Educational Institutions of Islamabad during COVID-19
Pandemics: A Reflective Study

Parveen Akhter Malik and Dr Saadia Dilshad

AJP

Educational Institutions of Islamabad during COVID-19 Pandemics: A Reflective Study

Parveen Akhter Malik and Dr Saadia Dilshad

Emails: saadia.amjad@gmail.com, imcgg92@gmail.com

Abstract

Purpose: The spread of Novel Corona virus (COVID-19) affected all fields of life along with education across the globe. After increase in positive cases of COVID-19, Federal Government of Pakistan announced the closure of educational institutions all over the country in the mid of March, 2020, as a protective measure for students and staff members. Due to complete lockdown in the country, internal and board exams of secondary school certificate (SSC) and higher secondary school certificate (HSSC) cancelled. Students got promotion without annual examination into next classes based on previous performance. This study investigated the blow of COVID- 19 on the students of government educational institutions of Islamabad along with the response of Government on the issue.

Methodology: This was a qualitative study with case study approach. Target population was all the students and teachers/head teachers from public High and Higher secondary schools in Islamabad Pakistan. Random convenient sampling technique used for collection of data. Semi structured interviews were conducted telephonically for data. After completion, interviews/ responses transcribed and analyzed.

Findings: Results of this research have revealed that this pandemic has badly affected the Federal educational institutions of Islamabad because of confinement of students in homes. Generally, students in government schools are from middle and lower middle class. They have no/limited access to internet and technology at home. It has widened the gap between privileged and none privileged/less privileged students due to inequality in access to internet and unavailability of gadgets in unbiased access to quality education. These factors compelled the Government to launch Tele-School on PTV (Pakistan Television) channel that started its regular transmission on 14 April 2020. Basic aim was to give assistance to all students confined at home. Schools opened after expected peak time I.e. 15 September. Students were allowed to join the regular school in small groups on alternate day. Strict precautionary measures, like social distancing, use of disinfectants in and around the premises/humans and provision of regular medical assistance carried out. Data revealed that the whole system was overburdened but the steps taken caused the far less damage than expected to the students.

Recommendation: The study recommend that Tele-school channel should continue even after pandemic. It is beneficial for students to learn during closure of schools. It is also helpful to the students of remote areas, with no or least of internet facilities. Time has proven that the low-income government institutions have tackled the situation very well under the visionary umbrella of Federal Directorate of Education Islamabad Pakistan.

Keywords: *COVID-19, Lockdown, Quality Education, Precautionary measures, Digital divides.*

INTRODUCTION

In Pakistan, during the last week of February 2020, first COVID -19 positive cases were reported. In the second week of March, government across the country started to shut down the schools and colleges temporarily as a precautionary measure to contain the reckless spread of the corona virus. This was a crucial time for the education sector. Initially schools were closed from 15 March to 15 July 2020 but then extended to 15 September 2020. Board examination, nursery, school admissions, entrance tests of various institutions were all held during this period. As all internal and external assessment cancelled, so it was feared that it would affect student's learning process negatively (Black & William, 2018). According to Anderson and Nielson (2019) study, participation in tests has positive effect on the learning of students. Similarly, Dawadi (2018) has pointed out that assessments gives motivation to students for further learning.

After continuous increase in positive cases, Federal government of Pakistan has decided to lockdown the country. This lockdown continued until May 2020. Government decided to relax the lockdown by converting it to smart lockdown under strict protective measures/SOPs. However, all educational institutional remained closed throughout the country to stop the spread of COVID-19. Due to this pandemic, many schools started conducting online classes. But the main challenge was that our teachers and students were not prepared for it and not well trained to meet the current challenges (Mohamedbhai, 2020). Lack of access to technology and fast reliable internet access is a great hindrance for students (Sharma, 2020). Face to face teaching has positive impact on student (Lavy,2015).When schools were closed, parents were asked to facilitate the learning of children at home and struggle with them to perform the task. This was difficult for parents who were illiterate. There is dire need to look for new strategies (Poudel, 2020).

