction; ability to manage grading online.
- **Saving Time:** accommodate more students increase student satisfaction=higher retention and fewer repeats. Given sufficient time to revise the topic again and again.

This also made students self-motivated, self-starter familiarize with the computer and the Internet. As University is very keen on not losing or extending the academic year. We have even started internal assessment examinations online using MCQ's, PowerPoint presentation, assignments and seminars. Practical classes, clinical discussions were done by case based problems, case scenarios and assignments related to the hospital cases. Even undergraduate students require industrial training as a prerequisite to complete the course so they were trained online through industrial experts. University provided an opportunity for PhD students, postgraduates in submitting their synopsis, dissertations online which were reviewed online by the experts.

Online Training/ Capacity Building

Online training programmes conducted for various functionaries are given in Tables 2 and 3.

Table -2: COVID-19: Online Training Programmes for Students and Volunteers

Viewers by Technological tools: YT (Yutude), FB(Facebook), TW(Twitter). IG

Sl. No.	Date	Event	Topic	Recourse persons	No. of Beneficiaries
1	31.03.2020	Online training for NSS Volunteers	COVID-19 Awareness	UNICEF	500
2	01.04.2020 to 10.04.2020	Online training for NSS Volunteers of RGUHS	COVID-19 Awareness	NSS Programme Officers of respective colleges	10000
3	11.04.2020	Releasing of Video	COVID-19 : NSS Volunteers to enrolment as COVID warriors.	Dr. S. Sacchidanand Vice Chancellor, RGUHS, Bangalore	15,000
4	April-2020	Downloading of ArogyaSetu App	ArogyaSetu	NSS Volunteers and COVID warriors	35,362
5	16.04.2020	Online training for NSS Volunteers	COVID-19 Awareness	Dr. Pradeep. B.S Associate Professor, Epidemiologist, Karnataka State COVID-19 data analysis committee Centre for Public Health, NIMHANS, Bangalore Dr. Naveen, Associate Professor, Sri Sri College of Ayurveda, Bangalore	1000
6	20.04.2020 Medically cured information	COVID-19 Online Training for Karnataka State NSS Volunteers and Non-Medicals	COVID-19 NSS Communication and Safety	Dr. Pradeep. B.S Associate Professor, Epidemiologist, Karnataka State COVID-19 Data Analysis Committee Centre for Public Health, NIMHANS, Bangalore Dr. Naveen, Associate Professor, Sri Sri College of Ayurveda, Bangalore	1000
7	30.04.2020	Online training on stress management for officers and staff of Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports, GOK and NSS functionaries.	Stress management during COVID-19 Lockdown.	Dr. Pradeep. B.S Associate Professor, Epidemiologist, Karnataka State COVID-19 Data Analysis Committee Centre for Public Health, NIMHANS, Bangalore Dr. Mutharaju A (Project Coordinator, YuvaSpandana)	1000
8	April 2020	Telemedicine-12,000 NSS Volunteers	Awareness about COVID-19	NSS Volunteers from Ayush faculty	33,000
9	14.05.2020	Online training for Karnataka State NSS Programme officers and Volunteers	1.Turning crisis into opportunity. How to navigate the new normal of the Post COVID-19 world. 2. Living in the CrSiS 3. Leading in the Crisis	Dr. Kalpana, IAS Add Chief Secretary Dept of Youth empowerment and Sports (GOK) Dr.Gururaj Director., Academy of Creative teaching, Dr. Balasubramanyam Founder Swamy Vivekananda Youth Moment., Mysore	913

NSS Program for Students : COVID-19

Due to change in the regulation of government of India interns, Postgraduates and Alumni were taken as volunteers.

Table -3: Online Training Programmes for Students

Sl. No	Date	Title	Venue	WebEX login	YT	FB	TW	IG	TOTAL
1.	16.04.2020	Training of NSS program officers COVID-19	RGUHS	1380	0	0	447	147	1974
2.	18.04.2020	Training of COVID-19 warnors	RGUHS	0	4979	0	611	0	5590
3.	18.04.2020	Student minds on COVID-19	PIAHS	980	309	0	0	0	1289
4.	20.04.2020	Training of NSS program officers and Volunteers- COVID-19	RGUHS	1535	411	0	634	0	2580
5.	25.04.2020	2 nd Student Minds on COVID-19	PIAHS	0	0	4200	0	0	4200
6.	02.05.2020	3 rd Student minds on COVID-19	PIAHS	0	0	732	0	0	732
7.	09.05.2020	4 th Student minds on COVID-19	PIAHS	0	0	958	0	0	958

Student volunteers asked to register themselves as Corona Warriors to help the frontline workers in management of COVID-19. For the same 35000 students volunteers registered within a week of appeal for registration.

The volunteers were utilized from BBMP for Survey and telemedicine which Delivers information and communication technologies for the exchange of valid information for diagnosis, treatment and prevention of disease and injuries, research and evaluation, and for the continuing education of health care providers, all in the interests of advancing the health of individuals and their communities.

Telehealth is the distribution of health-related services and information via electronic information and telecommunication technologies. It allows long distance patient and clinician contact, care, advice, reminders, education, intervention, monitoring, and remote admissions. This made successful by undergraduates of all fraternity students affiliated to the University.

Manpower Preparedness for COVID-19 Containment

As Volunteers RGUHS has large number of student community from the different disciplines. There are approximately 2, 50,000 workforce like Interns, Postgraduates and Alumni who all were engaged to support and to prepare as responders for the COVID-19 pandemic. They have expressed that, they learned about COVID-19 and competent enough to disseminate learning, skills to practice and also to execute at the community/State/National level.

Participants participated as learners for public health preparedness and responses in the following events through online platforms:

- State- level coordination, planning, and monitoring;
- Risk communication and community engagement;
- Surveillance, rapid-response teams, and case investigation;
- Points of entry;
- National laboratories;
- Infection prevention and control;
- Case management; and
- Operations support and logistics.

“Students learned in such a way under guidelines of the teachers that, no sick should be deprived of health care services. And yet globally, at least 5 patients die every minute because of unsafe care,” said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General. “We need a patient safety that promotes partnership with patients, encourages reporting and learning from errors, and creates a blame-free environment where health workers are empowered and trained to reduce errors.”

E-Posters from all the Students

Student community were encouraged to generate Information, education and communication materials to create awareness and develop skills for self care and community safety to prevent from COVID-19 by using the versatility of the multimedia.

The students have responded with eye catching and informative textual, graphically simple, attractive and meaningful IEC materials against COVID-19. All the students were inspired with their innovations and general community also mutually benefitted by learning and practicing the skills graphically designed on COVID-19 prevention.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. S Sacchidanand, Vice Chancellor of Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences, Bangalore-560041 (Karnataka). These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Dr. S Sacchidanand, Vice Chancellor of Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences, Bangalore. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.rguhs.ac.in, E-mail :vc@rguhs.ac.in

RAVENSHAW UNIVERSITY, CUTTACK

When the state government of Odisha declared corona lockdown starting 22nd March, 2020 (Odisha was the first state in India to call for corona lockdown), Ravenshaw University was approaching the end of the even semester and a few departments were in the middle of the mid-semester examinations. But hostels had to be vacated immediately, and the university entered lockdown, with little time for planning. In spite of the disruption, all functionaries of the university, while adhering to social distancing norms, tried their best to offset the impact of the disruption.

The Vice Chancellor held periodic review meetings, online with faculty via Google Hangouts / Zoom to identify student priorities during the lockdown period. It was unanimously decided to focus on:

1. Course Completion and Student Counseling (by way of gainfully engaging the student community).
2. Assessment and Evaluation.
3. Student Placement.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

1. Course Completion and Student Counseling

Faculty-student Connect

- a. Teachers initiated student contact, in the first week, through whatsapp chat groups and phone calls, and gradually held focus group discussions on zoom. A few of these sessions were recorded and circulated in student groups for those who could not join because of unsteady internet connectivity (Fig. 1a, 1b, and 1c).
- b. Several teachers used G-Suite Google classroom for scheduled hours.
- c. Teaching learning materials, including references, handwritten notes, video lectures, audio notes prepared by teachers have been uploaded on Youtube in the public and unlisted categories, circulated in groups, as well as uploaded on the university website. (Fig. 1d)
- d. Students were encouraged to call or get in touch by all electronic means available. This was to enable engagement with students who used the

opportunity to engage in long informal conversations regarding their difficulties in approaching course units as well as doubts and anxieties related to the corona pandemic and post-lockdown plans for their final semester examinations, and fears about their career plans.

- e. Teachers recommended enrolment for short online courses and attendance at public webinars to hone their skills and learn new skills.
- f. All students including research scholars were guided on remote access to research databases such as JSTOR & ProQuest.

Counseling

- a. The Vice Chancellor reached out to students with a well-being message via the official Facebook page of the university.
- b. Students were duly notified of the activities being undertaken such as sanitisation of the campus and the hostels for their safe return to the campus, post-lockdown.
- c. The phone numbers of faculty and staff of the university counseling centre 'Sambhab' and other functionaries were duly circulated for counseling help.

Observations

- i) Students appreciated faculty efforts for online teaching and got in touch intermittently to apprise the faculty of their problems and to seek guidance. Despite being led to the large corpus of learning materials available on online portals such as SWAYAM and NPTEL, students preferred teacher notes and TLMs prepared by their teachers.
- ii) Students called to express their sense of pride and belongingness to the university after coming to know of small but significant attempts made by faculty and staff, specifically the production of 'RAV-Sanitiser' by faculty of the Department of Chemistry, and a faculty research paper on 'Digital Forensics Using Drone', to maintain the tempo of university life during lockdown period.
- iii) Students also appreciated the media presence of their teachers who had published informative and analytical articles on COVID-19 matters in the local dailies.

2. Research

Faculty continued to be actively involved in own research as well as guiding student research from the undergraduate to the doctoral level. The lockdown period has been used by faculty to finalise pending research papers as well as to plan and publish new research. (Fig. 2a and 2b)

3. Admin-Faculty Convergence

A series of six live webinars were conducted by Vice Chancellor Prof. Ishan Patro, beginning 8th April, 2020, as part of the university's Online Lecture Programme to encourage synergy among the various administrative and academic units in matters of work from home. The objective of the webinars was to support the teaching and research needs of faculty and students in the time of COVID-19 as well as to plan teaching and examination schedules in post-lockdown situation in line with government advisories. The virtual interactions, in an interesting simulation of normal practices of substantive interactions, helped faculty not only to stay connected but also to take lessons for similar models of interaction with their students.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

While some departments had completed the mid-semester examinations prior to lockdown, a few more were in the middle of the mid-semester exams when the first corona lockdown was announced by the government of Odisha, on 22nd March, 2020. For the latter, it has been decided to conduct online examination following due procedures for prior notification of examination time-table, pre-set time limit for the examinees, and timely assessment of the answer scripts. The following modes of operating has been decided:

- i) Examination time-table to be notified on the website 7 days in advance; not more than two examinations to be conducted in a day.
- ii) Question paper to be prepared such that answers are not easily searchable on the net.
- iii) Question paper to be flashed on the website and / or sent on whatsapp 5 minutes prior to schedule.
- iv) Student to send scanned answer script in pdf/jpg format within 30 min after the end-time via whatsapp or e-mail (A margin of 15 minutes may be allowed by the teacher concerned for submission, after duly considering the situation of the student).

- v) All answer scripts to be evaluated and score sheet sent to COE by e-mail by stipulated date.
- vi) The Students, who fail to take the test as per schedule, may be allowed to take the examination again, but with a different question paper.
- vii) Ph.D. scholars due to submit thesis during lockdown would be allowed 6 months extension; Viva-voce to be conducted through virtual platforms, with due checks and permissions.

STUDENT PLACEMENT

The student placement cell has been tracking the continuity of the sessional placement drive through virtual meetings and regular follow-up (Table-1).

i) One Online Campus Placement Organized for Wipro Technologies for Two Profiles.

- a) WILP (Online Test, Online Technical Interview and HR interview)
- b) StepUp(Online Test, Online Technical Interview and HR interview)

The Technical test for some students are still pending. However, five students, who took the tests during lockdown, have received their Letter of Intent.

ii) Virtual Pre Joining Formalities

- a) Pre-joining Programme, including uploading of relevant documents such as Pan Card, UID, Passport, Mark sheets, etc., has been started for all Wipro recruits. Both faculty and students are coordinating the programme with the Wipro Recruitment Team in the virtual mode.
- b) A few more companies are scheduled to initiate virtual pre-joining programme.

iii) Follow-up Activities

- a) The Placement Cell coordinator (PCC) is in touch with HR of the companies regarding the status of the offer letter and possibilities of virtual joining.
- b) The PCC, while resolving pre-joining glitches, has spoken to the HR of Zee Entertainment towards internship of second year students of undergraduate course

Fig. 1a
Teachers' Participation in Online Teaching
Online platforms used for e-Teaching & Learning

