

A Statistical Survey of On-line Class - Performances in different Colleges under Bankura University

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Abstract

Education being an effective vehicle for enhancing human capabilities and providing social and economic development in many ways our crucial role in preparing our students to think critically for their effective communication, social interaction, ethics, lifelong learning, environment and sustainability, can not be denied. It is most unfortunate that the wheels of this effective vehicle are thwarted to some extent during the lockdown period owing to the outbreak of COVID-19 (Novel Corona Virus). The schools and colleges being closed throughout the country, conducting of physical classes is not being possible. So, the Government is in favour of utilizing the latest technological devices to hold on-line classes for students by the teachers. Study materials, video lecture are being uploaded on regular basis through whats app groups, college websites, e-mail. On-line classes having direct communications with the students through webcam as being held in most of the higher educational institutions of the country, have become a common practice of the day due to this unprecedented situation of COVID-19.

Bankura University with its 24 affiliated colleges has also been shouldering its responsibilities with its liberal, holistic and motherly care to constantly encourage its affiliated colleges for safeguarding the students' interest even at this crucial period, thus favouring the on-line classes as alternate substitute.

Keywords: Lockdown, Bankura University, "Corona Virus", "COVID-19", On-Line Class, Study Material.

Introduction

Our country has been passing through at present a critical situation of facing the outbreak of Novel Corona virus along with the other countries throughout the world. The people have been practising social distancing to avoid the spread of COVID-19 during this period of lockdown as announced by the Central Govt. since 25th Mar, 2020. The academic institutions across the nation are closed, the classes are suspended, the examinations are postponed and millions of students are forced to study from home. The said institutions are exploring different ways to prevent the loss of studies during this period. To continue the learning process by the students, the universities, colleges and schools are directing teachers to use different media like Whats app, e-mail, e-learning classes, SMS etc. to provide sufficient study materials to the students.

On April 1, 2020, the Government of West Bengal sent out a notice to the colleges asking them to submit their infrastructure reports. The colleges were also asked to inform the Govt. whether they had started with the e-learning and teaching module or not. Accordingly, different colleges of our state have already started the same on different dates during this lockdown period.

With the suspension of classes due to Corona virus Pandemic since March 16th, 2020, West Bengal Government on Friday (20th Mar, 2020) announced one week long virtual classroom for students of higher classes of State-run schools from the next week.

In view of extraordinary circumstances due to COVID-19 Pandemic and nationwide lockdown, some state governments have issued directions to their schools regarding promotion of students from Class 1 to 8. The West Bengal government has decided for the extension of virtual classes (originally scheduled for 7 days) by over two months upto June

10th, 2020 to make for lessons lost by the students of classes 9 to 12, owing to lockdown.

Objective of the Study

Bankura University being a newly established university (Act XIX of 2013), is committed to disseminate higher learning in this region of Bankura District. It comprises of 24 affiliated colleges with the first academic session (UG) started since 2017-2018. It aims at promoting the study of indigenous folk and cultural tradition along with sustainable rural and tribal development. A considerable percentage of the students' community in most of the affiliated colleges belong to SC/ST/OBC and Minority categories with even first generation learners.

Although Bankura district is an economically backward area, but so far as, education is concerned, there is no dearth of talent among the students. Every year boys and girls from this district top the list of the successful candidates in "Madhyamik", Higher Secondary, other board examinations and also the University examination (Previously Burdwan University) in comparison to other districts of West Bengal.

The present endeavour is to ascertain the number and percentage of students availing themselves of the opportunity of on-line classes during this unprecedented situation of COVID-19, thus assessing the present circumstances, how far the loss for absence of physical classes is compensated by the on-line classes. A comparative study of the number of students in all the Honours, Programme and Post Graduate (wherever applicable) courses availing themselves of on-line class facilities, out of the total number of students in their respective courses of these 24 colleges under the University, has been made in tabular form.

On-line Class Scenario in Some Other States of the Country

In Delhi the school and college students are being "home-schooled" since March 24. The traditional classrooms have been replaced by the Zoom and On-line classes.

In Bihar like other states, schools and colleges are shut due to COVID-19 lockdown. Recently, BEPC (Bihar Education Project Council) a wing of state education department launched a mobile application "Unnayan: Mera MeraVidyalaya" Mobile, for class VI to XII of over seventy thousand government run school. This application has been jointly developed by the UNICEF (United Nations Children Education Fund), the Bihar government and Eckovation, a social learning platform.

In Odisha, Higher Education Secretary, Saswat Mishra in a letter to the universities said neither theory nor practical classes will be allowed on physical mode during the period and advised that online teaching be imparted as a substitute during the crisis. The universities have been asked to remain prepared to conduct the tests in short notice.

In Madhya Pradesh, Chhindwara District collector issued an order not to collect fees from students for online classes.

The Assam Govt. has been thinking of rescheduling the academic calendar from April to March instead of January to December.

In Chennai majority of the students and faculty members are familiarising themselves to online learning. The city colleges may use online classes to avoid crowded classrooms and to maintain social distancing post COVID-19 lockdown. Some colleges here are also thinking of starting the next semester early with online classes. According to Thomas Amirtham, Principal of Loyola College online classes would be handy to maintain social distancing when colleges reopen. P. Duraisamy, Vice-Chancellor of Madras University said, "On-line classes would be useful at the start of the academic year. Faculty members may upload video lectures and later conduct classes by splitting them into small groups to clarify doubts." He also said that the colleges may have to shift the online classes to avoid crowded classroom post COVID-19.

In Gujrat although the state Govt. has given nod to promote school students without conducting examinations due to nationwide lockdown to contain COVID-19 spread, it has ruled out the option for colleges and universities. According to Principal Secretary, Education, Anju Sharma- the Mass promotion is completely ruled out legally. It has been legally challenged earlier in the Supreme Court when mass promotion had been issued by the Gujrat University.

In Kerala, RSET (Rajagini School of Engineering and Technology), Kochi estimates that there are more than one hundred forty colleges with more than Thirty Thousand students. The short concise video, first of which was posted on March 17th, 2020 covering topics in minimum time using minimum internet bandwidth usage. According to Prof (Dr) PS Sreejith, Principal, RSET "As as of today our faculty members have uploaded more than 300 videos on different branches of Engineering, Mathematics, Chemistry and Economics. I hope this will enable all the students under APJ Abdul Kalam Technological University."

The move of virtual learning through "Doordarshan" and AIR in Meghalaya is likely to benefit at least 2.5 lakh students especially in rural areas, whose access to mobile network is limited. IIT Roorkee is likely to conduct webinar on career in AI (Artificial Intelligence) and Machine learning in the wake of current economic crisis.

The Uttarakhand government has issued an order to government and private colleges, state based universities and their constituent colleges to start conducting regular online classes according to a timetable from April 21st, 2020.

The Uttar Pradesh government in a statement pointed out, "Students studying in different state universities/ colleges are consistently getting the benefit of online teaching / counselling / training etc. during the lockdown period. Sixty five thousand nine hundred forty three e-contents have been prepared by teachers of various state universities and colleges across the state. All the above e-contents are available on the respective universities/ colleges'