Schools can request support from within the communities for learning process because they know the language and culture of students (Sabates, 2020). Schools are hub of social activities and human interaction. When schools are close, many children and youth are missing out of a social contact that is essential to learning and development (Brugess & Sievertsen, 2020). spite the fact that COVID-19 is not as horrifying as it was in 2020, teachers and the mother institution FDE (federal directorate of education) has changed the traditional method of face to face teaching learning process to blended learning in which is face to face teaching is supported by e-learning. It got implement after the suggestion of some heads of the institutions and researchers that, Compulsory closure of educational institutions may be replaced by changing into e-learning system, or blended system. Next to many challenges in equitable access to quality education however students have several issues .Students have no suitable place at home for studies, limited access to computer, internet and other family tensions as well (Vahid, 2020).Special attention should be given to special children (Pudasaini, 2020).

Various developed countries like US, UK and other Europeans countries have responded this pandemic by adopting different measures according to their resources. They have adopted e-learning platforms (cloud system, LMS, Moodle) and created distance learning centre portals. They have provided access to e-content to their students through their mobile devices. In these countries all stake holders joined hands to create digital resources (learning material and text books) and delivered through virtual classrooms (Azzi-Huck & Shmis, 2020). Present scenario indicates that this pandemic has affected students differently (Gyamerah, 2020).To mitigate the impact on education, some urban schools in Pakistan have started online classes but for rural

schools, it is not feasible. Distribution of access to Internet and e-learning facilities has created inequalities between students living in urban and rural and between rich and poor (Pandit, 2020). Policies should not be city oriented but it should address the individual need of students (Phuyal, 2020; UNESCO, 2020) has showed the concern about the sustainable development goals to ensure equitable and inclusive education to promote equal opportunities for all. It has created uncertainty in students who are eligible to be enrolled in colleges and universities in higher classes. After opening of schools there will be lot of pressure on students and teachers to catch up the lost time and cover all curriculum in short time rather than developing skills (Buckler, Chamberlain, Stutchbury, & Hedge, 2020). There are more chances of dropout rate (Giannini & Albrectsen, 2020). Due to this pandemic and lockdown, many parents have lost their job. So rise of students dropout rate was expected as parents will go for the option of not to afford their children to attend the school and they prefer their children to help them for economic support (Triuneh, 2020).

Research Objectives

The research objectives were to:

1. Investigate the contact of COVID -19 on Government Educational Institutions of Islamabad.

2. Find out the steps taken by Federal Directorate of Education to continue process of delivering education at home.

3. Evaluate the present status of educational process in Model Schools of Federal Capital Territory

Research Questions

1. What is the Impact of COVID-19 on Government Educational Institutions of Islamabad?

2. What steps were taken by Federal Directorate of Education to continue the process of delivering education at home?

3. What is present status of classes and coverage of syllabus in Model Schools of Islamabad Capital Territory?

Statement of the Problem

Government had to close the educational institutions temporarily to contain the spread of COVID-19. This pandemic affected the educational systems throughout the world, leading to total closure of schools, colleges and universities. Government of Pakistan tried its level best to respond to this pandemic effectively by taking different initiatives. Apart from all the efforts, there was a dire need to pin point some strategies required to catch up the lost time in short academic calendar. The reflection of efforts and the results of the steps taken in this regard had to be reported, and reviewed for future strategies.

Significance of the Study

This research was conducted to investigate and reflect the impact of COVID-19 on Federal Government Educational institutes of Islamabad. It has highlighted the government response to this pandemic by closing the institutions as a protective measure to protect the students and staff along with reducing the risk of spread of COVID-19. This study has shown the concern and the affect of COVID-19 on annual examination and results of academic calendar 2020. It proposes suggestions for catching up lost time in the academic calendar. Moreover, it can be espied as the responses of the administration at the institution level so that the

administration at the directorate level can take the precautionary measures, as the pandemonium of this pandemic is still not over.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a qualitative research with case study approach (Creswell, 2017). Qualitative studies focus on trends and meanings, opinions, and attitudes. The case study concentrates on the investigation of a phenomenon, including but not confined to an individual, a program, class, a group of people (Lichtman, 2010). This methodology is applicable when the researcher wants to remain focused on one unit. Thus, the researcher may examine factors affecting people's behaviors in particular situations. Keeping in view the above stated definitions researcher used this method and strategy. Here the opinion of the teacher's students and head teachers of public sector secondary and higher secondary schools recorded to understand the situation. The steps taken by the mother institution to ease the burden from the public institutions was also under consideration. To get the data researcher selected all the female public secondary and higher secondary in Islamabad Pakistan. These are 43 in number (33 secondary schools+ 10 higher secondary school) Researcher chooses three (2+1) institutions by convenient random sampling technique.