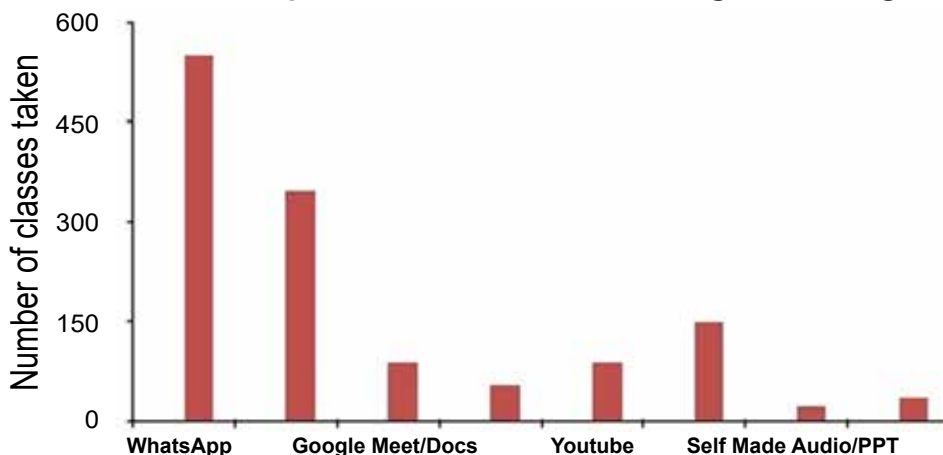


Fig. 1b
Faculty participation in Online Teaching-Learning

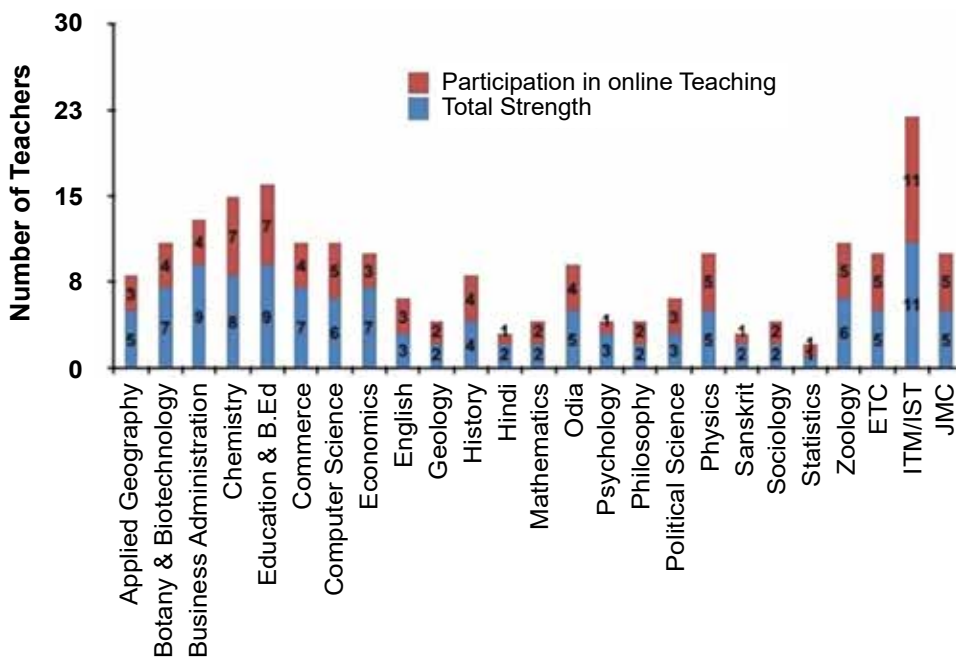


Fig. 1c
Teachers' Participation in Online Teaching

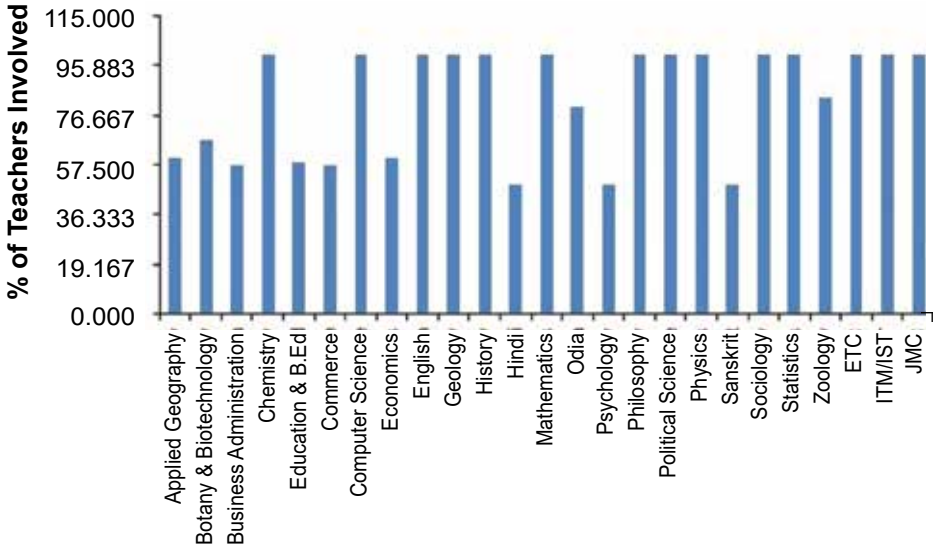


Fig. 1d
Faculty Participation in Online Teaching-Learning 1b

E_Content Developed by faculty

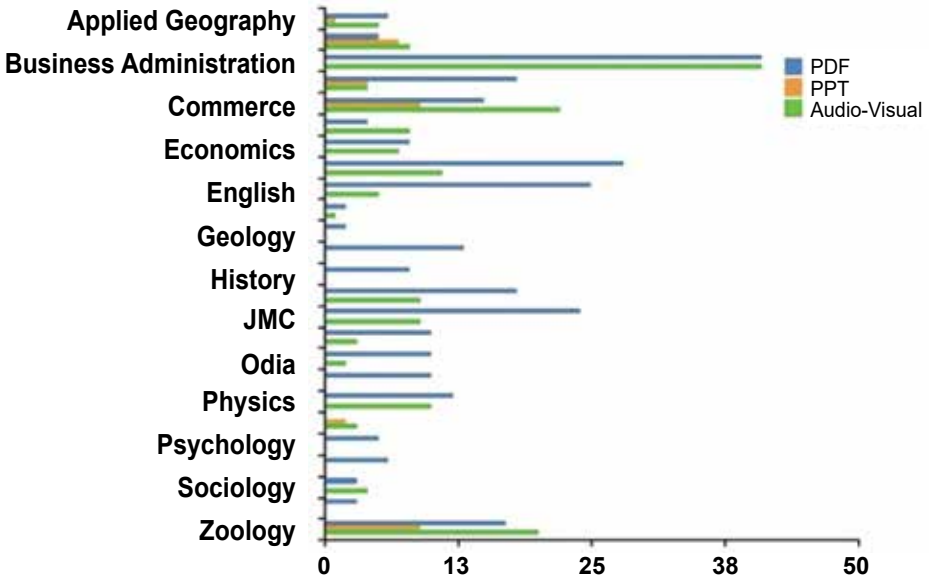


Fig. 2a

Research Output during Lockdown

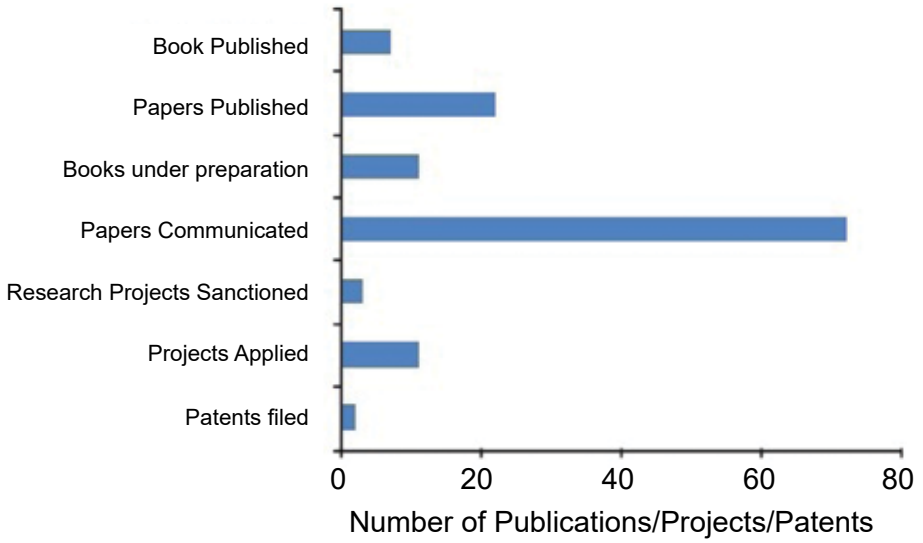


Fig. 2b

Research Output during Lockdown
Department profile

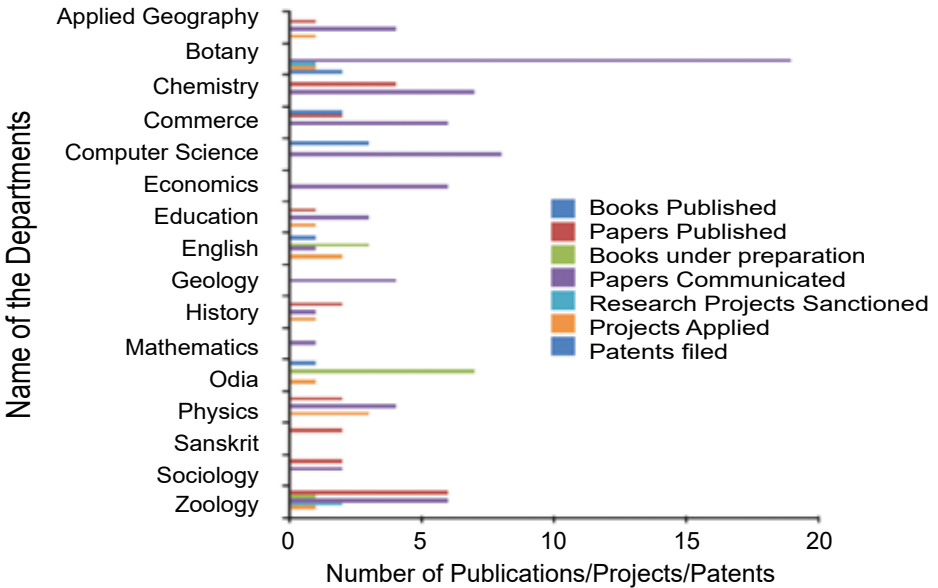


Table 1

RAVENSHAW UNIVERSITY						
ON/OFF CAMPUS RECRUITMENT DRIVE FOR THE SESSION 2019-20						
PRE-LOCKDOWN (STARTING FROM AUGUST 2019 TO MARCH 2020)						
SL.NO.	COMPANY NAME	ON/OFF CAMPUS	STREAM/DEPARTMENT	NO. OF SELECTED STUDENTS	PAY PACKAGE	NATURE OF JOB
1	DELOITTE INDIA	ON	B.SC - ITM, IST & CS	14	3.82 LPA	ASSOCIATE ANALYST
2	PAYTM	OFF	MBA	1	2.4 - 2.8 LPA	MARKETING EXECUTIVE
3	ATMECS INC.	OFF	B.SC - ITM, IST, CS, MATH., STATISTICS & PHY.	4	2.5 LPA	TRAINEE SOFTWARE ENGINEER
4	CAPGEMINI	OFF	BA, B.SC, B.COM & BBA	57	2.5 LPA	SOFTWARE TRAINEE / INFRA (SD) / INFRA (IMS)
5	SUNDARAM FINANCE	ON	MBA & IMBA	4	4 LPA	ASST. MANAGER CUSTOMER SUPPORT
6	INFOSYS	OFF	MCA/M.SC (MATH., PHY., STATISTICE, CS, ITM & ETC)	1	3 LPA	SOFTWARE ENGINEER
7	JUST DAIL	OFF	MBA	1	1.8 LPA	MARKETING EXECUTIVE
8	SAPANDANA SPOORTY	ON	BBA, MBA & MA - RURAL DEVELOPMENT	2	5.38 LPA	BRANCH MANAGER
9	INFOSYS	OFF	B.SC (ITM/CS/IST/PHYSICS/MATH. & STATISTICS)	57	2.19 LPA	OPERATIONS / TESTING EXECUTIVE
10	GENPACT	ON	ALL UG	29	1.5 - 2.7 LPA	PROCESS ASSOCIATES
11	COGNIZANT TECHNOLOGIES	OFF	B.SC - IST, ITM & COMPUTER SC.	18	2.52 LPA	PROGRAMMER TRAINEE
12	CUE LEARN PRIVATE TECHNOLOGIES	ON	ALL UG & PG	2	4.2 LPA	DIGITAL MARKETING / INSIDE SALES
13	CONCENTRIX	ONLINE	B.SC, B.COM, BA, BBA, MA, M.SC, M.COM	96	2.19 LPA	ASSOCIATES
14	SAKROBOTIX LAB	ON	M.SC - ETC, ITM, CS, MCA & B.SC - IST	26	1.8 LPA	ROBOTICS SYSTEM ENGINEER
15	PEOPLE'S FORUM	ON	MA - PSYCHOLOGY	6	1.5 - 1.8 LPA	COUNSELLOR
16	CENTROXY SOLUTION	ON	MCA & M.SC - COMPUTER SC.	6	1.8 LPA	INTERN
17	CHO LIFE INSURANCE	OFF	BBA, B.COM, BA, B.SC & MBA	6	2.8 - 3 LPA	SALES OFFICER
18	FEDERAL BANK	OFF	MBA, M.SC, M.COM, MCA & MA ECONOMICS	1	7.3 - 10.2 LPA	JUNIOR MANAGEMENT GRADE-1
19	DRUBUS TECHNOLOGIES	ON	B.SC - IST, ITM & CS		2.4 LPA	SOFTWARE TRAINEE
20	INDUSIND BANK	OFF	MBA & IMBA	2	3 LPA	MANAGEMENT TRAINEE - SERVICE DELIVERY MANAGER
21	AZIM PREMJI FOUNDATION	ON	MA & M.SC - ENGLISH, HINDI, POL.SC, HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY	FINAL ROUND PENDING	3.72 LPA	ASSOCIATE
22	BRITISH TELECOM	OFF	B.COM, B.SC, BA & BBA	2	2.3 LPA	TRAINEE ASSOCIATE
23	FEDERAL BANK	ON	BA, B.SC, B.COM & BBA	10	4.16 - 4.25 LPA	ASSOCIATE IN NON-OFFICER (CLERICAL) CADRE FOR BRANCH BANKING
24	CAPGEMINI TECHNOLOGIES	ON	M.SC - MATHEMATICS & STATISTICS	2	6.8 LPA	ANALYST
25	LIDO LEARNING	ON	UG & PG	1	5.6 LPA	TRAINEE - BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
26	COGNIZANT TECHNOLOGIES	ON	BA, B.SC, B.COM & BBA	8	2.52 PLA	GRADUATE TRAINEE
27	WIPRO TECHNOLOGIES	ON	B.Sc - MATH, STATISTICS, PHYSICS, ITM, IST & CS	74	1.88 LPA	WILP - WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING PROCESS
28	TECH MAHINDRA BPM	ON	ALL UG & PG	FINAL ROUND PENDING	1.5 - 1.7 LPA	E-COMMERCE TECHNICAL SUPPORT
29	TATA AIG	OFF	MBA	3	3 LPA	CHANNEL SALES MANAGER
30	ICICI BANK	ON	ALL UG	32	2.2 - 2.57 LPA	PHONE BANKING OFFICER
31	ANNAPURNA MICRO FINANCE	ON	MA RURAL DEVELOPMENT	FINAL ROUND PENDING	1.5 LPA	SUPERVISOR
32	RAMKEY	OFF	M.SC - CHEMISTRY & ANALYTICAL CHEM.	2	2.5 LPA	POST GRADUATE ENGINEER TRAINEE
33	ZEE MEDIA	ON	MA - JMC	FINAL ROUND PENDING	2.4 LPA	TRAINEE JOURNALIST
34	SBI LIFE INSURANCE	ON	MBA & IMBA	4	3 LPA	EXECUTIVE TRAINEE
DURING LOCKDOWN (APRIL 2020 - TILL DATE)						
35	WIPRO TECHNOLOGIES	ONLINE	B.SC - ITM, IST, CS, MATH., STATISTICS & PHY.	5	1.88 LPA	WILP - WORK INTEGRATED LEARNING PROCESS
36	WIPRO STEPUP	ONLINE	B.COM & BBA	FINAL ROUND PENDING	2.5 LPA	FINANCIAL ANALYST/PEOPLE AMBASSADOR

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. Ishan Kumar Patro, Vice Chancellor of Ravenshaw University, Cuttack- 753 003 (Odisha). The article has been contributed by Prof. Ishan Kumar Patro, Vice Chancellor of Ravenshaw University, Cuttack, Odisha. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.ravenshawuniversity.ac.in, E-mail : vc@ravenshawuniversity.ac.in

ROYAL INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, THIMPHU, BHUTAN

Evolving Academic Environment with COVID-19

On 6th March, 2020, all schools and institutions in the country closed as per the notification received from the Prime Minister's office. Following the notification for 4 months, the schools and institutions remained closed. Commencing with 1st July, 2020, institutions such as RIM and tertiary educational and higher level classes were given instruction to resume classes.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Immediate Response to Institute Closure

To ensure continuity of education, the Royal Institute of Management developed and implemented a 'Contingency Plan for continued service delivery'. The contingency plans provided clear step-by-step guidance on the way forward and identified the prioritization of activities and the implementation of a schedule for faculty and staff.

An e-learning program was launched bringing faculty and resource persons to the recording studio established in the RIM campus to carry out recording of the classroom session and to be uploaded in the RIM website for students to access and refer based on their convenience.

In addition to the e-learning tool, a variety of online tools were also used such as Google classrooms, Zoom meetings and discussion groups including the enhanced use of RIM Moodle for dissemination of students learning materials, assessments and discussions.

Professional Support and Training

The delivery of class modules from face to face lectures and interactions to virtual classrooms caused a lot of disruptions and unexpected demands to cope with the new reality. For some faculties, these challenges meant that they had to learn navigating on the net to post their lectures and interact with the trainees.

A support IT Team under the Registrar was formed to provide hands on training and support to all faculty and resource person needing support and training on use of RIM Moodle and managing technology which was the main channel for delivery of services and dissemination of learning materials and communication between the trainees and the faculty. However, the professional

support and training was primarily focused on the faculty since it was not feasible to reach all trainees although online support was available if required.

Curriculum Revision

Without the physical presence of the students, it was challenging to complete the entire curriculum so there was revision of the curriculum. Within each department, prioritization of units/modules was carried out and units condensed to include only key themes since in a virtual classroom it is challenging to keep the attention of the class for longer hours.

In addition, non-credited but mandatory programs especially pertaining to personal development of the trainees and others like speakers series, assemblies were all removed from the year's academic calendar and focus was put on the academic content of the curriculum. Exam based assessment was modified to meet the new normal and assessment featured more of assignments and quizzes instead of sit in examinations.

Increased Spending on ICT and ICT Related Activities

To cope with the increased time and resources spent on online teaching and learning, the institute provided data packages to enable faculty and staff on remote work mode to provide seamless delivery of services and guidance to the trainees and the institute.

Further, trainees who fall under the category of private trainees (not under government supported trainees and therefore not eligible for stipend) were provided data packages based on mobile numbers submitted to the management. However, this could be provided only at a later date.

For deployment of online and distance teaching technologies, the institute invested in purchase of proper lighting, cameras and other equipment for setting up of the lecture recording studio, mixing and editing studio.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Ms. Sonam Pelden Thaye, Director of Royal Institute of Management, Thimphu, Bhutan. The article has been authored by Ms. Sonam Pelden Thaye, Director of Royal Institute of Management, Thimphu, Bhutan and has been provided for publication in this Book by Mr. C. Ramakrishna, Executive Director, Association of Management Development Institutions in South Asia (AMDISA), Hyderabad-500 046. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.rim.edu.bt.

SATHYABAMA INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, CHENNAI

(DEEMED-TO-BE UNIVERSITY)

The COVID-19 Pandemic has made all of us to think innovatively to manage the crisis situation. Technology came to our rescue and we were able to come out with constructive solutions for every problem. We did respond to the situation in a very short span and quickly embraced the technology to ensure undisrupted learning to the students. We believe that, to endure the situation of uncertainty triggered by the Pandemic, it is the responsibility of the Institution, to provide adequate information and give proper direction and reassurance to all the stake holders. We ensured that adequate information reach everyone at the right time to avoid any confusion.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

The working arrangements or 'Best Practices' of our Institution to continue with the teaching, learning and research and to protect the academic interests of the students during COVID-19 are presented here.

Online Classes

The first and the foremost problem was syllabus coverage for the courses left incomplete due to lockdown. As an immediate measure, we have scheduled online classes for students through online platforms including Zoom, Google meet, Google Classroom and Microsoft Team. The students were informed about the schedule and the Department made sure that every student participated in the classes. The entire syllabus was completed within the time frame of the semester. The students were assessed through online assignments and quizzes and were given grades for the semester. The project viva for the final year students were scheduled in priority over other examinations to enable them to complete their course and earn their degree within the stipulated time.

Webinars and Student Development Programmes

Webinars on topics like higher studies opportunities post COVID-19 at National and International Universities, Crisis Management and Entrepreneurial development were organized to keep the students engaged and motivated during the lockdown period. Aptitude training and Personality Development Programmes were organised online to improve the placement opportunities for students post COVID-19.

Free MOOC Courses

Sathyabama has tied up with Coursera to offer free online courses to the students and faculty. This has given an opportunity to our students to enroll in courses offered by renowned universities across the world free of cost. This is a very good initiative which keeps our students and faculty members engaged and enable them to utilize their time productively.

Dissemination of Information about Programmes Happening around the World

The students were informed about all the events and programmes happening around the world in which they can participate.

Centre for Continuing Education

Sathyabama has established a Centre for Continuing education through which Online courses and degree programmes are planned from this academic year. We have tied up with Top Industrial organisations to offer market oriented courses to students. The students can pursue these courses as a part of their curriculum to fulfill their credit requirement for their programme. Sathyabama has also launched courses in Moodle platforms in varied disciplines of Science, Arts, Engineering, Technology and Management.

Virtual Mobility Programmes at International Universities

Sathyabama provides opportunity for the students to enroll in virtual mobility programmes at International Universities. Sathyabama has more than 200 partnering Institutions across the world and have tied up with the partnering universities to offer Virtual semester abroad programmes and summer schools for the students. The International office facilitates the virtual exchange mobility programmes, which offer courses involving transfer of credits with no additional fees.

Col. Dr. Jeppiaar Research Forum

Col. Dr. Jeppiaar Research Forum has been established to facilitate knowledge sharing on the thrust areas of research. The forum creates awareness on the advances in research and development activities happening around the world and to develop interest in various fields of research. The forum also provides opportunities for the students to discuss their research ideas with the Scientists of our University to convert their ideas into technological development. The research forum educates the students on publications and helps them in writing

research articles and converting them into publications. Research Seminars are conducted every week for Research Scholars in which they make presentation on the latest innovations and technological developments taking place in their field across the world.

Virtual/Online Programmes

- **Virtual Cultural Programmes:** The students were deprived of nothing including the fun element which they will experience if they are physically present in the campus. Virtual cultural Programmes were organized in which students performed dance (named as dis-dance) drama (named as Pan-dramatic) and many more programmes creatively named relating to the COVID-19 situation.
- **Virtual Alumni Meetings:** Alumni Meetings were conducted virtually in which our alumni working and settled across the world have enthusiastically participated. These meetings connected the alumni who are interested to support and give back to the institution.
- **Online Hackathons:** Hackathons were conducted in which students across India participated and offered creative solutions to the practical problems faced by various sectors.
- **Online Quiz Programmes:** Quiz programmes open to all students across the world were organized in various subject area.
- **Online Quiz Programmes to School Children:** To motivate and encourage School Children Quiz Programme named 'BRAINIAC' was organized and top three winners were given prizes and others are provided with participation certificate.
- **Design Competition:** Online Design Competition was held for students of Civil Engineering studying across the world.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. S Sundar Monoharan, Vice Chancellor of Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology, Chennai- 600 119 (Tamil Nadu). The article has been contributed by Dr. S Sundar Monoharan, Vice Chancellor of Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology, Chennai, Tamil Nadu. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.sathyabama.ac.in, E-mail : vc@sathyabama.ac.in

SHARDA UNIVERSITY, GREATER NOIDA

Amidst the countrywide lockdown to contain the spread of COVID-19 pandemic, Sharda University, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh has undertaken various initiatives and adopted best practices possible to tackle the crisis. The University has adopted a multi-pronged strategy- first of which was to ensure non-disruption of the teaching-learning process and timely completion of course curriculum as well as maintaining social distancing. This has been possible by switching over to an online platform through the use of the University's strong ICT enabled study environment and Learning Management System (LMS). Second, it has been engaging and giving wide exposure to students through a host of educational webinars and online training programmes organised by various Schools/Departments. It is also ensuring the timely completion of summer internship programmes as well as placement of its students through online mode. Besides, the University is not only taking care of the academic interests of the students but also the health care of students, their families and the community at large. Amidst this pandemic, Sharda School of Medical Sciences is playing a prime role in the fight against COVID-19. Highlights of the best practices adopted by the University are presented here.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Teaching-Learning Process amidst COVID-Best Practices

The University which offers 150 programmes through its 14 schools to over 12, 000 students from India and abroad has been successful in ensuring timely completion of the course curriculum without any disruption. Ever since March 20, 2020 (commencement of lockdown), the syllabus/courses have been duly and properly completed as per schedule (April 24, 2020) via online teaching by our highly qualified faculty. The students were also imparted lecture/study material through digital means. Besides quizzes were conducted on a regular basis along with assignments to keep the students engaged and in rhythm with the classes in an online mode. The students were not only engaged properly by their respective teachers, mentoring of slow/advanced learners has also been done in an online mode. They have also been given access to old question banks, to help them in their preparation for examinations. As per the UGC

directions, students have also been provided links to their subject resources available on Swayam Prabha platform. Above all, to ensure the emotional well-being of the students (as well as staff and parents), the University has provided free tele-counselling facility to them by trained and professional Psychologists/ Counsellors.

The smooth conduction of teaching-learning process has been enabled by the University's strong ICT enabled study environment with Sharda Tech initiated PeopleSoft, V-Attendance, TED Monitoring Portal, LMS and smart ERP system. Through the use of its high-end software, iCloud EMS, it has been successful in maintaining online time-table, attendance, assignments, lecture materials, etc. In this moment of crisis, the use of University's online e-resources, with platforms like J-STOR and reputed journals like Springer, etc. has undoubtedly come handy in ensuring unhindered research work by students and faculty. Besides this, students have also been advised to download the AarogyaSetu App for COVID-19 awareness. A fact sheet substantiating the teaching learning-process during COVID-19 is given in the following paragraph.

Teaching-Learning at Sharda University: Amidst Lockdown

A factsheet on teaching and learning activities-online classes, including theory, tutorials, interaction with research students and research work carried out during the lockdown period is given below:

- i. Lab classes on Virtual Platform and Server-based Coding Experiments- 976 activities conducted in laboratory experiments/studios/simulation.
- ii. Project/Internship Guidance to UG/PG students-1727.
- iii. Community study specifically in survey and data analysis-based projects on COVID-19 perspectives-195.
- iv. PhD Scholars engaged in research by respective guides-248.
- v. Digital lecture and study materials through ERP, mails and WhatsApp-18,016.
- vi. Digital material in the form of recorded video lectures-7,896.
- vii. Scanned Notes/PPT in soft files-10,120.
- viii. Total assignments given to students by the faculty-4,433.

- ix. Total Mentoring activity done-2,756 using TED platform and 831 slow learners given academic guidance by respective faculty.
- x. Total number of counselling done-76 students/people through mentors and helpline for major issues.
- xi. Number of Quiz conducted-764.
- xii. Group/ discussion/seminar/ viva/ presentation/ interaction/ etc-2,272.
- xiii. Total seminars conducted (with students' participation)-270.
- xiv. Faculty enrolled in online advanced courses in SWAYAM/NPTEL/ MOOCs-225.
- xv. Total questions uploaded by the faculty -15,00,00.
- xvi. Total sample questions given to students for practice purpose- 800.
- xvii. Total number of publications (by faculty) in research papers/ books/articles/ chapters-156 (Many papers are co-authored, with the involvement of students).

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

In line with its efforts to follow best practices with respect to student evaluation/assessment during the lockdown period, the University has taken various initiatives. Since continuous assessment has 20% weightage in a course evaluation the faculty members have conducted online quiz sessions, given assignments as well as conducted online internal tests as part of the continuous assessment. Almost 85-90% of the students have successfully participated in internal tests conducted by the faculty members. However, there were some limitations as 10-15 per cent students could not attend all assessment tests due to network issues, similarly hardware-based lab experiments could not be completed. Moreover, students could not complete internships, where they were physically connected with industry/ organizations but students who had already collected sufficient data could complete their projects on time. Prior to the lockdown, the university had already conducted the Mid-Term Examination (MTE) which carries 30% weightage in total evaluation of the courses. Therefore, the University is already through with 50% (MTE+CA) of their student evaluation despite the difficult pandemic conditions.

Engaging and Enriching Students through Webinars

A host of webinars and online training programmes have been/are being organised by various Schools and Departments in order to enhance the knowledge and skill of the students and give them ample exposure. Some of them are mentioned below:

- i. School of Agricultural Sciences organised a webinar on food Security and Sustainability in the time of COVID-Prospects and Challenges on April 22, 2020.
- ii. School of Law organised a webinar on 'Access to Justice' on April 18, 2020, emotional Intelligence during Pandemic on April 27, 2020.
- iii. Sharda Skills organised webinar and Online Training Programme on Public Speaking and Presentation Skill.
- iv. School of Media Film and Entertainment organised webinar on 'Role of Mass Media in Shaping Public Opinion', another on 'Future Prospects and Opportunities Available in the Animation Industry' on April 25, 2020.
- v. School of Dental Sciences organised a Webinar on Dental Practice during and after the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- vi. School of Pharmacy organised webinar on 'Current Scenario of Pharmaceutical Marketing' on April 29, 2020.

Sharda School of Medical Sciences in Service of Students/Community

Sharda School of Medical Sciences with 200 bed facility exclusively for COVID-19 patients has been declared a COVID-19 hospital by the State Government. The University is providing free of cost medical facilities to all COVID-19 patients, including medicines. Around 39 COVID-19 patients have been discharged as on May 01, 2020. A team of 300 people including doctors, nurses and medical staff are on round the clock duty to serve the community during this pandemic. Besides providing free medical services, the School is also engaged in spreading awareness among the students through webinars such as 'Duties and Responsibilities of Citizens towards COVID-19: Global Pandemic'.

PLACEMENT INITIATIVES

A disruption in the normal course of business brings in new opportunities to explore, rethink and innovate on the delivery of services offered. As far as placement activities are concerned, most regular recruiters have almost completed their recruitment cycle by the month of March and over 90 per cent of eligible students have already been placed. However, companies which have started their recruitment process late are on their job in an online mode (online tests and Skype interview). Table-1 shows is a list of companies conducting online recruitment for the remaining students of Sharda University.

Table 1: List of Companies Conducting Online Recruitment for Batch: 2019-2020

S. No.	Company Name	Branch
1	Oncquest Lab	Biotech
2	Nagarro Software	CSE, IT, ECE
3	Ishida India	CSE, IT
4	Crystal Hues	B.Tech All branch
5	Ginger Science	Biotech, Pharma, Mech & EEE
6	Successive Software	CSE, IT
7	Unicorn Denmart	M.Tech/ B.Tech Biotech, MSc./B.Sc
8	Premas Lifesciences	M.Tech/ B.Tech Biotech, MSc.
9	FIS Global	B.Tech All branch
10	Indus Valley Perner	B. Tech CSE/IT
11	HCL Technologies	B. Tech CSE.IT/ECE/EEE
12	WNS Global Services Pvt. Limited	B. Sc./M.Sc. (Clinical Research)
13	Think & Learn Pvt. Limited (BYJU'S)	B. Tech All branches/MBA/BBA/B. Com
14	Ginger Spice Pvt. Ltd.	B. Tech ME &M.Tech ME
15	White Panda	MBA
16	World Phone	MBA
17	Hippo Innovations	B. Tech CSE/IT
18	Moolchand Hospital	MBBS, MS

1. A virtual CODEVITA program (coding challenge) with Tata Consultancy Services has been organized for 252 B.Tech students. Based on the scores of CODEVITA, Tata Consultancy Services will provide internships and full time opportunities to the participating students.
2. CODUSULE, a coding challenge by Naggaro Software and Coding Blocks has been organized for CSE/IT and MCA students. The best programmers can showcase their coding skills. The prize money is Rs.1.00 Lakh per month.
3. MOU with HCL Technologies for providing virtual Cyber Security training to all B.Tech and MCA students is in the process.
4. Utilized the services of www.internshala.com for providing virtual internships to the students. 39 students have got paid virtual internship through the online platform with a stipend of Rs.5,000 – Rs. 15,000 per month.
5. Conducted the entire recruitment process of Byju's Learning through Skype and 6 students got job offer at a package of Rs. 10.00 Lakh Per Annum.
6. Conducted the selection process for summer internship of Career Launchers by making video resumes of students.
7. Arranged virtual internships for 23 students of MBA batch through www.letsintern.com.
8. Placed 15 students of MBA batch through www.firstnaukri.com in ICICI Bank at a package of 4.25 Lakh Per Annum.
9. Organized a one month virtual job readiness training program for all the students by our faculty on various technologies like C Programming, DBMS, Java, Data Structures and Algorithms, IC Engine, Fluid Mechanics, Thermodynamics, Robotics, STAAD, Advanced Bioinformatics, Embedded Systems, VLSI, etc.
10. Conducted a 15 days virtual training program for pre final year students on Professional Communication, Personality Development and Soft skills with the help of Sharda Skills (training department of Sharda University).

11. Work from home opportunities have been arranged for students with the help of TechConfer Technologies where the students will be mentored by an individual company mentor, having more than 10 years of experience.
12. A half day webinar on Career guidance for pursuing higher studies in foreign universities was conducted for all the students with the help of School of Business Studies on 30th April, 2020.
13. Half-day webinar on 'Digitalization: A Tool to Enhance Employability' was conducted for all the students with the help of School of Business Studies on 1st May, 2020.
14. A one-day Webinar on 'Current Scenario on Pharmaceutical Marketing' has been organized for Pharmacy students 29th April, 2020
15. A five-day webinar on 'Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)' has been organized from 11th–15th May, 2020 in collaboration with Cell for IPR Promotion and Management (CIPAM) and Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India.
16. A one-day Webinar on 'Dental Practice During and After COVID-19 Pandemic' by Prof (Dr.) Ashish Kakar, Senior Consultant, Apollo Indraprastha Hospital was conducted on 27th April, 2020 for all dental students.
17. A half-day webinar on 'Skills Required to Succeed in Legal Profession post Corona Pandemic' by Col. Atul Tyagi (Retired Advocate) was conducted on 17th April, 2020 for law students.

Summer Internships for Students of 2020-21 Batch

Summer internships play a vital role in career development of a budding professional, be it technical or a non-technical course. It helps the student to enhance their skills as per the requirements of the industry and gives the student an opportunity to acclimatize with the industry conditions/environment. Prior to the lockdown, the University had already arranged internships for over 200 interested students in over 30 companies, with a monthly stipend. Since most of the students have returned to their hometown due to the COVID-19 situation, some of these companies have given virtual internship projects to the students (which can be done from their hometowns as well). Some companies have

postponed the internships to July, 2020, hoping to take the students on a full-time basis, depending on the situation.

The University has also sought services of online internship portals like internshala.com, virtualinternships.com, letsintern.com, weintern.in, etc. for arranging virtual internships for the remaining students. Besides, it has also taken some inhouse initiatives in this regard. The School of Engineering and Technology has plans to initiate an in-house internship program for its students. Online student internship programs have been initiated in collaboration with National Productivity Council (NPC). Apart from this, the University is utilising this(lockdown) period for skill enhancement of students. It is organizing a month-long virtual training program in technologies like C-Programming, DBMS, Java, Algorithms, Fluid Mechanics, Thermodynamics, Robotics, STAAD, Advanced Bioinformatics, Embedded Systems, VLSI, etc.

FURTHER FOCUS

The university has already issued a circular to the students pertaining to online classes, internal assessment, tentative examination plan, evaluation and declaration of results. As per the UGC directives, the university has set up a COVID-19 cell to resolve issues and problems of the students related to academic activities, academic calendar and examination, including evaluation and results. The Cell shall ensure smooth operation of the university's helpline numbers/e-mail ids for students. It may use the mail id, COVID_19@sharda.ac.in for any correspondence with the students in this regard. Based on the COVID-19 scenario, requirement of social distancing and UGC guidelines, the Cell shall plan an implementable calendar, recommend the mode of assessment, examination and evaluation for the Even Semester of Academic Year 2019-20 as well as finalise an academic calendar for the Academic Year 2020-21. Students have been advised to work on projects at home on the basis of secondary data, case study, analytical modelling, etc. which do not require campus laboratory facilities. The Cell shall also formulated appropriate methods for assessment of such projects works.

The University is dedicatedly working towards a Research and Development Strategy. It aims to set up five Centres of Excellence and two high-end testing laboratories very soon. A Tasks Force has been constituted to develop implementable plan for enforcement/implementation of UGC quality mandates.

The university is also utilising this time in rigorous review of the system and processes and revising 15 major Standard Operating Procedures. On the infrastructure side, the University is already working towards upgradation/enhancement of the following facilities-digitization of library, including more quality e-resources, provision for readily available plagiarism check software, integration of LMS with library digitization, lecture capture facility and Smart Classes. The University has also constituted a team to improve automation on data management for calculating the Course Outcomes and Program Outcomes(COs/POs) as a part of the Outcome-Based Education (OBE).

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. Sibaram Khara, Vice Chancellor of Sharda University, Greater Noida-201 310 (Uttar Pradesh). The article has been contributed by Dr. Sibaram Khara, Vice Chancellor of Sharda University, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.sharda.ac.in, E-mail : vc@sharda.ac.in

SHREEMATI NATHIBAI DAMODAR THACKERSEY WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY, MUMBAI

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Main efforts by the faculty members of Shreemai Nathibai Thackersey Women's University in keeping the student community—ranging from Junior College to Doctoral scholars of their respective Department/College/Institution are presented here:

Online Classes and Guidance

Teachers undertook online classes to complete the syllabi, for doubt clearing, problem solving, practice sessions and internal projects/assignments. WhatsApp and Emails were extensively used for these interactions. LMSs like Moodle, Edmodo, Google Classrooms, and Canvas were used by teachers for discussion forum activities, assignment submission and online quizzes. Zoom, Skype, WizIQ, BigBluebutton, Duo and Google Hangout were used for synchronous sessions. Screencast videos and podcast were developed by teachers. Other tools like Google forms, Socrative quizzes, Buble.us, ezTalk, Kutuki, Open Matlab, Online Octave and LTspice simulation tools were also used by teachers. Resources from SWAYAM, NMEICT and ePG-Pathashala were also used.

Workshops, Seminars and Webinars

Numerous Seminars, Workshops, Webinars were organized for Students. For example, Online Workshops on topics like Digital Communication: Platforms, Contents and Tools, Statistical Analysis, Blended Learning (Mind Mister, Padlet, Jamboard, Kahoot, IdeaBoardz). Over 13 webinars were conducted during the month of May and June, 2020.

Many departments conducted online webinars for spreading information about the programs on offer at SNDTWU. To name a few P V Polytechnic, Department of Lifelong Learning, Department of Educational Technology, Department of Special Education, Department of Lifelong Learning and Extension and its Pune Sub-centre, etc. Such webinars were well-received by the students as well as by their teachers and parents.

Coursera on Campus

Under this initiative SNTDWU was given 10,000 licenses for free access to their selected programmes. This enabled the UG, PG students, PhD scholars, faculty members to avail over 4200 courses under a variety of domains like business, computer science, arts and humanities, personal development, information technology, data science, language learning, health, math, logic and social sciences. By July 17, total of 817 learners within the University have enrolled for 2927 Coursera MOOCs spending 4369 hours of learning for 6145 lessons. The student feedback clearly indicates that they are enjoying this golden opportunity and seem to be using it to enhance their knowledge and skills.

Exposure to National and International Speakers

Subsequently being part of the disciplinary networks, the details of the thousands of webinars conducted by outside institutions were shared with the students providing them exposure to national and international speakers of their own and other disciplines.

Online Examinations and Viva-Voce

Most Postgraduate Departments and number of Undergraduate Colleges (Conducted as well as Affiliated) conducted a variety of online examinations starting with Google form, online MCQ, WhatsApp submission of assignments, Google Meet Seminar Presentations, Zoom Viva Voce and so on. All the teachers made sure that they support the students in their time and space to perform to the best of their abilities.

Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB) Programme

SNTDWU and Rama Devi Women's University, Bhubaneswar carried out many activities starting from slogan writing competition, poster making competitions, preparation of quizzes, videos, song audios and comparative research. Students learnt various skills such as preparation of videos and its technicalities, review of literature and collecting secondary data, coordinating with fellow classmates, teamwork, time utilization in fruitful manner, communication and many more skills.

Psychological Support to Students-Helplines and Let's Talk, Tele-samvaad

SNDTWU created Webpages under Mission Fight COVID-19 with lot of resources for students on the URL: <https://sndt.ac.in/covid-19/stay-fit>.

SNDTWU recognized the need for support during challenging times of Lockdown. Faculty of Psychology provided phone in tele-counselling for the University Students. Department of Education Management created *Let's Talk* initiative to provide psychological support to their own students. COVID-19 helpline Google form was created on the webpage for students to write down their queries which were addressed by the staff. Lot of information and engagement was created on <https://sndt.ac.in/covid-19> even by Department of Physical Education and NSS Cell of the University.

Value Addition Activities

Activities like awareness quiz, Rangoli Competition, Quarantine Well Being and Adaptability Assessment Test, National COVID-19 Awareness programme on Women's Health and Wellness, lecture series on relevant topics (Department of Education Management), Tree Plantation, Yoga Day celebrations, etc kept the students occupied yet helped in coping with the pandemic.

Research and Internships

Students also undertook research studies in a similar way. For Example, Student of Resource Management took up Survey of ergonomics of Work from Home for women. Many students undertook Work From Home (WFH) Internship for digital marketing, research consultancy, marketing and promotional firms. Some students wrote articles on internship experiences, which were published in Krushival and local newspapers.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Assessment and evaluation have been always a sensitive issue and became more sensitive and debatable in pandemic. There was a lot of thought put into how assessment and evaluation could be done without putting students through any risk, and yet to evaluate whether they have adequately mastered the skills and knowledge they were supposed to.

Various strategies were used by the teachers to assess and evaluate students. The emphasis was on using combinations of traditional means of assessment,

and more online-friendly devices which would nevertheless remain student-friendly. Two examples are cited here, one drawn from theoretical domains, and the other drawn from field-based work.

In the former domain, students were asked to access the various online library resources available to them, and write literature reviews for various issues pertinent to their field of study. Wherever possible, faculty members used this evaluation device to make it relevant to possible dissertation areas which the students would work on, and also to domains they need to review for the curriculum. This methodology in fact gave the faculty members a good platform to make students aware about plagiarism and various means of carrying out plagiarism checks.

The field-based domain was in fact more challenging to work with during the pandemic, since there could be potential assignments wherein students had to go in the field and conduct interviews of teachers, students, principals, etc., or work with various patient populations, or people from the community. This process was duly modified and telephonic interviews were carried out and participants were requested to permit recordings. Further the transcripts were prepared and analysis carried out and the reports are submitted. The students conducted sessions online. They conducted quizzes for school students. Wherever required, the information was collected using google forms.

What's app was also used to collect the raw data for assignments. Group work was carried out online wherein the members of group distributed topics and then prepared videos of group presentation. Faculty members found that students were very comfortable with this modality, and supported each other when online presentations by small groups were taken up, on their work on pre-assigned topics. In fact, students possibly learn more from peers during such exercises, which push them to interact among themselves.