Table 1: Sample Size and Respondents

Total institutions for sample	Heads of Institutes	Teachers	Students	Total Respondents
03	03	2*3= 6	2*3= 6	3+6+6=15

Instrumentation

For qualitative research researcher used the semi-structured interviews as a tool for data collection. There were some close-ended questions but mainly the interview had open-ended questions, which provided a greater space to the respondent for presenting the real or self -experiences during the pandemic. The semi-structured interviews contained the same questions for all participants, with minor differences as per position of the respondent.

Data Collection and Analysis

Interviews conducted via telephone because there was a nation-wide call for self-isolation/Quarantine and social distancing of all citizens. The online interviews lasted twenty minutes each on average .They were transcribed and analyzed using constant appropriate qualitative data analysis techniques. The researchers performed transcription and coding of data.

Data Analysis and its Interpretation

Data were analyzed, interpreted and results of the study were described after coding, categories and then themes were developed. The themes were presenting the results received from answers of research questions given by participants. The themes were organized in a way that every theme presented the research questions.

FINDINGS FROM RESPONDENTS

1. Impact of Digital Divide on student's performance

This pandemic COVID-19 has widening the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students due to uneven access of e-resources and e- learning. Our students and teachers are less aware about

the online education and have no earlier experience of online mode of education. One of participant who is working as a principal in government school of Islamabad shared "It is difficult for our students to learn and understand the lectures online as they are habitual of physical appearance in classrooms. Face to face, education has positive impact on students. Therefore, in online teaching they are unable to clear their concepts through internet live sessions. A number of students living in far-flung areas of the country have no access to the internet facility and they have to travel for a long to attend online class, which is not manageable."

Similarly, one of the headmistresses working in secondary school has expressed her views "The educational institutions were closed w.e.f.16th March 2020. With this closure, there was no face to face teaching, examination and other activities, although, few institutions tried to manage their teaching and learning process via online tutoring but students suffered. The students living in far-flung areas do not have stable internet connectivity and they could not attend online classes. It was scrutinize that the students had no serious attitude towards online classes. There were high chances of being dishonest and unfair in terms of attendance and work submission." Another respondent said, "The education system has affected badly. The students are in an uncertain situation. Both students and faculty face lot of issues in online learning to conduct and attend online classes. This generation has not experienced this tough situation so on both sides, it is tough to overcome the situation. The dropout rates are increasing among students. Most of them are not well equipped with sufficient gadgets in addition to enough internet data."

Similarly, another teacher said, "Our school is also trying to handle the situation with its maximum resources but we have some problems such as, "Our school is situated where most of the community is from lower middle class. Students do not have frequent access to the internet. Students don't have gadgets to connect themselves with online education system." One of the student shared, "Yes most students of our school are willing to takes online classes however everyone cannot afford internet facility" correspondingly, another student shared, "We don't have smart phones. We use phone of our parents and elder siblings. We cannot take proper online classes due to expensive internet package.

2. Innovative response to COVID-19 by Government

Tele school channel

At that crucial time, the most innovative response to COVID-19 crises in educational institution was Tele-School. This nationally broadcast TV channel proved very helpful and still helping primary and secondary school students to continue their learning process during the pandemic. Its purpose is to reach and assist the students of 1-12 grades confined at home. Its contents, designed in such a way that seemed relevant for all schools, age groups and demographics, not considering of their system of education to ensure equity in education. Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) has been working hard and much focused to provide quality education to the students and to minimize the time loss of the students. To keep the students engaged in their educational activities FDE launched a Television programmed that provided proper lessons and courses through tele-school program, through this channel students taught lessons with proper schedule of lessons from 8am to 6pm. The lessons are planned and telecasted class wise to guide students to study effectively while studying at home.

One of the principal shared "Television is an effective mode of communication that FDE has

selected and it's really an effective step and effort taken by Federal Directorate of Education Pakistan. Television is easily available and accessible for all the students and for all the age groups; lessons taught through it are very concise and understandable to all the students. The activities are very interesting and if once student have focused approach to the program they can easily understand the lessons."