Additionally, collaborative tools like google slides, padlet, jam board were used to assess collaboration. The discussions were also carried out in Google classroom. Also, concept maps, mind maps were used as learning as well as assessment tools. The assignments were uploaded on Moodle platform or shared through Google drive, or email.

Discussion forums were created in moodle platform to assess learning of students. Also, using Google Meet, various discussions entered around role

plays of relevant cases. Adaptive assessment was used as per the need of the situation and bringing flexibility in assessment. Questions ranging from MCQs to short answers were asked on Google forms.

Further, audio visual platforms were used to conduct interviews and viva voce, and students were put face to face with examiners, who could ask various questions based on the students' work. Students were also encouraged to make PowerPoint presentations based on their work in front of examiners, who had already read the written report submitted by the students, since a soft copy had been sent to them in advance.

Discussion threads were created in Google classroom and the evaluation of student is being done on the basis of the way discussion is carried out by student, the depth of content shared and initiation taken in the discussion. The points were also noted wherein the students tried to be cooperative rather than competing.

Rubrics were used to evaluate the student's ability of convincing others, respecting others views and putting forward own points and responding group members rather than reacting.

Adaptive assessment was used as per the need of the situation and bringing flexibility in assessment. During internship this flexibility was brought wherein students were allowed to do internship in two different institutes.

Flexibility was also bought in terms of conducting activities during internship such as workshop, seminars online, sharing lesson plans, and planning lessons for online teaching learning.

Dissertation and internship vivas were also conducted online using different meeting platforms like zoom, etc. If some students did not have good connectivity, they were allowed to fall back on a conference call. All in all, students were allowed to use a modality with which they were comfortable.

Finally, all the faculty members who had been speaking on various webinars, or had colleagues from the field speaking on national and international webinars, allowed the students access to such webinars, so that a lot of incidental learning could take place for the students. This gave the students a peek into the real world outside, pertinent to their own discipline of study.

PLACEMENT PROCESSES

Accenture, TCS and Infosys are mass recruiter organizations associated with SNTDWU from the last 15 years. These organizations have adopted a new method for the recruitment process. Last year Accenture, TCS and Infosys has made their online portal for recruitment where:

- i) Colleges have to register for the recruitment Process.
- ii) The students' details are uploaded with all academic performance.
- iii) Portal after verifying eligibility criteria, shortlisted students received SMS from Accenture portal.
- iv) Online test is conducted at Institute using Procture like aspiring mind, E-litmus.
- v) Technical Interviews and HR interviews are conducted offline and results are uploaded on their portal for final selection.

The corporates like HSBC, Barclays, Colgate IT, Neebal are sectors from consultancy firms follow the process as the IT technology firm with the main criteria of Group Discussion.

After COVID-19 situation, these firms are changing their pattern and are planning to conduct online test like aptitude and Programming test remote methods. We propose to use online portal Like Aspiring Minds, E-Litmus or Reference globe for training students. These portals provide online aptitude and programming test. They provide detailed analysis of performance of individual students where students will be able to understand the area in which she has to improve. They also provide study material online that will help students to learn and prepare in such COVID-19 situation.

Examples for 2020 Batch Recruitment

Accenture/Barclays/Capgemini/Colgate, etc.

Recruitment Process

The process consists of three rounds.

Round 1 - Aptitude Test and Coding Round

- It includes general aptitude questions with numerical, logical reasoning and verbal and technical coding

- Optional Round. You can appear for this round if you are interested for the position of Full Stack Developer.
- There were 2 Coding questions and if cleared both then the students were eligible for full stack developer position's interview.

Round 2 – Technical Interview and Group Discussions

- It included group discussion as well as HR interview.
- The gd was mostly technical. You may or may not be given current affair topics.
- The interview was based on students' mini-projects and their achievements throughout the 4 years.

Round 3 - HR Interview

- In HR the non-technical things are asked based on location, salary attitude, knowledge about company, etc.
- Due to COVID-19 situation there are strong probabilities to have the placement activities fully. As mentioned earliest the the portals are available to have placement activities online with all the databases available at centralized location or multinationals have their own platform to conduct these activities. Now students are being trained to have the knowledge and know-how of the technologies involved and also trained how to perform better in the interviews.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. Shashikala Wanjari, Vice Chancellor of SNTD Women's University, Mumbai-400 020 (Maharashtra). The article has been contributed by Prof. Shashikala Wanjari, Vice Chancellor of SNTD Women's University, Mumbai, Maharashtra. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.sndt.ac.in, E-mail : vc@sndt.ac.in

SHRI VISHWAKARMA SKILL UNIVERSITY, GURUGRAM

Shri Vishwakarma Skill University (SVSU) is India's first Government Skill University set up by Government of Haryana. The University is conducting around 31 programmes at the levels of Diploma, D.Voc, B.Voc, M.Voc, PGD programmes and short-term courses in association with industry partners. The university has been working for past 03 years towards developing highly skilled human capital through its Skill Faculty of Engineering and Technology, Management, Agriculture, Applied Science and Humanity.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

The University kept its academic activities intact during the lockdown emerging due to outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic. Whole class room activities of the university were immediately transferred on digital platform. In phase -I, 10 licences were procured for running 10 parallel sessions which was further extended to 30 by the IT Cell of University. All teachers were allocated ID to conduct their classes as per the schedule, as a result the university could continue its uninterrupted academic work while staying at home. All classes are regularly being monitored by the university administration through a dashboard. This is to inform that till date 546 online sessions are conducted through the digital platform. The average attendance in these sessions are up to 75% - 80%. Average duration of these sessions are around 50 minutes. This is also to bring to your notice that up to 415 logins are reported in one of the expert lectures conducted by the university during this period.

To mitigate the challenge of student's involvement in digital mode of teaching, the teachers of university has adopted various innovative pedagogies, some of them are as under:

1. **Group Learning:** Group learning activity by creating groups of students on social media and presentation of learning outcome on the digital platform of the university.
2. **Interactive Online Quiz:** During the lecture, the interactive online quiz on the platforms such as Mentimeter, Slido, Quizwhizzer, etc. were conducted to track learning and understanding by asking questions and downloading results. The awards of points are based on accuracy of answer as well as speed of answering the question.

3. **Video Caselets:** In this method, the students are given/shown a video related to context of the lecture and before starting it, the students are given instructions to watch and understand the content of the video. After which the faculty and students discuss over the content.
4. **Virtual Labs:** The university has also explored possibility of conducting experiments as per the syllabus on the available virtual lab platforms

In addition to the regular classes, every day lecture by experts from Industry and Premier Academic Institutions are being organized for overall personality development of the students. The University has not restricted its activities for its own students but is also organizing Webinars from eminent speakers for the benefit of whole academic fraternity and students.

Another unique initiative of the University is to directly connect with students through a unique programme-'Meet your Vice Chancellor in SVSU Town Hall'. In this programme, the Vice Chancellor of university interacts with students to understand their learning experience through digital mode. Such one to one interaction of Vice Chancellor with students has instilled confidence amongst them that in such a situation of crises, the whole university is standing to support them to eliminate any possible academic loss.

This is to bring to your notice that, Shri Vishwakarma Skill University has also conducted all its meetings (through Digital Platform) including statutory bodies of the University by 31st March: All meetings were successfully conducted and concluded.

1. Meeting of the Court
2. Meeting of the Executive Council
3. Meeting of Finance Committee of the University
4. Meeting of the Skill Council

By taking all such initiatives, the university could transform this challenge into a new opportunity of learning.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. Raj Nehru, Vice Chancellor of Shri Vishwakarma Skill University, Gurugram-122003 (Haryana). The article has been contributed by Prof. Raj Nehru, Vice Chancellor of Shri Vishwakarma Skill University, Gurugram, Haryana. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.svsu.ac.in, E-mail : vc@svsu.ac.in

SIKKIM STATE UNIVERSITY, GANGTOK

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Students of Sikkim State University, Gangtok spread over the entire state of Sikkim, mostly in the geographically hilly terrain inaccessible to internet facilities have been gainfully engaged by means of a humble digital WhatsApp Class by creating a WhatsApp group for exchanging 'virtual class room notes'. For this, subject-wise WhatsApp Coordinators have been appointed whose Whatsapp numbers have been circulated to all the students for query and availing virtual class notes if desired by students during specified period of the day almost similar to the normal day of routine class room.

As the smart mobile phones are possessed by all the students, they enjoy the routine class room 'subject notes' at their disposal through the designated coordinators. Subject coordinators collect notes from other colleagues and circulate the same to students connected to the WhatsApp Group by name 'SSUSWAG'. Students are happy with this 'survival arrangement' designed for the lockdown period. Students are even allowed to contact the coordinators and other class teachers over phone if they so desired during the specified period of the day. Coordinators have been requested to make themselves available at their residence as if they are in the real class room routines to provide the service as per the needs of students. In addition, students have been requested to glue with the Free Educational Channel arranged by the Government in order to enhance their general knowledge besides their subject matters. They are also requested to Install Google Classroom and create Google Account to avail the benefit of free web service useful for the submission of dissertation works/topics allotted to them by respective class teachers through WhatsApp Group.

Web links of relevant OER too are provided to students to complete their dissertation works assigned to them as and when Corona lockdown opens. Further, extracts from a number of downloaded files related to the subject matters along with their weblinks compiled by respective teacher-coordinators are being provided to students to facilitate the completion of their courses during lockdown period. Furthermore, they have been asked to write a general essay on COVID-19 as to how pandemic could be overcome only through self-

quarantine and strict adherence to guidelines provided by government. Thus, our best practice includes primarily to engage students in WhatsApp Class Room and sensitising them to maintain social distancing in their routine activities while they are at home to overcome COVID-19 pandemic. With the passage of time, our teachers have started a Google Class Room platform to engage the students and the new arrangement found that Google Class Room App was more effective over WhatsApp based learning. With the new arrangements, three Sessional Tests for each subject have been successfully completed using Google Form and MS Form.

However, questions were of short answer and multiple choice type unlike that of normal classes. Conduct of theory classes using the Google Class Room App was effective as long as internet connectivity provides good service. However, many complained that they could not avail the benefit of online classes due to poor internet connectivity and low bandwidth.

Moreover, many poor students did not have opportunity of possessing smart mobile gadgets, computers and other digital appliances to avail the internet based education. Given the constraints in theory classes, students can not be engaged for practical classes unless a kind of Virtual Lab gets established for conducting practice session. Thus, practical class is a problem for internet based learning to address the students' requirements as was managed for theory classes.

Development of quality e-contents and placing the same in the students accessible digital platform like YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook, etc. have become a serious challenge to teaching communities as the e-learning depends on e-quality and ICT. Second challenge being faced by university is about the conduct of Examination whether to hold the exam physically or through internet in view of COVID-19 situation. Corona in Sikkim is relatively less as compared to other states, university is planning to conduct the exam physically with due permission from the Government.

Sikkim State University being a new university with less number of departments and students, our dedicated teachers have successfully managed to protect their interest through the internet based teaching-learning process. Constraints being faced by university, teaching communities and students are being improved and made sustainable as the pandemic COVID-19 has compelled to alter the conventional mode of education to online mode during COVID-19 situation.

However, in the post COVID-19 situation, Blended Learning or Flipped Learning Model seemed to be the future Model of Education. Thanks to our learned teachers for converting harsh COVID-19 crisis into an opportunity in making this happen.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. GKN Chhetry, Vice Chancellor of Sikkim State University, Gangtok-737 102 (Sikkim). The article has been contributed by Prof. GKN Chhetry, Vice Chancellor of Sikkim State University, Gangtok, Sikkim. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.sikkimstateuniversity.in, E-mail : gknc2004@yahoo.co.in

SRI DEVARAJ URS ACADEMY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH, KOLAR

Higher education has been facing an unprecedented situation in the face of the corona pandemic that has thrown up challenges of a new kind necessitating change in curriculum delivery. Administrators, faculty and students are orienting themselves to communicate in spite of isolation imposed to ensure there is no break in education.

Sri Devaraj Urs Academy of Higher Education and Research has students from Programs offered by Faculty of Medicine and Faculty of Allied Health and Basic Sciences

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

The Academy has a Learning Management System (LMS) which is an online learning platform for student engagement beyond classroom and has enrolled all the faculty and students. During this unexpected period of student isolation, LMS is being used effectively to engage students during class hours too.

Schedule of classes prepared by departments along with mode of delivery is circulated to student community through class representatives and WhatsApp. Timely upload of e contents as per teaching schedule is practiced which is monitored by concerned HODs. Feedback is obtained by students regarding effectiveness of the e content uploaded and suggestions by students are incorporated during further delivery.

The time table prepared by each department is shared with faculty and students, so that they are aware of the classes in that particular month. The various modes of delivery of e content are audio and video lectures, PowerPoint presentations, and video recording of lectures, pages and weblinks to resources. Faculty prepare their Power point presentations/with or without voice recording and upload on this platform. They also give links which the student can access. The students can go through these slides before the online class for better understanding. Flipped class rooms are used by faculty during online sessions by case based discussions and application exercises to encourage participatory learning.

Since LMS is primarily being used for asynchronous classes, online classes are engaged using Google meet, Zoom, Skype and Big blue button are being used

for synchronous classes. Classes are scheduled as per time table and intimated to student representatives and one hour classes are being conducted. Due to lack of access of few students to internet, the recordings are uploaded on LMS.

Some of the applications have restriction on number of students and also duration. Students' expressed online teaching and PPT with audio is helping them to understand better. They can ask queries directly or through the chat option in the applications, thus sessions can be made interactive as well.

Academic mentoring is taking place through WhatsApp where mentors clarify doubts and administer assignments to small groups of mentees. Faculty share articles related to topics in curriculum and post analytical questions related to the article to encourage self-directed learning. Some of the Teachers are in touch with students on WhatsApp to clarify their doubts individually and also counsel them if required, this may make them feel that they are in touch with the subjects and not lagging behind.

Research supervisors are monitoring the progress of research scholars through google hang out meetings and WhatsApp discussions. PG departments are active on Skype and zoom meetings for case based discussions & journal club. PG departments are active on Skype and zoom meetings for case based discussions & journal club.

University hosted events and kept students engaged by conducting online competitions in painting/sketching, photography, storytelling and poetry which allowed students to take part in extracurricular activities and beat the boredom of isolation.

Students have prepared colleges with messages regarding precautions to be taken during this period to stay safe.

The common problems encountered are access of internet, speed of internet and technical problems leading to loss of connectivity. Faculty are gearing up for this new role of online delivery of classes and by training the faculty in acquiring this new skill, University has overcome the main hurdle for transition from traditional teaching to online teaching. It is interesting to note that students being tech savvy have adapted to the online delivery of curricular content with least resistance.

Links to authentic information regarding the ongoing pandemic have been provided to students to combat misinformation due to fake news peddling by

non-verified sources. Psychological stress due to lockdown and isolation with social distancing has been addressed by sending Video of counselling that boosts their morale and improves their psychological health.

Various learning platforms are being offered for free use for a specific period and Institutions can avail these services to facilitate online learning

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Learning Management System has provision for posting assignments and test papers including objective questions & essays. The assignments are being uploaded on the Learning Management System platform in the form of questions (long essay, short essay and short answer). Students have to complete the same and submit online, Learning Management System has provision for posting assignments and test papers including objective questions and essays which is evaluated and the students can access LMS for grades and feedback.

The other forms of assessment are Objective questions in the form of Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs), extended matching, drag & drop, true or false and fill in the blanks which are administered along with e lectures to assess learning. Google forms are also used for assessment.

Online placements: Anxiety in students due to delay in examinations and placements are being allayed by proper communication with students, University office, placement cell & employers.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. G Pradeep Kumar, Vice Chancellor of Sri Devaraj URS Academy of Higher Education and Research, Kolar- 563 103, Karnataka. The article has been contributed by Dr. G Pradeep Kumar, Vice Chancellor of Sri Devaraj URS Academy of Higher Education and Research, Kolar (Karnataka). The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.sduu.ac.in, E-mail : vicechancellor@sduu.ac.in

SWAMI VIVEKANAND SUBHARTI UNIVERSITY, MEERUT

Wellness- A Holistic Loom

“A healthy mind resides in a healthy body”. Our nation of 1.3 billion people, is earning a dubious distinction of moving towards many firsts and to quote a few, Indian youth is leading worldwide in terms of stress levels. We are the Diabetes capital of the world and India is also there at top when it is about the cancers of the human body, etc. These disabling and debilitating disorders can be easily prevented effectively by imparting knowledge regarding wellness and sharing ‘hands on’ experience of following ‘Simple Health Tips’.

The primary objective of this healthy practice was to effectively deliver health care, by acknowledging the changing disease burden, in order for timely interventions. This can prevent the high proportions of morbidity and mortality thus reducing out of pocket expenditures.

Wellness During COVID-19 Times

Swami Vivekanand Subharti University is a health promoting University and the healthy practice of ‘Wellness- A Holistic Loom’ has been running successfully since past two years. However during these unforeseen, testing and trying times, it was the need of the hour to create awareness with regard to modifications of lifestyle with simple techniques on an everyday basis so as to cope up with the wellness of heart, mind and soul. The University went one step ahead with including Happiness as an integral part of wellness loom. The dedicated teams have been delivering didactic lectures and online practical demonstrations in all the constituent colleges of the University keeping in mind the health care needs of individual as well as the society.

The Wellness Centre kept working tirelessly for everyone irrespective of the hierarchy of the University. The program catered to the overall Wellness of the individuals with a combination of body services, such as fitness services, personal training, counseling and nutrition consultancy along with alternate services such as chiropractic, acupuncture, etc.

The stress was laid on how to keep oneself happy and healthy by online demonstration of techniques like Pranayama, Relaxation Techniques, Meditation, etc. Wide array of topics of Social relevance were included like

Modification of Lifestyle and Stress related Health issues, Natural holistic approaches for Health and Well Being, Lifestyle Modification for Healthy Living, Inculcation of Healthy Habits, Stress Management, Intoxicants and their ill effects and coping strategies to addictions (Tobacco/Alcohol/ Drugs etc), Oral Hygiene and Dental Health, Yoga–Breathing Techniques/ Pranayam/ Kriya/ Meditation/Vipassyana etc, Mental Health promotion activities and many other such health promoting activities as per the need of individual.

The wellness centre has seen a steady rise in the number of individuals registering in the wellness program. The digital records for all the individuals visiting the wellness centre during these unprecedented times are maintained so that their follow-up treatment needs are easily accessible as and when required.

Responsibilities Foremost : Rights Later

Fundamental Rights and Social responsibilities of an individual are an integral part of the developed as well as developing countries. Rights provide an equal opportunity to all irrespective of the cast, creed or religious background. We all are well versed with our rights but are never forthcoming on the issue of our responsibilities.

At Subharti, Responsibility isn't just another word; it is the way of life. The principle objective behind this healthy practice, is to make the students understand their responsibilities, so that their rights are invariably taken care of. As Subhartians, we inculcate the essential responsibilities like saving on the National resources, following law and order, being aware and helping people to make them aware about their rights, caring for weaker and underprivileged sections, helping fellow beings at the time of calamities and natural disasters and being loyal citizens towards Country, so that these habits become part and parcel of their day to day lives.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

During these testing times of COVID-19, as the students and faculty were not supposed to report to the University, the University went to their doorstep by way of conducting online lectures via webinars and video mode. The most challenging feature of this practice during these times was the sustenance while integrating the core values of the University.

The faculty members were sensitized regarding their responsibilities. The Mentor-Mentee program which has come to be known as the support system for all the student was running successfully. The mentees could contact their mentors regarding their problems and the problems were sorted. Even the Buddy program for the foreign students where a foreign student is tagged with an Indian student who is meant to make the foreign student feel at home was too running successfully. The students from various parts of India were also given a common platform in the form of Microsoft Teams so that the students can get in touch with their facilitators.

Online webinars were organized by the University on 'Responsibilities First-Rights Later' where stakeholders were made aware about their responsibilities towards the society, culture, environment and the Nation. Videos were uploaded on Subharti University Website and YouTube with open access for one and all.

Our faculty and students were sensitized regarding their responsibilities which automatically took care of the rights of one and all. Our students were made aware about the values of sacrifice and forgiveness, respect for elders, honesty and truth, thinking about others before self, etc. The responsibilities towards opposite gender, towards environment, towards self and society were highlighted upon, which in turn, took care of the rights of an individual.

By responsibly participating in resolving the issues plaguing our society, we as a University have set a good example by applying and adhering to socially responsible practices, such as improving the quality of lives for individuals and their families, volunteer energy and time towards improving and benefiting society.

With this healthy practice a seed of change has been sown and the blossoming of tree might take some time but we have to wait patiently for it. It is a continuous process, some results are already visible, but it will take a consistent effort on the part of individuals.

Reinventing, Reinforcement and the Prioritization of communication were foremost and have helped in the efficient and effective application of this healthy practice.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. N. K. Ahuja, Vice Chancellor of Swami Vivekanand Subharti University, Meerut-250 005 (Uttar Pradesh). The article has been contributed by Dr. N. K. Ahuja, Vice Chancellor of Swami Vivekanand Subharti University, Meerut, Uttar Pradesh. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.subharti.org, E-mail : vc@subharti.org

SYMBIOSIS INTERNATIONAL (DEEMED UNIVERSITY), PUNE

Symbiosis International (Deemed University) is a multi-campus University spread across India, catering to the academic needs of 17000 plus students pursuing their undergraduate and postgraduate programmes across several specialisations. It was therefore inevitable that in a crisis situation like Corona, the academic interests of such a large number of students are protected. The University has always been proactive both in terms of pedagogy and technology. A right combination of the two has enabled the University to not get unduly affected by the pandemic in terms of upholding the academic interests. The University has continuously emphasised on increasing the standards of both pedagogy and technology by organizing training programs for its faculty members through the initiative of Symbiosis Teaching Learning Resource Centre (STLRC), throughout the year. In fact faculty members are mandated to undergo 5 days of training to update themselves both in terms of pedagogy and technology. Hands on workshops in labs are continually conducted by STLRC to increase the adaptability of faculty members towards new educational technologies. The University strongly believes in the philosophy of virtual learning acting a complementary tool to traditional modes of learning. This has come in handy during a crisis period like this where the University could make a seamless transition to virtual learning and evaluation using technology based tools.

GAINFULLY ENGAGING THE STUDENT COMMUNITY

Embedding Technology in Pedagogy

The University has strongly advocated over the years a pedagogy which is an eclectic mix of quiz, case studies, individual assignments, group assignments, field projects in addition to the traditional paper pen written examination and that too on a continuing basis. In fact, the traditional pen-paper based written examination is just one of the tools for evaluation and not the major mode which enables the University to function smoothly even in times of crisis. To cite an example, the University is a member of the Harvard case repository which enables it to access world class case studies which are then used as a pedagogical tool in the class. In times like these where running a physical classroom is

not possible, the case study is shared online with identified students and the students are asked to submit an assignment based on the same.

Similarly, in the few cases where classes were pending, the faculty members shot their own video lessons on YouTube studio and shared the link with the students. YouTube studio allows the faculty to record the lectures remotely and also enables them to observe as to how many students watched the video. These videos can be watched remotely by students at their preferred time. As it reaches all students via online means, the question of a student missing a lecture does not arise.

E-content was also created by faculty members in different courses using the 'Screencast-O-Matic' software and a central repository of such content was created. Every faculty member was encouraged to create a minimum of two videos in their area of expertise to build this repository. *Lecture Capture Technology* has also been provided by the University to enable interested faculty members to record, edit and circulate the lectures through online modes. The Government of India has developed the unique SWAYAM portal which is now providing a wide array of specialized and general courses catering to the needs of the different segments of students across different domains. In alignment with this initiative, the University has decided to encourage the use of Swayam portal for a set of specialized courses. The Swayam portal is a great learning tool in the times of crisis like the one currently on.

In this time of crisis, the technology based *Zoom* software has emerged as a popular choice for meetings and classroom sessions. Faculty meetings and classes are conducted via Zoom. A few faculty members of the University are currently attending a very timely workshop facilitated by the Association of Indian Universities between April 1-3, 2020 titled 'Online Learning for faculty' which aims at transitioning the faculty from traditional learning methods to online learning and again this workshop comprising of webinars is being facilitated via Zoom. The University has ensured that even in these times of crisis, the upgrading of the faculty members through workshops continues unhindered with the help of technology.

The constituents of the University like SIBM Pune, SIT have also signed up with *Coursera*, which has offered access to many of the courses free to 1000+ students. The University also has plans to use this in case the crisis continues.

Google Hangout and Microsoft Teams is also being evaluated for use but the Google classrooms has been used extensively for delivering online session. The University has also engaged the students using online webinars by corporate leaders and alumni almost on a daily basis during the lockdown. This has kept the students highly engaged.

Many of the features of Facebook were incorporated to help teaching and learning and that made it much more fascinating. Some features could assist in making teaching interesting and evaluation effective. Using the Email Notifications through Facebook messaging students are able to send attached documents, videos, pictures as well as text messages. Moreover, many mobile networks do support Facebook and messaged notifications are also sent to the linked mobile numbers as well the users' email. Through Facebook messaging student can also approach their teachers for consultation and clarification any time online. Sharing of links is also permitted on Facebook messaging. Thus, this enabled teacher to send tutorial and publication links and evaluation links to the students. Video links can be made from any video sharing tool and YouTube is one common example. Thus this feature was used in numerous different ways to modify our teaching procedures and make it technologically advanced and keep students up to date with events. The news feeds of Facebook helped and enabled students to follow recently updated news which gets posted on their home page once they sign in to their Facebook account. The Facebook Chat Messaging made it possible to carryout instant messaging. Through instant chat messaging, student and teachers could communicate with each other there and then.

Much like a traditional classroom, the instructor can be innovative and utilize optimally the features of online learning platforms, particularly some of the tools created for interactive learning. These tools may include the ones which enable the instructor to initiate webinar sessions, social media, chat rooms, discussion board, forums and group collaboration tools.

An online Learning Management System (LMS) was used by faculty upload their session plans and to upload case studies and study materials. The LMS also provided the option for faculty members to conduct their evaluations online. All the above was visible to students through his login either on a desktop or through an app on the smartphone.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Assessment and evaluation is an integral part of the online teaching learning process. Faculty members have found themselves at ease using the *Google classroom* as a tool for evaluations with pre-set deadlines. Faculty members used '*Google Forms*' as a tool for creating and running a timed online quiz. Another set of faculty members found themselves adapting to conduct simple online quizzes using '*Kahoot*' mobile application. Evaluation has also been done by conducting online Viva-voce using the online Google Hangout sessions.

The problem is that most online assessments are essentially un-proctored *assessments*. Hence the university made viva-voce a mandatory component of evaluation. This methodology helped students who missed a particular lecture to attend the same at their own convenient time and then get evaluated with a fixed time table that is created and circulated to all of them. The power point presentations generated by faculty members were also circulated among students to enrich the content available to the students.

The students were asked to submit online assignments on topics that were given to them by the faculty members. The assignments included individual and group tasks. The students were asked to use the open application called '*Padlet*' to submit their group tasks as a part of formative assessment Tool. *Padlet* (formerly known as *Wallwisher*) has been around for a while now at SIU. It acts as an online bulletin board where users place 'digital sticky notes'. These digital stickies can contain text, web links, uploaded files, photos, and even video! The application allows students to submit text, picture and video content and the same get evaluated by the faculty members. Closed Facebook groups were used for group collaboration and discussion. As Facebook is free it was used as an education and evaluation tool. Facebook as an educational tool has helped faculty members to keep in close contact with colleagues and students. Also a Facebook account gives a variety of features to deal with. Some of the major features which were used include Email notification, Video conversation, Messaging, Online chatting, Assignments as Photo downloads and uploads, News feed- upcoming events, Quizzes and questions, Joining new groups e.g. student and teacher (mentoring program), Link-page and Ability to give notification on mobiles.

The Questioning feature of Facebook made quiz taking as well as group discussions fun and easy. From their home page, student and teachers could forward questions targeted to a specific group of friends as well as individuals. From this further discussion and sharing of ideas were stimulated. An old belief states, that 'the more you share knowledge, the more it will grow', thus from this open panel discussion, teachers and student could share a lot of ideas and experiences. Additionally, this feature helped students brain storm ideas for their essays and other research work. Facebook as a tool was of great advantage to the classroom because of its interactive communication availabilities. It was seen that the students were under control and became more participative when the instructors acted as moderators on Facebook. Additionally, Facebook also helped in bridging the communication gap between students and teachers and make the learning environment much friendlier.

University encouraged its faculty members to use different technology platforms to create content as well as to conduct evaluations. In fact, faculty members are also encouraged to scout for new technology based software for creating content as well as conducting assessments on an on-going basis. In addition, faculty members were asked to share videos published online and articles published online relevant to the topic. The University has zero tolerance for plagiarism. Hence it actively promotes the use of the software 'Turn it in' to actively check for plagiarism in the different submissions made.

Pedagogy of Continuous Assessments

The University has always believed in the concept of continuous assessments rather than a single end of semester exam. In fact, the formative assessments conducted on a continuous basis, cover almost the entire syllabus and carry about 60% - 70% weight and this leaves only 30%- 40% weight being assigned to the semester end examination. Continuous assessments ensure that the academic content covered is periodically assessed for the students. Since the syllabus gets covered through a rich variety of continuous assessments, the Academic Council and the Board of Management of the University, in this critical situation, weighed the various alternatives of online exams, or letting uncertainty continue but keeping the interests of students in mind, finally decided to leverage the advantage of rigorous continuous evaluation and to extrapolate the marks obtained in the continuous assessment to the final

examination results, on a pro rata basis. In the programs where continuous assessments were pending, the faculty members provided online assignments followed by a Viva-voce using technology based platforms. This eased the pressure on the students and they worked extremely hard on the remaining assignments.

ONLINE PLACEMENTS

In all constituents of SIU, both summer and final placements get closed by end of January and mid-February, hence there has been no need for using virtual technology for placements. However, some organisations where students have not been able to join for summer internships, have given the students virtual internships.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, Symbiosis International (Deemed University) has always believed that even in adverse situations protecting the academic interests of the students is of paramount importance. Hence it has progressed with the philosophy of combining a rich mix of pedagogy with technology to generate a stream of best practices which are most useful during times of a pandemic like Corona. The Pandemic has totally changed the way the teaching learning process will be conducted of which virtual learning will definitely be an important component.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. Rajani R. Gupte, Vice Chancellor of Symbiosis International, Pune- 412 115 (MS). The article has been contributed by Dr. Rajani R. Gupte, Vice Chancellor of Symbiosis International, Pune, MS. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.siu.edu.in, E-mail : vc@siu.edu.in

THE ASSAM ROYAL GLOBAL UNIVERSITY, GUWAHATI

With the global spread of COVID-19 affecting everyone across the world, almost everything has come to a standstill, the impact being severe on all sectors of the society. The education sector too saw a major disruption with almost all educational institutions closing, thus profoundly affecting the smooth delivery of regular classroom teaching. With over 37 million students of India enrolled in higher education, the Indian education system had to come up with strategies and action plans for engaging the student community and thus continue with their assessment and evaluation with the main aim of protecting the interest of the students.

Most of the educational institutions across the country have been quick to make a transition towards online teaching and learning thus moving into a new ecosystem for creating teaching-learning exercises through the digital mode. It is noteworthy to mention that few faculty members of The Assam Royal Global University, a newly established State Private University in Guwahati, Assam had taken spontaneous steps to resort to the digital platform from March 16, 2020 when all educational institutions were notified to be closed owing to the outbreak of the pandemic.

GAINFULLY ENGAGING THE STUDENT COMMUNITY

From March 23, 2020, a day before the lockdown was announced by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, the University with due support from the IT team took immediate measures for all faculty members across all disciplines to avail the various online modes of teaching so as to protect the academic interest of the students. Some of the effective alternative teaching methods that the University has encouraged its faculty members to adopt includes RoyalNET (the digital platform of the University where faculty members can upload lesson plans, study materials, etc. and also record the student attendance); ZOOM (through this medium faculty members are conducting real time regular lectures as per their respective schedule, thus providing a real classroom-like environment virtually); SKYPE (faculty members and students are transmitting video chat, voice calls as well as instant text messages and images through this online medium); Google classrooms (virtual online

classrooms whereby the faculty members can assess and evaluate the students and further provide feedback to the students); E-mail and WhatsApp groups (faculty members are regularly sharing assignments and presentations of course topics through these mediums thus enabling smooth monitoring, assessment and evaluation of the students); YouTube (through this medium faculty members may upload their lecture videos for easy access by students); SWAYAM Online Courses (students and faculty have a wide access to study materials online through this platform); UG/PG MOOCs (learning materials of the SWAYAM UG & PG archived courses through the UGC MOOCs INFLIBNET for online learning of various subjects have been widely circulated amongst all faculty members and students); E-PG Pathshala (high quality, curriculum based, interactive e-contents with more than 1000 modules for easy access by the PG students of Humanities, Fine Arts, Mathematical Science, etc. have been made available to students) and SWAYAMPARBHA (a group of 32 DTH free to watch channels which air high quality, educational curriculum based course contents across all disciplines, the telecasted video/lectures are also available as archives in the SWAYAMPARBHA portal). It is also worth mentioning that few departments of the University have also contacted guest speakers of their respective subjects and have conducted online lectures of the experts for the students.

Apart from the above, a few more digital platforms are also being explored. These include the MTUTOR (Mobile Tutor), promoted by AICTE, which provides free access to customized animated contents for courses approved by AICTE and focuses on conceptual and contextual based learning using 2D animation. Further for video conferencing, the University has already registered with TCS Digital Glass Room and is also in the final stage of discussion with GoToMeeting for subscriptions.

The outbreak of this global pandemic has reminded one and all that change is inevitable and has taught us all to build resilience to face such threats in the future. The new digital mode of teaching shall prepare the students to adapt to new skills and thus opt for online mediums of learning. In order to combat the global pandemic, online learning is being utilized as the safest option to gainfully engage the students as well as assess and evaluate the students on a regular basis. This relatively new online mode of teaching would require some sinking time for acceptance by the students' mass and hence would require

regular motivation by the faculty members so that they are more responsive to the digital transactions of teaching and learning. Online examinations and assignment submissions are being incorporated to judge the outcome of this new method of imparting education. The transition from conventional teaching to online teaching have been initially slow but have seen a steady growth with regular and buoyant participation by students across all disciplines. The senior officers of the University as well as the Heads of each department have also been monitoring the progress of the pedagogic exercises of the University in the digital platform. The faculty members of Royal Global University have been provided with a fixed format to maintain the daily online class reports which is sent to the Heads of Department/Schools. The heads have also been shared with a separate format through which they can send a day to day compiled report of various online activities taken by faculty members to the concerned authorities of the University. Through these measures, the University is leaving no stone unturned to academically support the students and unitedly combat the menace of Corona pandemic.

Even when the entire nation has come to a halt, a break in the cloud came from the technology sector enabling people to carry on with their activities using the online platform. Various software solutions have been initiated to facilitate a smooth transition from the blackboards to the e-books and e-classrooms. Technologically supported online classes provides an almost infinite number of ways to teach and learn outside the traditional classrooms. Unlike the normal practice of face to face teaching, online teaching can include hi-tech audio, video, animations, etc. thus providing a much wider perspective. Online teaching is found to provide a rich learning environment with much more flexibility and tailored to fit almost everyone's schedule.

ONLINE PLACEMENTS

Apart from academics, the University is also trying to make provisions for online placement opportunities for the final year students who had opted for placement support from the University. The training and placement team are in the process to discuss possibilities for online campus placement with Jeevitam, an MoU partner with National Career Service (NCS) under Ministry of Labour and Employment. This mode of digital placements would be comparatively

faster and more effective and would also eliminate the need of recruiters to travel to various Universities for conducting campus drives.

CONCLUSION

The digital shift from classroom to online teaching being relatively new, has its own limitations. Not every student is tech-savvy or has access to high speed internet facility, especially in the rural parts of the country. Further, it is a very new system of teaching for the faculty members too in comparison to the traditional face-to-face mode of classroom teaching that they have been following all this while. Hence, regular motivation of the faculty members by seniors would enable them to deliver better at this hour of crisis. However, in the event of COVID-19, online teaching has become a necessity for all educational institutions across India. A country that has been primarily relying on offline mode of teaching has seamlessly transgressed to an online mode of teaching thus making everyone hopeful that the Corona virus pandemic shall eventually result in a new solution for education and innovation, and hence opening new avenues for a 'Smarter Tomorrow'.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. (Dr.) S. P. Singh, Vice Chancellor of The Assam Royal Global University, Guwahati, Assam-781 035. The article has been contributed by Prof. (Dr.) S. P. Singh, Vice Chancellor of The Assam Royal Global University, Guwahati, Assam. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.rgu.ac, E-mail :vc-chancer@rgu.ac

THE CLUSTER UNIVERSITY SRINAGAR

The Cluster University Srinagar is trying tooth and nail to combat the crisis created by COVID-19 in general, and the academic loss created due to lockdown imposed to break the corona chain. With the onset of COVID-19 lockdown, the Vice Chancellor convened the Meeting of Officers of the University and Principals of constituent colleges to devise an Action Plan in the backdrop of COVID-19 scare and advisories issued by various Government Agencies. The University conducted meetings, developed Action Plan amid COVID-19 outbreak, Online lectures were offered through Google Classroom and other virtual platforms. Following are some of the measures taken to take care of University Students and their academic and health needs:

- All the University employees contributed one-day salary for the month of April, 2020 toward the relief fund of the Lt. Governor meant to fight against the scourge of COVID-19.
- University provided volunteers to the district administration for managing quarantine centres and other places designated for COVID-19. Pertinently, the NSS volunteers of the constituent colleges were deployed and they created awareness regarding safety measures that need to be adopted against the spread of COVID-19.
- The volunteers distributed masks and sanitizers in the different areas of the valley. The University procured 10000 masks and 5000 sanitizers for distribution among the masses besides, manufacturing sanitizers and face masks in its own laboratories for students, as and when the university re-opens.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

- The process of admission to all the courses was conducted Online.
- The lectures were delivered through Google Classroom and other virtual platforms to all enrolled college students.
- The Semester Examinations for II and IV semesters were deferred which were scheduled for April, 2020.
- The Principals of the constituent colleges were informed to conduct the Google Class Rooms for next preceding III and V semesters.