Teachers training and quality education

Federal Directorate of Education Islamabad Pakistan has directed the teachers to do various online courses and report their progress weekly to directorate, to widen their horizons and get some exposure to the latest education trends. It is very fruitful, instead of watching entertainment all day long; they have the opportunity to learn. Amid corona virus, everything has become online to avoid the spread. To maintain quality of education during pandemic is a challenge for the school administrations. The students as well as teachers lack experience of online education so the quality of education is difficult to maintain. Facing the Pandemic with limited resources, non-availability of students in their own town, and limited availability of internet are the main hindrances. Teachers have to approach the out of the town students, being assured to arrange online classes and develop their interests in studies until they get back into normal study routines is a hard task not given a rehearsal before. Online teaching, no matter how much is effective but not as much as face-to-face teachings, schools practice time. Many of the students they learn more with face to face-teaching, than this online teaching. Therefore, it was very difficult to maintain the quality of education at that time, however the teachers students institutions, FDE, and education Ministries in Pakistan worked together to make it through. They all cooperated with each other to attain the tasks of academic excellence and mutually we might have device a standard or a benchmark through which we can assess students on particular criteria without compromising the performance of students on the long run.

One of the principal shared "At public sector schools, all students are not able to afford online education; however there is also dire need to train the teachers for adopting online education system successfully. To maintain quality of education during pandemic is a challenge for the school administrations. The students as well as teachers lack experience of online education so the quality of education might be affected. To mitigate the loss of quality education during COVID-19, the students must focus on education at homes as well as on maximum online lectures .The students should take maximum benefits from digital media tools to learn more and more about their topics to clear their concepts." Likewise, another teacher shared "It is extremely difficult to maintain quality of education during this pandemic, no matter what platform (zoom, go to meetings, Google classroom etc.) is used for teaching, nothing compares to one to one teaching done in a physical classroom. We can only try to provide education online, but maintaining the quality is almost fictional."

One of the teachers expresses "it is little bit difficult to manage a quality of our education during pandemic but we have to facilitate the student by using zoom and provide some interesting videos and some internet links to share with them by using what's app groups." A good suggestion was correspondingly put forwarded, "This pandemic has affected the education system. However, we can maintain the quality of our education by shortening the syllabus of the respective courses. We can also make certain changes in the student assessment process by giving them weekly assignments, conducting online quizzes and taking final viva of the students." One of the students

shared, "During this pandemic teachers have maintain the quality of education by conducting online classes on zoom app. Students should have given proper response and attendance during online classes but most of the time only science subjects got the complete attention of the students and rest were on the decline status." This comment only showed the upper meniscus of the bad situation.

Cancellation of examinations and promotion of students to next grade

After complete lockdown, all type of internal and external exams to be cancelled immediately as precautionary measures. All the provincial education ministers along with the federal education minister of Pakistan released a statement, for promotion of all students to the next classes based on their previous and regular assessments during the session.

Provision of free text books to students

Government has provided free textbooks as per previous routine to the newly promoted students of government schools during the lockdown.

Online classes for students

Schools have started online classes on self-help bases. Teachers had generated whatsapp group and sharing instructions with students through their own digital gadgets. Most of the teachers started using Zoom and Google classroom to teach students but student's attendance remained very low due to their problems.

3. Online Teaching and Learning Process is Dire Need of the Time.

For advanced studies and extensive lessons students approach to teachers and in this Pandemic the only way through which teacher can help and provide education is through online teachings or social media networking. Online teaching is not that much convenient for all the students due to certain hindrances. Students and teachers are facing problems in online teachings like limited resources, like network and gadgets. Network is available throughout the country but connectivity issues and network speed problems do exist everywhere that gives a problem when a lesson is going on and gives a break in continuity of lesson as well. Therefore, the parents, teachers and students are unable to continue these classes online. One of the student said, "Students have no option at this time."

4. Uncertainty for Reopening of Schools

No doubt, this Pandemic had affected students of all age groups. Due to the fear of deadly virus students were getting into depression and anxiety as well and they were unable to give a real focus towards their studies. Moreover prolong lock down was not allowing students to utilize their potential positively and channelize their energy to enhance their skills in a positive manner. One of the participants shared "Students were quite uncertain about their future, about their academic schedule, and most of all to their future admissions. Students being out of educational institutions were becoming casual day by day towards their studies. They had started showing non-serious attitude, which might take time to get away from their personalities. In the same way, another participant shared "Instead of closing down the schools, we may open the schools and call students on rotation basis. The school can prepare need-based timetable and have classes on rotation basis. The school with the help of personal resources, SMCs, local community and liaison with any NGOs can ensure required safety measures for the students and the teacher." One of

the teacher participant said, "This was an uncertain situation. A common person was unable to say that school should be open or not. Our health departments could only suggest a time to open the school, based on the data of effected person. A teacher or a common man can mishandle the situation, if he himself finds it okay but one effected student can affect more 50 students and 50 students' means making 50 families' COVID-19 positive."