The syllabus for the 6th semester was completed to conduct the examination.

- The students were encouraged to earn credits from MOOC modules offered by MoE, Government of India and the list of relevant courses made available on the University website.
- Sensitization of the students through introduction of skill based courses on 'Basic Hygiene amid Corona Virus' was also done.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. Anju Bhasin, Vice Chancellor of The Cluster University Srinagar-190 008 (J&K). These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Prof. Anju Bhasin, Vice Chancellor of The Cluster University Srinagar (J&K). The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.clujammu.in, E-mail : vcofficecluj@gmail.com

THE ICFAI FOUNDATION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, HYDERABAD

(DEEMED-TO-BE UNIVERSITY)

In the current testing times, when social distancing is the most-effective way to stop the spread of COVID-19, we at The ICFAI Foundation for Higher Education (IFHE) stay committed to providing a continuous learning environment for our students. Ever since the classes were suspended on 16th March, 2020, we have been sending PPTs to students and also using real time learning communication systems (Zoom, Google hangout), SWAYAM, MOOCs, NPTEL, LMS, YouTube and other online teaching platforms. The faculty members are constantly in touch with the students to clarify their doubts on phone and through chat-rooms and WhatsApp. The library has provided online access to the students and faculty. The doctoral students are constantly in touch with their supervisors online to ensure good progress in their work. We have conducted FDPs to our faculty to teach and conduct examinations online.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

We have started conducting online MBA classes for both first and second year students from June, 2020. There are about 1200 students in each year from all over the country. The internal and final examinations will also be conducted online. End semester examinations for B.Tech and BBA students have also been conducted online. Our Strategic Management committee, Academic council and Board of Management meetings are conducted online. We plan to conduct our Planning and Monitoring Board and Board of Management meetings online. All other meetings are also conducted online. We have a practice of conducting weekly departmental seminars which immensely help in promoting research. This practice is now being continued online.

For our flagship Management program we already have a flipped classroom by virtue of using case method of teaching. This is a great advantage for us as we can now use active learning approaches using real life cases developed by our world-class Case Research Center in our online teaching, rather than just passive approaches like just taking the classes online. This leads to better engagement of the students being taught in the online program. Our Case

Research Center offers more than 6000 cases, that are being used across the world for online learning during this fight against COVID-19.

Having said that, we believe the future of higher education lies in blended learning or hybrid learning – a combination of online and classroom teaching. After normalcy is restored we plan to go for a blend of online and face-to-face classroom teaching. The interaction between the faculty and the student, the human touch and above all the collaborative peer group learning is extremely important. There is no substitute for it. Apart from interaction among the students which is curriculum-based, collaborative learning happens in a classroom and through the multiple student clubs at IFHE campuses especially in professional courses such as business management, law and science and technology. We have 50 clubs (eg., Yoga, Environment, *Samavesh* to promote cultural integration) through which students take an active part in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. These clubs help students develop team spirit and leadership. Living on campus creates a strong bond among students which goes a long way in making them better alumni. Needless to say, the contribution of alumni in the development of the institution is immense.

CONCLUSION

To summarize, in order to circumvent the COVID-19, we will go the whole hog with online teaching employing active learning approaches that will keep the students engaged. Subsequently, we want to get back to a mix of online and face-to-face classroom teaching as each has its own advantages and is ideal for quality education. We will reassess what part of teaching delivery should be done in person and what part should be offered online.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. J. Mahender Reddy, Vice Chancellor of The ICFAI Foundation for Higher Education, Hyderabad. The article has been contributed by Dr. J. Mahender Reddy, Vice Chancellor of The ICFAI Foundation for Higher Education, Hyderabad. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.ifheindia.org, E-mail : jmreddy@icfaiuniversity.in

THE ICFAI UNIVERSITY, DEHRADUN

In view of COVID-19 and the subsequent closure of the Universities and in order that the Teaching Learning process is not hampered but is carried on smoothly during this period and the syllabus is completed on time, ICFAI University Dehradun decided that the students be taught through Flipped Learning mode during this period starting from 16th March, 2020 till date.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Flipped Learning has come to the forefront in education in recent times. It's a pedagogical approach in which direct instruction moves from the group learning space to the individual learning space in an interactive learning environment where the educator guides students by means of PPT presentations, video lectures, pdf files notes etc using various online tools. The students are taught to apply these concepts and engage creatively in the subject matter. It maximises learning by moving content delivery on line.

Thereafter the students are given assignments based on the content provided and even though the teachers and students are not physically present before each other, this pedagogical approach can help to assess and evaluate the students effectively.

- The respective subject teacher will identify the topics to be covered which were submitted starting of semester (e.g: session plans) and provide learning materials (Course handout: Power Point presentation, lectures and names of reference books pertaining to that particular topic) .
- There will be assignments at the end of each topic to evaluate the students on the comprehension of that topic.
- Students are required to submit those assignments on the deadline date stated by the Faculty during this period.
- Assignments should be duly completed and mailed on or before the said date.
- Two faculties were nominated as coordinators from each school to submit summary reports subject-wise, faculty-wise by every week end.

- Vice Chancellor with Registrar and HoD's were monitoring the progress every week and online meetings were conducted every 15 days during the lockdown till date.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. (Dr.) Muddu Vinay, Vice Chancellor (O), The ICFAI University Dehradun, Dehradun – 248 001 (Uttarakhand). The article has been contributed by Prof. (Dr.) Muddu Vinay, Vice Chancellor (O), The ICFAI University Dehradun, Dehradun, Uttarakhand. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.iudehradun.edu.in, E-mail : vc@iudehradun.edu.in

THE ICAI UNIVERSITY JHARKHAND, RANCHI

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, regular classes at the ICAI University, Jharkhand had to be suspended since 3rd week of March, 2020. Because of the lockdown restrictions and physical distancing norms, students could not move about freely. Added to this, as the number of COVID-19 positive cases have been rising, with no signs of abatement, future has been looking uncertain. Consequently, most of the students have been feeling uncertain about their future and have been feeling isolated, though they have been staying with their parents. Understanding the situation, ICAI University Jharkhand formulated a multi-pronged strategy to address the underlying issues. Key objectives of the strategy are to ensure continuity of learning of the students and divert their attention from negative zone to a positive zone so that they are distressed.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Launch of *Swaadhyay*, Self-learning Digital Learning Management System

On the day, the lockdown was announced, Vice Chancellor of the University had a brain storming session with the faculty team on the challenges faced and on how to continue studies of the students, who were in the midst of the semester. After considering various alternatives, it was decided to launch Digital Learning Management System (LMS) uniformly across all of its disciplines—Management, Engineering, IT and Law. Within 10 days of the lockdown, the University launched Online Digital Learning Management Platform, “*Swaadhyay*” so that students can continue their studies, staying safely at home. The University quickly trained and motivated its faculty members to upload a variety of digital study materials, like PPTs, Videos, Video Lectures, Assignments, Quizzes, Case Studies etc for all the courses of the programs onto *Swaadhyay*. Students were happy to go through the study material, at their convenience.

On a survey of the students, it was noticed that 56% of the students accessed it through Smart Phones and the balance through Lap Top and Desk Top computer. Analysis of the survey results showed that 83% of the students studied using *Swaadhyay* for 2-3 hours per day and 73% felt that it was very

easy to use. While 53% of the students liked the PPTs, 33% liked the videos and video lectures by the teachers. When asked about the benefits derived from Swaadhyay, 35% mentioned convenience, whereas 27% liked the facility to go through the study material repeatedly and the balance students liked the features of self-tests and additional study material like e-Books and articles. The biggest challenge faced by 66% of the students was issue with speed of internet. In a nutshell, it is the ease of use and the benefits that motivated the students to adopt the new learning platform, Swaadhyay.

Conduct of Online Classroom Sessions

The University also arranged interactive and engaging classes for 3 hours per day through video-conferencing. Prior to that, all the faculty members were trained on Digital Educational Technology Tools like Poll Mentimeter for Polling; Quizziz for Quizzing and Testmoz for creating interesting tests embedding images and videos. Grade the students automatically and break-out groups for conduct of group discussions. The University adopted Flipped-Class Room model, wherein students were expected to go through *Swaadhyay* Study material before attending online sessions these tools. So that students actively participate in discussions and quizzes during the session. The students were assessed through continuous evaluation, using formative and normative assessments. When a survey on pedagogical tools was conducted among the students, it was found that 90% of the students liked the Quizziz the most, as it was very interesting, followed by Mentimeter (55%) and Poll (25%), Class attendance varied from 72% to 85%. A few students residing in the rural areas faced challenges with regard to Internet bandwidth. For the benefit of the students, all the online classes were recorded and the videos were posted on *Swaadhyay* so that the students that missed the classes could go through them at their convenience. Students that attended classes also accessed the online session videos as they helped in refreshing the learning during the classes.

Evaluation of Students and Declaration of Results

Evaluation of the final year students (graduating in 2020) was completed by 2nd week of June, 2020 and results were declared by 30th June, 2020 and provisional completion certificates were issued. It helped them to pursue their careers, in industry or higher studies. Online Examination was conducted for the intermediate students (other than final year students) and their results were

declared by first week of August, 2020. As their careers were not affected, stress levels of the students came down.

Utilisation of Time by the Students

ICFAI University also encouraged the students to utilise the time to pursue MOOC Courses in the areas of their interest. A number of students participated in various Quiz programs and received awards. The University has also taken the initiative to organize Online Panel discussions, as a part of Charcha Manch series, to update the students on the recent developments in technology, industry and society. In the last two months, six webinars were conducted with global industry experts on topics like Employment Opportunities in COVID-19 times, Digital Transformation of Business, Cyber Security, Artificial Intelligence, Legal Protection during COVID-19, Developments in Mining Industry, etc. A number of students and faculty members, not only from the University but also other Institutions across India participated actively in them.

De-stressing the Students

Due to the prolonged physical distancing restrictions, students are unable to socialise physically and some of them have been feeling isolated. Besides, as number of cases have been on the rise continuously, students are feeling uncertain about the future. In order to destress the students, the University adopted a number of measures. 'Express Yourself' competition was held wherein students sent sketches, cartoons, poems, etc. Select entries were posted on Social Media. A Virtual Music competition was conducted, which received excellent response, Faculty members of the University have been in continuous contact with the students and counselled the students appropriately. Vice Chancellor of the University interacted with the students through Video Conferencing and addressed them through You Tube.

Social Outreach Activities

The University has also undertaken a number Social-Outreach activities to help the underprivileged sections of the society, who lost their livelihood during the crisis. The University, under the leadership of Vice Chancellor, launched '*Bhojan Patra*', scheme wherein Food Kits (Rice, Pulses, Oil, Sugar, Salt, Spices, etc.) along with soap and masks were distributed to the needy families in 16 villages in the neighbourhood of the University. The villagers were also educated on Spatial Distancing Measures, Sanitisation and Hygiene.

These activities received good press coverage from the leading news papers and enhanced the image of the University. Details of the activities taken up by the University are posted on its website (www.iujharkhand.edu.in) and Face Book page ([icfaijharkhand](https://www.facebook.com/icfaijharkhand)). This has motivated the students and gave them a sense of pride.

CAMPUS PLACEMENTS

The University arranged for campus placements by way of interviews through Video Conferencing. Besides, the University also persuaded the companies that offered placements prior to COVID-19 not to withdraw the campus placement offers given earlier.

Virtual Internships

In the normal course, as a part of the program structure, students of all programs and batches are required to undergo Internships in Industry so as to acquire hands-on skills. As it is not possible to visit organisations physically, the University organised Online Internships in Industry in Management, IT and Law Programmes, whereas Engineering students had to take up in-house projects. Reputed companies like Larsen & Toubro, Sterlite Industries, Shriram Finance group and a number of practicing advocates and Law firms offered Online Internships to the students. Prior to allocation of the projects, students were imparted Digital Skills (like conduct of online surveys, online tools for analysis, conduct of meetings using Video Conferencing, etc). Ms Shobhana Samarth, MBA student of the University received the award for the 'Best Virtual Internship in India' from Shriram Life Insurance Company.

GOING FORWARD

As the COVID-19 times tend to get extended, the University is smartly adapting itself to the New Normal, by digital transformation of its operations, including admissions and academic delivery during 2020-21 academic year. Research Aptitude Test for admission to PhD Program (part-time) in Management was conducted online, wherein candidates could take the test online from home but with remote proctoring, driven by Artificial Intelligence. Personal Interviews were conducted using Video Conferencing. Selected students joined the Course Work-I online *Swaadhay*-II classes, which commenced in Second week of July, 2020. The University plans to start academic year from 2nd week of August, 2020 for senior students and early September, 2020 for newly admitted

students. Academic sessions will be conducted using flipped-classroom model using *Swaadhyay-II*, which incorporates Outcomes Based education. In order to enable the Engineering and IT students to conduct Laboratory Experiments from home, the university tied up with IIT— Delhi for Virtual Labs and trained its faculty members on the same. Faculty members of the University are allowed to work-from-home. A COVID-19 cell was constituted to take all requisite steps to ensure hygiene in the campus and redress the grievances of the students and staff, if any. All efforts are being made to conduct academics and other operations of the University in the New Normal Environment, without compromising on quality.

CONCLUSION

While COVID-19 has brought unprecedented damage to day-to-day life and livelihood, it is possible to contain the damage by formulating appropriate strategies and implement the same by effective communication and motivation of all the stakeholders - students, faculty members and staff. Besides, it presents an excellent opportunity for digital transformation of an Institution, which can bring in substantial tangible and intangible benefits, in the immediate as well as distant future.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. O R S Rao, Vice Chancellor of the ICFAI University Jharkhand, Ranchi-835 222. The article has been contributed by Prof. O R S Rao, Vice Chancellor of the ICFAI University Jharkhand, Ranchi. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.iihmr.edu.in, E-mail : orsrao.icfai@gmail.com

THE ICFAI UNIVERSITY, SIKKIM

The ICFAI University, Sikkim is taking all necessary preventive measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and also engulf new methods of operation in order to not disturb the academic flow. The Sikkim State Government notified a complete ban on entry of tourists to Sikkim on 16th March, 2020 and the Prohibitory Order U/S 144 Cr. PC 1973 was notified on 19/03/2020 followed by complete lockdown message from the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri. Narendra Modiji.

Thereon, the university notified complete shutdown from 19th March, 2020 to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Some of the several essential steps taken are:

1. The students' Class Representatives and Vice Class Representatives (CRs and VCRs), a team of 50 students are constantly sensitizing their family members, relatives and people of their region on a choice of steps to be taken on prevention of COVID-19 and if needed, support to the elderly people and children.
2. The CRs' and VCRs' are constantly keeping track of the fitness and health situations of their respective fellow students and their family members. There is a Medical Counsellor Team comprising of one faculty and one Administrative staff of IUS. The CRs' and VCRs update the fitness status of every student to the Medical Counsellor Team on weekly basis.
3. IUS being one of the Unnat Bharat Abhiyan Institute, the protocol/guidelines/advisory/messages for prevention of COVID-19 are under process of compiling and recording in local regional languages by students of our university with an objective to reach out to as many as possible to maximize awareness.
4. For academic purpose, the methodologies and mechanism adopted by all Schools of IUS are:
 - A) University has moved to completely online with its first initiative towards introducing One to One Online Learning through WhatsApp video calls, messages, skypes and emails. All the correspondences between teacher and students are being compiled by the respective School Coordinators and are reported to Dean Academics for information. The assignments of each course are compiled by Dean's office in a report format.

- B) Due to difficulties in obtaining good internet speed at the home location of faculties, live classes are not being able to operate at the moment.
5. As the state is under complete lockdown mode, only online medium has been used to present the COVID-19 prevention measures and news.
 6. Only essential staffs (Security) are stationed at the university campus. Items like hand sanitizer and soap has been provided.
 7. All the faculty and staff are presently working from home in order to maintain smooth pace with the regular university functioning. The communications are channelized through group video conference calls through WhatsApp. Important meetings are being held through video conferencing.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. Jagannath Patnaik, Vice Chancellor of The ICFAI University, Gangtok-737102 (Sikkim). These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Dr. Jagannath Patnaik, Vice Chancellor of The ICFAI University, Gangtok (Sikkim). The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.iusikkim.edu.in, E-mail : vc@iusikkim.edu.in

THE TAMIL NADU DR AMBEDKAR LAW UNIVERSITY, CHENNAI

The Government of Tamil Nadu declared suspension of instruction classes for all the schools and colleges (including Universities) due to the COVID-19 pandemic on 16.3.2020, the university through official circular suspended the instruction classes for the university students and instructed the inmates of university hostels to vacate as per their travel arrangements. Following this, lockdown for the entire city was declared by Government of Tamil Nadu till 30.3.2020 which was extended till 14.4.2020; 3.5.2020 and 17.05.2020.

As per the original academic schedule of the university, the instruction classes were to run till 30.3.2020; the Pre-Semester examinations were scheduled and held in the 41 week of the February, 2020; Viva voce was scheduled to be held during 1st week of April, 2020; the Semester examinations were scheduled to be held from 15.4.2020. The classes were conducted as per the academic schedule and accordingly the teachers could complete 80-85% of the syllabus till declaration of lockdown and suspension of classes. A few teachers had to still complete the remaining 15% of the syllabus.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

From 25.3.2020 onwards according to the instruction of the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor of the Tamil Nadu Dr. Ambedkar Law University, the faculties started to coordinate with the students through electronic medium. Faculty members created WhatsApp group with their respective courses and class students and started to share the instructions for future course of action. Faculty members created Google Classroom and added their students to check out their participation. The remaining incomplete portions were instructed through either Google classroom or whatsapp group. The students are encouraged to raise their doubts and clarification during group discussion. The instruction portions are recorded either in audio format or video format and shared with the students.

Some faculty members installed Zoom Video Chat app and included the students for group discussion and instructions. Students are invited through Unique ID for meeting and virtual classes also conducted. Due to the security reasons, the faculty members reduced using of Zoom App and started using

Google Meet and Hangouts as alternative meeting apps. Students are very much excited to learn through these technologies and showed their interest and responded very promptly.

Faculties coordinated with the students for the internal assessments. As the Pre Semester examinations are already conducted, some classes are in theme of project 1 submission and presentation. Students those who had not submitted and presented their projects are followed by the concern faculty members through either WhatsApp or Google Classroom to complete their projects. Google Classrooms are very effective for assigning projects and submitting the same. As the App provided with grading system also, the allocation of marks is also intimated to the students immediately. Class tests are conducted through Quizzes for the absentees. The questions are set by the subject faculties and shared with the students.

Faculty members conducted the project presentation through WhatsApp video call facility directly or instructed the students to video capture the presentation and share the same in the Google Classroom. So that other students view the presentation. This methodology got appreciation from the parents also as they witnessed the presentations of their wards.

Pre-Semester answer scripts were valued, and marks were shared with the students through emails. The answers for the questions are discussed in group discussion. Meanwhile, students are encouraged to register for various Webinars on the subject matter of legal education. The LawSpice of AIR Cafe came handy in conducting Webinar Series on different topics of law and the students are participating in it enthusiastically. Students are informed about various online courses on law and justice. Some faculty members shared the special lecture series in video format from the experts. Further, the students are also psychologically counselled by the faculty members. With the able guidance and support of the Hon'ble Vice Chancellor and other authorities, the faculty members monitored the students and encouraged them.

The Department of Library shared the links for E-book facility for the students. As online sources are very much useful for the students as well as faculty members during this lockdown period. Vice Chancellor shared the Qdfiledrive.in to download huge varieties of books. Students are also motivated to publish their research articles with the aid of this link. The other links such as, www.coursera.com, www.edx.org, www.academicjournals.org, etc. are shared

with students to explore more through online. Further, the students are also informed about online platform for various resources like cmoocs.inflibnet.ac.in/ u-rcmoocs/moocs.courses.

The research students are provided with online sources to continue their research studies without interruption. The links are <https://academic.research.microsoft.com>, www.scholar.google.com, <https://dbis.uni-trier.de/DBL-Browser/>

With respect to Postgraduate studies, the first year and second year students are monitored by their respective subject faculty members. The Second Year students of LL.M courses are guided promptly and properly by the supervisors to continue their dissertation work. The supervisor and the researcher are coordinated through either email or WhatsApp group or Google Classroom. The dissertation chapters are shared by the students and verified and corrected by the supervisor. The students are shared with different sources to explore the materials for research. Google classroom and WhatsApp technology used by most of the faculty members. In the same manner Doctrinal and Non-Doctrinal works of the students are also assessed by the faculty members. Students submitted their chapters in the Google Classroom and other students access on the same. This is very much helpful in getting suggestions from everyone in the class.

For the first year- second semester students, the instruction classes are going through virtual classroom. Every day the instruction is either audio recorded, or video recorded and shared in the classroom. Students are shared with materials in the form of MS Word, Videos, Audios, You Tube links, etc. As per the norms, the projects are allotted to the students and students are conducting surveys using Google Forms. The date and time are fixed by the subject faculty members to submit the projects. The project presentations are assigned to the students by submitting the video recording of the same. The class test is conducted in the virtual classroom itself. So, the students are not missing any instruction classes or materials or internal components during this lockdown period.

PLACEMENT

The Placement Committee is in contact with corporates, law firms, law associates for recruitment process. Some companies like Bajaj Insurance Company conducted the screening test and interview to the students through online mode. Registered students are provided with the accessible links and

coordinated by the companies. ZOHO Ltd. Company conducted the online test and shortlisted and assigned them task in the work from home pattern. Neeyamo Ltd Company recruited students and allocated assignment which is work from home nature with salary. Other Law firms and Law Associates are also conducted the interview and waiting for the results.

Above all, the Vice Chancellor took tireless efforts to cope with the situation and worked out various methods with future vision, guiding the faculty members and the students. Recently our institution entered an MoU with ELCOT for creating software for online classes exclusively for our institution. This software enables us to connect 500 students in a single session and the lectures will also be recorded. The University has been trying its level best through various strategies, action plans and innovative methods for effectively engaging the students in protecting them from academic loss. The university is committed to face and combat the impact of Corona challenge by using the ICT and digital space in the best interests of the students. Further, the faculty members are preparing course handouts in e-form for the forthcoming semester. These handouts will be useful to the students of UG and PG through online learning.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. T. S. N. Shashtry, Vice Chancellor of The Tamil Nadu Dr. Ambedkar Law University, "Poompolh!!" Chennai- 600 028. These details are limited to the initial few months of the first phase of COVID-19. The article has been contributed by Prof. T. S. N. Shashtry, Vice Chancellor of The Tamil Nadu Dr. Ambedkar Law University, "Poompolh!!" Chennai. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.tndalu.ac.in, E-mail : vc@tndalu.ac

UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES, RAICHUR

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the first case of COVID-19 in the state of Karnataka was confirmed on 9th March, 2020. Two days later, the state became the first in India to invoke the provisions of the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897, which are set to last for a year, to curb the spread of the disease. With the first case reporting and instructions from the Department of Higher Education, Karnataka, measures were taken to see the health and safety of the students at all the campuses of UAS, Raichur. The students were given orientation about the safety during the pandemic and possible impact on the academic matters like classes, examinations, research, etc. Subsequently when holidays were announced, all the students were sent to home on 23.03.2020. The post graduate students who were in the middle of their research were asked to stay back and continue with their research with strict social distancing norms at the hostel and mess halls. All the students who were leaving hostels were asked to carry the course materials, laptops and other audio-visual aids related to the courses of the current semester.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Strategies for Online Learning at UAS, Raichur

When AIU announced the online workshop on ‘*Online Learning for Faculty: What you need to know and prepare for a successful transition of your curriculum*’, a team of teachers attended this workshop on 31.03.2020. All the teachers who attended this workshop convened a meeting on 03.04.2020 with the officials of the University and chalked out strategies to conduct online classes, student engagement and evaluating online learning. On 04.04.2020 a committee was constituted to start and monitor online learning classes at University level. This committee has nodal teachers from all the four campuses under chairmanship of a senior faculty. The committee has the following objectives:

- Planning for online classes and delivery.
- Student engagement for online learning through apps such as Zoom and WhatsApp (wherever connectivity problems are there).
- Orientation on Tools for online learning such as laptops and smart phones; and

- Weekly assessment of online learning across all the campuses.
- Educating the faculty and students facing difficulty in online delivery of classes

The students were instructed to download Zoom app on laptops and smart phones and more than 90% of the students were ready for online delivery of the courses by the evening of 04.04.2020. The teachers started taking courses online as per the time table of the regular classes.

Weekly Assessment of Online Learning Across all the Campuses:

The online classes were monitored every Monday and all the teachers were asked to submit a report of classes taken to the respective Deans of the colleges who in turn submitted a report to the Online Classes Evaluation Committee. The details of the classes taken and assessment during April-2020 (four weeks) is presented in Table.1.

The Experience of University of Agricultural Sciences, Raichur

A Great Moment for Learning

The corona pandemic provided an opportunity for learning, all the restrictions that keep learning away are gone and people are looking for solutions that in the past they did not want to see. With online learning and delivery of classes, students will take ownership over their learning, understanding more about how they learn, what they like, and what support they need. They will personalize their learning, even if the systems around them won't. During the online delivery of classes >90% student attendance was recorded.

Bracing Technology and Independence in Learning

The pandemic gave insights into possibilities of using ICT tools and other technological tools for allowing a potential shift from classroom teaching to augmenting relationships with teachers, personalization, and independence. Though some of the students of UAS, Raichur live in remote areas with limited internet connectivity, more than 90% of the students responded to the initiatives taken by the University.

A New Role Play for Faculty of UAS, Raichur

All the teachers embraced the new technological tools without much training and swiftly adapted to the desperate times and engaged classes regularly. More than 95% teachers engaged in classes online with at least two classes per teacher.

Many teachers may well continue to associate with e-learning and online classes even after the lockdown.

Table.1: The Progress and Assessment of Online Classes at UAS, Raichur

Sl. No.	Class	Teachers	Sessions conducted	Students attended-(Average)	Strength of the class	Attendance (%)	Mode
1	I B.Sc.(Hons.) Agriculture/ I B.Tech. (Ag. Engg.)	126	303	1376	1500	91.73	Zoom, Google Meet, Cisco-Webex WhatsApp and Email
2	II B.Sc.(Hons) Agriculture/ II B.Tech. (Ag. Engg.)	133	492	1265	1431	88.39	
3	III B.Sc.(Hons) Agriculture/ III B.Tech. (Ag. Engg.)	107	223	1181	1344	87.87	
4	IV B.Sc.(Hons) Agriculture/ IV B.Tech. (Ag. Engg.)	21	51	582	620	93.87	
5	M.Sc.(Agri.) / M.Tech.(Ag. Engg.)	189	424	393	403	97.51	
6	Ph.D. (Agri.) / (Ag. Engg.)	149	305	117	118	99.15	
	Total	725	1798	4914	5416	90.73	

The Future of Learning and Other Opportunities

The pandemic has changed the learning of Agriculture education and become transformational for teachers and students. UAS, Raichur in coming days will invest more on technology and online delivery of the classes. Apart from the regular academic programmes, UAS, Raichur will formulate 'massive open online courses' – or MOOCs for the benefit of students wherever they are and

short-intensive courses for educated youth who want to take agriculture as profession. Since most of the youth have smart phones, this will be a strategy for UAS, Raichur in attracting educated youth to take up Agriculture as a profession and livelihood on scientific principles in future.

Future Plans on Online Learning

University of Agricultural Sciences, Raichur planning to have its own software for online learning or custom software developed by leading agencies with secured features hosted on its own server. This will ensure safety of personal data of the learners (students, farmers, youth, etc.) and complete control on the process of learning.

Digital Divide and Other Issues in Online Learning

New shifts in education approaches could widen gaps in terms of learning since it requires minimum technology and gadgets. UAS, Raichur is aware of these things and for learners who have a limited internet connectivity and resources to buy a smart phone will be addressed through conference call via mobile and a toll free telephone number (1800-425-0470) is provided to educated youth who have taken Agriculture recently to cater their needs of learning modern agriculture techniques for profitable farming. Also. UAS, Raichur is planning to measure the impact of online learning in future days to come.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. K N Kattimani, Vice Chancellor of University of Agricultural Sciences, Raichur-584 103 (Karnataka). The article has been contributed by Dr. K N Kattimani, Vice Chancellor of University of Agricultural Sciences, Raichur, Karnataka. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.uasraichur.edu.in, E-mail : vc@uasraichur.edu.in

UNIVERSITY OF ENGINEERING AND MANAGEMENT, KOLKATA

We are going through a very difficult situation now due to this Corona virus invasion, COVID-19 pandemic. Regular traditional teaching learning process (face to face) has been completely halted. We do not know when things will normalize. Fortunately, we had taken lots of exemplary initiatives in last two years to go digital in line with Digital India Initiatives launched by Government of India. In the end the month of February, 2020 when we realized the seriousness of the situation and anticipated a nationwide preventive drive is going to be implemented shortly to encounter the outbreak, our statutory bodies decided to confront the threat, crisis and panic created due to COVID-19 pandemic with a positive attitude of transformational leadership to avail its opportunities and become self reliant through a paradigm shift from offline to online mode of education in such a manner so that there is no loss of available academic hours as per our academic calendar being followed strictly before the pandemic period. The very objective of these initiatives taken was not to reinvent education but to continue it uninterruptedly with a different methodology.

As per the directive of the Government, we had notified to suspend all face to face classes from 16th March, 2020 and closed down the University on and from 23rd March, 2020. Since then all our employees including faculty are locked down in home as per the decision of the govt. to protect against COVID-19 pandemic. We firmly believed that if we delay the teaching learning process and examination and declaring results, enormous damage will be done to the families who are waiting for their child to financially supplement family income. About 90 per cent of our final year students have got job offers. Families of these students are looking forward eagerly for time when their ward will start supplementing family income. Employer company will not wait further.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

In order to maintain our academic calendar unaffected and to protect the career of our students, we decided to continue our teaching learning process through digital platform. Around 2000 lectures done by our teachers were

videotaped. Our teachers and students collectively practiced mock examinations on digital platforms. University authority was committed to ensure no students loose time due to corona virus invasions.

Accordingly, since 16th March, 2020 all our faculty were sincerely engaged in classroom teaching online and session / lab classes in virtual mode following our daily academic class routine. The syllabi for even semester in 2019 -20 academic session completed satisfactorily. The daily attendance of faculty, progress of syllabi and % attendance of students were monitored daily through online mode. An academic audit was conducted online by the IQAC of our university to oversee the quality of online education and timely completion of courses which was found to be satisfactory in nature. We were confident to come out of the crisis period with complete victory.

During this lockdown period all over India due to COVID-19 pandemic, our group of institutions have taken a lot of innovative initiatives to continue academic as well as students/ faculty development activities through digital platform. Some of the initiatives are mentioned hereunder :

- Digital Attendance of Faculty was ensured through Online morning and afternoon meetings daily with all faculty (which is one of the good practices being followed in all our group of institutions since inception) through youtube live, Goto Webinar- Everyday all faculty meet via Youtube Live, Goto Webinar in the morning and afternoon, comprising of all 500+ members of the group and everyday departmental meetings and faculty assignments reported via Google meet are monitored and considered as a part of compliance for virtual attendance of all faculty and officers.
- Online classes through Google Hangout meet, YouTube live, every day as per routine were held. The digital tools used are - Youtube Live, Google Classroom, IEMCRP (our proprietary educational ERP software), Simulators, like, MATLAB, NS-2, GridSim, CloudSim, etc., Online Coding platforms like, HackerRank, CodeChef, HackerEarth, etc.
- Practicals were conducted through Online Labs by virtual mode using MATLab, Hacker Rank - online coding platform, etc.

- Online lectures by corporate experts - which were initiated on continuous persuasion and strong initiatives of various departments corporate connect programmes are being conducted through online sessions in the evening for our students, thereby not hampering their everyday WFH schedule, and much to our delight, many of them have responded spontaneously and a good number of sessions have been done which are immensely beneficial for students making them aware and ready for the upcoming battle in their career.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

University has conducted online mid-term examination for students as a part of continuous assessment and prepared for end semester examination. These examination were held while students sitting in their homes with pen and paper answered the. descriptive questions sent to them digitally . This was not an open book system of examination. Questions taken from question banks were framed in such a manner so that no two question papers were identical. Answer scripts were scanned by the students with mobile phone and uploaded digitally for evaluation. Teachers took help of zoom and later googlemet for proctoring (a group of students under one mentor) so that students cannot take help of others during examination. This hybrid online system with 4500 students during our 2nd term online examination was introduced and found to be very effective. Almost 95 per cent students attended the examination without any problem. Students will later submit the hard copies of answer script for keeping record.

With this hybrid online system of examinations tested and proven to be very effective, our university has recently completed end semester examinations using the same model for final year students successfully as per the approval of our statutory bodies and in accordance with UGC/AICTE guidelines . Almost 100 per cent students have appeared for the examination. Rest of the students will get another opportunity to appear for examination after the situation normalizes.

University has facilitated development of faculty members during this testing time by organizing online FDPs, which are taken by eminent academicians of India.

Online Admission- New batch admission process has been made completely online by making entrance test, IEMJEE online, followed by online counselling-cum-interview session.

PLACEMENT

Online Placement- Many recruiters have resorted to online recruitment process and our current final year students have coped up with those opportunities well and grabbed the job offers.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. (Dr). Sajal Dasguptea, Vice Chancellor of University of Engineering and Management, Kolkata, West Bengal-700 156. The article has been contributed by Prof. (Dr). Sajal Dasguptea, Vice Chancellor of University of Engineering and Management, Kolkata. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.uem.edu.in, E-mail : sajal.dasgupta@uem.edu.in

VEER NARMAD SOUTH GUJARAT UNIVERSITY, SURAT

University has prepared academic calendar in accordance to the common academic calendar circulated by Education Department, Government of Gujarat. Accordingly there is a season of examination. The academic work in terms of teaching has been completed before we have closed down due to the pandemic of COVID-19. A few initiatives taken at the university are presented here.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

1. Supplementary reading material provided in PDF formats. (Department of Human Resources Department)
2. Using Google classroom for assigning assignments to students. (Department of Computer Science)
3. Using Google classroom for assigning assignments to students. (Department of Computer Science)
4. Teachers evaluate assignments submitted by students online on google classroom. (Department of Computer Science)
5. Conducting online classes on Zoom application. (Department of Computer Science)
6. Some of the teachers use WhatsApp for academic communication with students. (Department of Computer Science)
7. Students who are on final semester project for last three months are instructed to do their project work through 'Work From Home'. (Department of Computer Science)
8. To encourage and engage students, they are advised to join causes MOOC. Circulated AICTE circular of availability of free of cost MOOCs. (Department of Computer Science)
9. For students of Sem-4, LL. M.(H. R.), Dissertation work is going on. Students are carrying their assignment in consultation with allotted Guide. (Department of Law)
10. Students were given revision through zoom app. WhatsApp group is used to guide students with respect to any queries. Students are working

at home for their term paper and dissertation. Which they will submit online. (Department of Journalism)

11. For any query students are using WhatsApp. (Department of Mathematics)
12. Made a WhatsApp group to solve difficulties. (Department of Aquatic biology)
13. Made WhatsApp group. Recorded lectures and copies of articles are being sent to students for use. (Department of Gujarati)

In a nutshell, in most of the programmes, syllabus and internal examination have been over. However, teachers are using WhatsApp, Zoom App and Google classroom for two way communication for various queries of the students. Teachers are sending various study materials to students through the app/ software.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. Shivendra Gupta, Vice Chancellor of Veer Narmad South Gujarat University, Surat – 395007 (Gujarat). The article has been contributed by Dr. Shivendra Gupta, Vice Chancellor of Veer Narmad South Gujarat University, Surat, Gujarat. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.vnsgu.ac.in, E-mail : info@vnsgu.ac.in

VELLORE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, VELLORE

Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore VIT with its well established digital infrastructure and practices continued its activities un-interrupted even during lockdown in various spheres. Many events were organised and the very important feature is that VIT has involved many experts from many reputed foreign Universities; and at the height of it a Nobel Laureate [Dr Andre Geim Nobel Prize Winner for Physics in 2010 from University of Manchester, UK] also gave a keynote speech in one of the International Conferences organised during pandemic.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Academics

Winter semester leftover classes were conducted in online mode from 1st April to 31st May, 2020, using Microsoft Teams and it was observed that about 98% of the students were able to attend the classes. Classes were also recorded for the benefit of students who could not attend the classes and for those who could not follow up the classes. Project reviews, both capstone and as course component, were conducted in online mode.

Arrear examinations were conducted in online mode as per guidelines so as to facilitate student progression and to honour Industry recruiters request in placements.

VIT Online Learning (VITOL) Institute–Asynchronous Courses

VITOL offered 22 courses completely online (Asynchronous Mode) through vitol.ac.in customized in Open Edx Platform to 20,202 students of all campuses of VIT with more than 43,000 Registrations. The courses included Intro to Bio-Inspired Design and 21 other courses for our students.

These are add-on additional courses offered to students to keep themselves engaged productively during pandemic and also add value to their degree.

The platform had inbuilt provision for Continuous Assessment using MCQs and Student assignments and online programming lab sessions. The courses were offered in Asynchronous mode and therefore the students had the convenience of learning at their convenience.

Research Activities Continued

The office of Academic Research has initiated measures to conduct meetings such Viva-voce, Synopsis, and DC meeting completely online (Microsoft Teams). This has been a great boon in the current situation as all the external DC members, Guide, Scholar, and internal DC members can attend the meeting completely online.

Till today, a total of 45 Oral exams, 39 Synopsis meetings, and 110 DC meetings have been held online. All the meetings are recorded and kept in the repository for future reference.

Besides, this office has been functioning from May 20, 2020 (Monday to Saturday) with 50% staff members between 10.00 AM and 4.00 PM.