5. **Strategies to Catch Up the Lost Time in Short Academic Calendar**

Teachers proposed many strategies to make it on time such as, providing them extra coaching classes before or after school time. Assigning them some focused group activities, and provision of IT assisted classes to enhance their learning while sitting at home. There was a suggestion for short academic year with fewer curriculums to make the both end meet. Therefore, the academic year 2020 was a special year for institutions with selected curriculum and assessment techniques. This was opted not by choice but by order in the whole country to make it work uniformly. There was a suggestion of providing a relief package for parents too as they were the direct victims of the situation. Government announced student packages for internet, and special permission to needy students to use the institutional labs at times. This was a great relief for the low-income families, as it they had to spend less for the gadgets and internet packages. In this manner, collectively all the stakeholders joined hands to provide quality education to the students to reduce the hindrances for online classes.

Administrative representative responded, "we must curtail the syllabus at all levels to meet the lost time .moreover ,core subjects I.e. languages ,mathematics and sciences should be focused more .the assessment system and procedures need to be revamped as well as to suit the curtailed syllabus and ensure time saving. Teachers can catch up the lost time but students should also respond actively to the teachers. If we continue teaching learning process through online classrooms then no matter how long it take , we can try to catch up lost time. Duration of school timing ought to be increased, and encourage our community to share homeschooling and online learning resources that support student learning and well-being.

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The pandemic affected the performance of students across the globe especially in the developing countries, like Pakistan with limited digital resources to overcome; the hazards of COVID-19.It had increase the gap between privileged and underprivileged people due to unequal opportunities to access the quality education. Tele-school was a landmark initiative of the Government that received an overwhelming response, as millions of students across the country were taking benefit from this project at their doorsteps. At the demand of the students and administration of public sector schools, this program is still working efficiently. In public sector schools, not all students can afford online education, however the dire need to train the teachers for adopting online education system successfully showed again. After COVID-19, this training proved helpful in blended learning. To maintain quality of education during pandemic was a challenge for the school administrations. The students and teachers lack experience of online education so the quality of education rightly expected to be affected. However, at that time of devastation all the stakeholders for education in Pakistan joined hands and make it through. To mitigate the loss of quality education during COVID-19, the students must focus on education at homes as well as on maximum online lectures. The students should take maximum benefits from digital media tools to learn more and more about their topics to clear their concept.

CONCLUSIONS

Keeping in view the above stated findings and the recommendations the researcher has observed that the situation in the Government educational institutions have tackle the situation very well under the visionary umbrella of Federal Directorate of Education Islamabad Pakistan. The results of federal Boards has shown that the graph of students success rate and the marks obtained during the period of pandemics was way above the expectation level and it is a sign of healthy response as a Nation under the time of emergency. Furthermore, there are new departments arranged by the Government to take the speedy actions for similar situations in the future. One of them is NDC (national disaster cell). This department is responsible for the need assessment and facilitation of the people in the emergency.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the Schools reopened in September 2020 by adopting all safety measures, but scrutinize strict implementation of SOPs. The reason behind is the waves of post-COVID problems faced by the masses. Tele-school channel has continued even after pandemic. It is beneficial for students to learn during closure of schools. It is helpful to the students of remote areas, which do not access of internet facilities. All the same, there is a need for children hour at every private T.V channel. The time and content may vary and flexible to allow students to get education with entertainment.

Currently, online mode of education is the only way to mitigate the loss of education. There is also dire need to train the teachers for adopting online education system successfully. The best way to help institutions is to provide the students with free, fast and reliable internet facilities in all parts of the country may it be urban or rural (especially rural). Another way to catch up is to make sure students get tutoring in small groups who are lacking behind. Get to know about the loop holes of the students and then help them improving in them. All of the teaching community should be equipped with latest laptops. Although Government of Pakistan is facilitating the students with providing latest laptops at the priority bases but there is a need of the same to teachers as well. An official web site might be developed for each school to avoid the misuse of personal number of the teachers, and to keep the record of the lectures and assessments for the school/college.