Academic Staff College

A series of Online Faculty and Staff training programmes and Faculty Orientation programmes were organised during the last few months during the lockdown period. The complete details of the same are given under the Academic Staff College activities in the VIT website.

Student Club Activities

During this pandemic period office of Students' Welfare conducted various virtual events through clubs and chapters.

More than 400 Online events were conducted in 70 days, these events included webinars, demos, workshops, Stress management programs, live dance music art classes. International Yoga day was also celebrated though live telecast of yoga sessions by expert teachers and more than 900 students, faculties and staff participated in this event.

Several knowledgeable renowned experts, celebrities across the globe gave lectures in live webinars workshops.

Admissions

March to June every year is the peak time for admission. Fortunately majority of our admission processes are digital in nature without the need for direct human interaction. The all applications are available in the internet with document upload facility pre-empting the need for handling physical materials and human interaction viz. copying mark sheets, sending by post

or courier, receiving posts, etc. The online applications is also available as Android and iOS apps with transitions for counselling and then to VIT student app.

Any support required for applying to VIT is provided by multiple platforms. The first is a toll free telephone line. 1800-102-0536 are managed by 6 counsellors 24 x 7. An online chat support is also available through web.

Social media support through WhatsApp Number 9566656755 is also provided with specific chat facility. Offline support is available through email support (ugadmission@vit.ac.in). Any staff/ visitor entering our office are thermally scanned and hand-sanitized. Daily sanitization of office space and contact areas is performed. All guidelines of GoI are followed.

We are planning to adopt social distancing during of entrance examinations by doubling the required seating, sanitizing the examination hall and equipment every session. We are exploring the options to conduct the counselling and admission process from the comfort of home.

Placement of Students (PAT)

PAT (Students Placement)Centre trained more than 5000+ 2021 graduating batch students for campus placements remotely using MS Teams.

We have done the PG internship placements remotely for the 2021 graduating batch. As of date, 40 companies have completed the recruitment drives and 340 students have been offered.

We have also helped our alumni in lateral hiring recruitments done remotely. 5200 alumni have registered for the lateral hiring and 31 companies are interviewing them remotely.

Campus placements season for 2021 graduating batch will start remotely from 13th July, 2020 and 8 companies will be sharing the SLOT-1 for the Super Dream placements, each offering more than 25 Lakhs per annum,

PAT Centre has facilitated an International remote Internship (Canada) for 40 students of 2021 graduating batch.

PAT Centre is also facilitating Certification and hackathons for 7500 students who will be graduating in 2022, through NASSCOM FUTURE SKILLS initiative.

More than 14000 students have enrolled for Coursera courses facilitated by PAT.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Finance and Purchases Departments

The services departments like purchases and Finance were enabled to work from home and emergency purchases were made through Online. The same way the Finance department worked from home to disburse salaries to Faculty and Staff members and also to make emergency payments.

Human Resources Department

Recruitment Process – Faculty and Staff

Faculty and Staff selection Interviews were held online. Further processes are in progress. Interviews were held during April, 20-June, 20.

A total of 188 Faculty members were selected during pandemic and they underwent 1 month Virtual Training Program and completed it on 1st July, 2020.

Confirmation of appraisal process was completed for faculty members who were on their probation through digital inputs/approval.

Non-teaching Staff Training (Coordination)

Non-teaching staff members were given training in MS-Office and English/Hindi languages through MS-Teams. The training was held in multiple batches during May, 20-June, 20.

Contribution to Society

School of Mechanical Engineering has developed 3D printed face shields for doctors, nurses, technicians, polices and other health-care professionals involved in treating the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) patients and donated more than 1500 masks till date. Three sets of ventilator splitters, and limiters to the Vellore Medical College Hospital.

Administration

In addition, all official meetings of VIT core management, Deans and Directors, other supporting offices are being conducted Online.

During the pandemic, faculty members did at least one MOOC course/ how to prepare MOOC courses training online. Professors worked for review papers during this period when access to experimental lab was limited.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. Anand A Samuel, Vice Chancellor of Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore- 632 014 (Tamil Nadu). The article has been contributed by Dr. Anand A Samuel, Vice Chancellor of Vellore Institute of Technology, Vellore, Tamil Nadu. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.vit.ac.in, E-mail : vc@vit.ac.in

VIGNANA JYOTHI INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, HYDERABAD

Pandemic was a word that was less known until late January, 2020, before World Health Organisation (WHO) declared COVID-19 as a pandemic and the entire world wriggled under the damage that the microscopic virus was creating. Governments across the globe began declaring lockdowns. Lockdown became another commonly used term. Nations, economies, industries were all struggling. Educational institutions were not left behind. Managements of educational institutions were grappling over many issues, the primary one being that of academic continuity.

By mid-March, governments across the world, imposed lockdowns to restrict the movement of people and practice social distancing to control the rapid spread of the contagion. Indian government also followed suit and on 24th March, 2020 it swiftly enforced the strictest and most comprehensive lockdown in the world leaving very little time for individuals and organizations to plan for a prolonged shutdown. Vignana Jyothi Institute of Management was no exception.

Here is a glimpse of the various initiatives taken by VJIM, most of them developed on the fly, to maintain continuity and mitigate the impact of the disruption on faculty and students.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Academic Delivery to Maintain Continuity

The next important task was to avoid disruption in the programme schedule. Since it was uncertain when the lockdown would be lifted, the Director and team after wide-ranging deliberations decided that the entire Teaching-Learning-Evaluation process had to be shifted online to ensure minimum disruption in the schedule. This major step was fraught with risk and posed immense challenges ranging from rapid adoption of new technological tools to adjusting to new norms of behaviour rapidly by all stakeholders. Microsoft Teams was chosen because of its security features, video and audio quality, ease of operation and its ability to scale up and accommodate large classes. Classes for Trimester IV was commenced in the end of April. A set of guidelines for conducting sessions was conveyed to the faculty including marking attendance for the sessions, uploading course content including reading material and power point slides, briefcases, etc. The idea of flipped classroom was mooted as an effective pedagogy since it encouraged students to prepare for engaging online discussions.

Knowledge Dissemination

Committed to the values set by the mentors of this institution, VJIM has taken this opportunity to contribute to the society as well. The institute organised webinar and workshops for the academic and corporate fraternity.

Webinar: VJIM LRC organized webinar on COVID-19: Challenges and Opportunities for Libraries to discuss topics such as Enhancing Online Learning facilities, Increasing productivity among Library Work Force, Digital Transformation (e-resources), Challenges and Opportunities.

Management Development Programme: Python for data analysis: An MDP was conducted during May, 2020 to June, 2020 for a group of managers. This curriculum is aimed at imparting skills to curate the data, observe underlying structure and apply machine learning algorithms to predict and classify the data. Currently there are various tools in the marketplace to do the above mentioned, but in this course Python, an open source programming language is used along with the complementing environments like Jupyter notebook, Pycharm, REPL, etc. Several packages like Numpy, Pandas, Matplotlib are also introduced which would enable the learner to apply the techniques offered by the packages to the given business requirement.

Faculty Development Programme: Data visualization using Tableau: An FDP was organised for the faculty from various institutions under HMA in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh in the month of June, 2020. This FDP covered the data visualization techniques using Tableau's various features. Faculty have learned how to import data into Tableau environment and understand the various data types. Also, the visualizations appropriate for a given situation was also explained to the faculty group. Various ways to present the data using the available techniques and then building dashboards to present the data in a story format was also taught in this FDP.

Workshop: A workshop on mental health 'Appreciative August' is being organised in the month of August. 'Appreciative August' is a foundational workshop to understand the basics of mental health and tips to rejuvenate oneself. The workshop shall discuss the basics of mental wellbeing, an understanding into Life Positions of oneself, discuss the philosophy (and science) of happiness and small bites of how one can work towards improving their happiness. The workshop will also help the participants chalk out a plan for improving the happiness quotient.

Skill Enhancement of the Faculty

Faculty is the pillar of any institution. The institution has taken necessary steps to expose the faculty to upgraded technology through trainings and online meetings. They have also been successfully participating in webinars and training programmes for skill development conducted by prestigious external organisations.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

End-term Examinations for I-year and II-year Students

The unprecedented closure of the educational institutions did not allow VJIM to conduct the final examinations of the I year (Trimester III) and II Year (Trimester VI) in the campus as scheduled. Understanding that the lockdown was going to get extended and any further delay in conduct of examinations and closure of the academic year would affect the students who had to either join their final jobs or their internships, VJIM decided to conduct the end-term examinations online. The institute conducted 31 online open book examinations in trimesters III and VI with the help of an online examination platform. In addition, online viva-voce examination for terms V and VI were conducted by faculty panels on Microsoft Teams for the second-year PGDM students (Class of 2020) who could not attend regular classes since they had already joined companies by then.

Safety Protocols

The institute remained closed as per the decision of the central and state governments. The college will reopen faculty and staff after following the necessary safety protocols of the government. All the government guidelines and safety precautions are being followed by the institute.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr. Ch. S. Durga Prasad, Director of Vignana Jyothi Institute of Management, Hyderabad-500090. The article has been authored by Dr. Ch. S. Durga Prasad, Director of Vignana Jyothi Institute of Management, Hyderabad and has been provided for publication in this Book by Mr. C. Ramakrishna, Executive Director, Association of Management Development Institutions in South Asia (AMDISA), Hyderabad-500 046. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.vjim.edu.in, E-mail : durgaprasad_r@vnrvjiet.in

VIKRAMA SIMHAPURI UNIVERSITY, NELLORE

His Excellency, the Honourable Governor of Andhra Pradesh has given valuable advice ago (Reported in News Papers) that the Universities shall play an important role in creating awareness among the general public about COVID-19 and help the needy people at this hour of crisis. Understanding this deep concern expressed by Hon'ble Chancellor for the society in general and for the poor and destitute in particular, Vikrama Simhapuri University Nellore has taken a few initiatives. No doubt the Central Government, State Government and the District administration have been putting their best efforts in the containment of the spread of this Pandemic. The University desires to put its humble efforts as a matter of its social responsibility to create awareness, containment of COVID-19 and to undertake some relief operations through its NSS Unit. What follows is a Quick Report on the activities initiated by the University.

Pre-lockdown Period

- Created awareness among Students, Research Scholars and Staff by displaying posters and posts through Social Media and advised to take precautionary measures for the prevention of spread of COVID-19 disease.
- The Coordinator of NSS Cell of University has distributed Arsenic Album-30 Homeopathic Pills (Prophylactic drug for prevention of Corona Virus infection) which was confirmed with the Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India, to the University Staff and Students in the month of February, 2020 as a primary preventive initiative and also encouraged the 110 Units under its jurisdiction to do the same in its Colleges in Nellore District.
- The University has procured limited number of surgical masks from DMHO Office and DFIT, Nellore and distributed to the students who are having cough, cold or flu like symptoms.
- Organised awareness meetings at Department/Office/Hostel Level.
- NSS volunteers made small number processions in the city with banners, Posters and placards and displayed the same at its adopted villages of the University NSS Units.

- In response to our Honourable Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi's call, wide publicity was given in Nellore city for Campaigning on '*Janata Curfew*' in the University jurisdiction and the Vice Chancellor made an appeal to the Staff, Research Scholars, Students and general public to observe *Janata Curfew* in the local press and electronic media.
- The University has created awareness and sensitizing University staff, NSS Programme Officers and NSS Volunteers to mitigate the problem mainly by prevention methods like good hygienic practices, self/community quarantaining and social distancing. The university through its NSS Unit, distributed masks and sanitizers within the University.

During Lockdown Period

- Feeding Homeless people and migrant labourers and distributed food to beggars at six locations in Nellore City, mainly at temples.
- Bringing the health issues of some homeless people to the notice of District Medical and Health Office, Nellore.
- Distributed fruits, biscuits, water bottles and tea to police department personnel who are On Duty on 29th March, 2020.
- The Vice Chancellor made an appeal to the students, staff of affiliated colleges and to the general public to cooperate with the District administration in the strict implementation of lockdown in the State and in the City.
- The University gave its willingness to handover the students' hostels (both Men and Women) at Main Campus, Nellore and at PG Centre, Kavali to the district administration to use the same as Isolation Wards.
- Deputed Head of the Department of Computer Science, V. S. University, Nellore to the Central Control Office, Nellore District on request of the District Administration.
- The Vice Chancellor, the Registrar, some of the staff, students and Sri Krishna Chaitanya College Management, Nellore contributed their mite to supply rice and necessary provisions adequate for at least for 15 days to about hundred poor families (those who are not having Ration Card) on dated. 7-4-2020.

- The Vice Chancellor sent an Advisory to the faculty members regarding the protocol suggested by the Ministry of Health and Family welfare, Government of India and other instructions and guidelines given by State Government from time to time to combat the pandemic COVID-19. The faculty members were also advised to utilise the lockdown period to prepare Research Proposals, Research Papers for Publication and to motivate the students to learn online. Heads of the Department and Faculty were suggested to facilitate online teaching and learning by connecting to students Department-wise.
- Vice Chancellor sent an appeal to all College Managements, Faculty, Non-Teaching Staff and students to contribute their mite to the Chief Minister Relief Fund, Government of Andhra Pradesh to express their solidarity and to support financially at this critical time.

The students of department of Statistics, Vikrama Simhapuri University, Nellore distributed rice, groceries and masks to 50 families of daily wage earners in Padakandla and Gandlaveedu Villages in Atmakuru Mandal on 07.04.2020 besides creating awareness about the COVID-19.

This budding University, with its limited resources sincerely resolve to stand by the nation in its own way in containing the spread and combating COVID-19.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Prof. R Sudrsana Rao, Vice Chancellor of Vikrama Simhapuri University, Nellore- 524 320 (Andhra Pradesh). The article has been contributed by Prof. R Sudrsana Rao, Vice Chancellor of Vikrama Simhapuri University, Nellore, Andhra Pradesh. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.simhapuriuniv.ac.in, E-mail : vsu.vc1@gmail.com

VISVESVARAYA TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, BELGAVI

In the wake of COVID-19 pandemic; upholding the directions and advisories received from the Central and State Governments from time to time in this regard, Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU) is striving hard to see that the academic future of it's students is least affected during this period. A brief report on the measures and efforts taken by the university in the present difficult times of COVID-19 pandemic is presented here.

During the initial stage of the outbreak of COVID-19, taking into consideration its social responsibility, on 5th March, 2020, VTU conducted an Awareness Programme on COVID-19 pandemic for its teaching and non-teaching staff, inviting a group of doctors from KLES' Prabhakar Kore Hospital, Belgavi, who explained the staff about how the pandemic spreads and also about do's and don'ts during this period to keep oneself healthy and safe.

On 20-03-2020, Video Conference meeting was conducted with Principals and Management members of the 219 affiliated engineering colleges across the State to update the measures to curb COVID-19, and protect academic interest of the students, etc. Several such meetings were conducted by VTU, in association with its Vice Chancellor, Registrar and Registrar(Evaluation) to discuss about the Academic and Examination issues arisen because of COVID-19 and to convey the measures to be taken and to collect feedback from the colleges for future course of action.

GAINFUL ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENT COMMUNITY

Online Teaching Learning Process

With the announcement of nation-wide Lockdown w.e.f. 24-3-2020, University informed the colleges to conduct online classes for UG and PG courses using digital platform (You Tube channel, Videos, Zoom, Virtual labs, etc.). For the benefit of students who have missed the digital classes, colleges have put recorded lectures on YouTube channels with links hosted on their websites. In addition lecture notes, reference materials, Solved Question Papers have been put on websites. The Pre-Ph.D. / Ph.D. / M.Sc.(Engg.) by Research Viva-voce examination were conducted through video conference using suitable digital platforms.

VTU's e-Shikshana YouTube channel has many videos which are accessible for the students. In addition to this, e-Shikshana portal has 15000 lecture videos set for VTU syllabus. VTU's complete E-resources have been made available to all faculty members and students through a mobile app. Virtual Labs also have been referred to the institutes.

Approx. 2,60,00 students 16,000 teachers participated per day and on an average 2400 courses in multiple divisions were offered until 15-06-2020. Around 9000 students used e-Resources of VTU consortium through mobile application. All the meetings to come out with the policy decisions are being conducted using digital platform only. VTU-CPC(Central Placement Cell) is also active in conducting Video Conference with Placement Officers of all colleges to assess the situation and plan for future placement activities.

Innovative Projects

We all are aware of the critical and severe conditions as well as issues being faced by the front line Warriors like doctors, Medical support staff, Police personnel, etc. in the wake of COVID-19. University has invited the innovative ideas and Research Projects from the students and teachers of all the engineering colleges under VTU to handle the issues related to COVID-19. The selected proposals such as IoT based low cost Ambu-Bag Compressing Machine for Low Cost Ventilators, Sanitizing Truck, COVID-19 Android Mobile App, Low Cost Mask for prevention of spread of COVID-19, etc. were considered for funding under TEQIP 1.3. After the thorough scrutiny, 30 Projects have been identified for funding and about Rs.10 lakh has been sanctioned towards it.

University has technically and financially contributed for designing and building a Robot which can serve medicines and food in the COVID wards. This Robot is designed which can be operated remotely with the help of Mobile Phone and has the following features:

- 360 degree Cameras to capture all the views around the patient
- Provision to have video interaction between the patients and doctors
- Nozzles to sprays disinfectants beneath the cots and other areas

This Robot has been developed with the help of group of enthusiastic engineers from Nippani in association with the Department of Mechanical Engineering of VTU.

Institutes have been instructed to ensure mentoring and counseling of the students to maintain their mental health in good condition. Building confidence in them is of prime priority in these difficult times. As per the terms of UGC and Government of Karnataka, Grievance Redressal Cell has been established in the University as well as in the affiliated colleges and Nodal Officers have been appointed to take care of the academic as well as examination related queries from the students. These queries have been addressed on immediate priority by the Nodal Officers.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

All the employees of VTU and most of its affiliated colleges have contributed one day salary each to Hon'ble CM's Relief Fund as well as Hon'ble PM's-CARES Fund.

As its social responsibility University has donated 500 PPE Kits to the District Authorities, in association with the Jana Kalyan Trust. These Kits were handed over to the Hon'ble District Minister, Belagavi.

Around 550 Face Masks have been distributed to the Security and House Keeping employees of the University. Face Masks were also handed over to Police Personnel of Rural Police Station, Belagavi. Sanitizers and Hand gloves were distributed to the Security personnel and House Keeping employees.

VTU Head Quarters and Regional Centers have been prepared to maintain all the safety measures in the campus with infrared thermometers, Sanitizers, hand gloves and masks to the employees. Other terms such as social distancing are keenly monitored.

As per the request from the Government of Karnataka, one of the hostels at Muddenahalli Campus of VTU, was handed over for the use as Quarantine Center for COVID-19 affected people.

The activities and accomplishments mentioned in this article have been initiated and realised under the leadership of Dr Karisiddappa, Vice Chancellor of Visvesvaraya Technological University, Belagavi- 590 018 (Karnataka). The article has been contributed by Dr Karisiddappa, Vice Chancellor of Visvesvaraya Technological University, Belagavi, Karnataka. The facts and the opinions expressed in the article are those of the contributor only. More information regarding the activities and the University can be accessed from the Website: www.vtu.ac.in, E-mail : vc@vtu.ac.in



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