Further Studies

This was a small-scale study carried out in the federal capital of Pakistan; there is a need to carry out a more elaborative study with bigger sample size in the least privileged areas of the country to make solid strategically applicable planes in future. There is a project of blended learning started in the public schools of Islamabad Pakistan after the havoc of COVID-19 with the help of local internet facility providers. This project might be studied for its efficiency in this regard. There can be a study about go for the project of efficient blended learning in the time of need.

REFERENCES

Anderson, S. C., & Nielsen, H. S. (2019). Learning from performance information.*Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 20*(20), 1-17.doi:10.1093/jopart/muz036.

Azzi-Huck, K. & Shims, T. (2020).*Managing theimpact of COVID-19 on education system around theworld:Howcountries are preparing,coping, and planning for recovery*.Retrievedfrom https://blogs.worldbank.org/education/managing-impact-COVID-19-education-systems-around-world- how-countries-are-preparing.

Black,P.,&William,P.(2018).Classroomassessmentandpedagogy.*AssessmentinEducation:Principles, policy & practices, 25*(6), 551-575.https://doi.org/10.1080/0969594X.2018.1441807.

Buckler, A., Chamberlain, L., Stutchbury, K., & Hedge, C. (2020). *Minimising 'distance' in distancelearningprogrammesduringaglobalhealthcrisis:framinganinternationaleducation responsetoCOVID-UKFIET*.Retrievedfromhttps://www.ukfiet.org/2020/minimizing-distance-in-distance-learning- programmes-during-a-global-health-crises-framing-an-international-education-response-to-COVID-19/.

Burgess,S.,&Sievertsen,H.H.(2013).*Schools,skills,andlearning:TheimpactofCOVID-19on esucation.VOX CEPR Policy Portal.* Retrievedfrom https://voxeu.org/article/impact-COVID-19-education

Creswell, J.W.(2017). *Educational Research: planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research. 4th edition.* New York: Pearson.

Dowadi,S. (2018). The impact of the SLC examination on English language teaching and student motivation to learn English. In D. Hayes (Ed.), *English language teaching in Nepal: Researchreflection and practice* (pp.133-163). Kathmandu, Nepal: British council.

Giannini, S. &Albrectsen, A. (2020). *COVID-19 school closure around the world will hit girls hardest.* Retrievedfrom https://en.unesco.org/news/COVID-19-school-closures-around-world-will-hit-girls-hardest.

Gyamerah, K. (2020). *The impacts of COVID-19on basic education: How can Ghana respond, cope, and plan for recovery?* Retrieved from https://schoolofeducation.blogs.bristol.ac.uk/2020/03/31/the-impacts-of-covid-19-on-basic-education-how-can-ghana-respond-cope-and-plan-for-recovery/

Lavy,V.(2015).Dodifferencesinschools'instructiontimeexplaininternationalachievementgaps? Evidence from developed and developing countries. *Economic Journal, 125,* 397-424.doi: 10.1111/ecoj.1223

Mohamedbhai, G. (2020). COVID-19: What consequences for higher education? *University world News, Africa Edition.* Retrieved from https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20200407064850279

Pandit, S. (2020). *Sankatmanirantarsikai,Gorkhaparta.* Retrieved from https://gorkhapatraonline.com/education/2020-05-06-13805.

Phuyal,D. K. (2020, April 10). Challenges of virtual classes. *The Himlayan Times,* Retrieved from https://thehimalayantimes.com

Pudasaini, S. (2020, May 06).LearninginthetimeofCOVID-19.*TheKathmandupost,* Retrieved from https://kathmandupost.com/columns/2020/05/06/learning-in-the-time-of-COVID-19.

Sabates, R. (2020). Think local: Support for learning during COVID-19 could be found from within communities. *EdTech Hub*. Retrieved from https://edtechhub.org/2020/04/16/think-local-support-for-learning-during-coronavirus-COVID-19-could-be-found-from-within-communities/.

Tiruneh, D.T. (2020).*COVID-19schoolclosuresmayfurtherwidentheinequalitygapsbetweenthe advantaged and the disadvantaged in Ethiopia* .Retrieved from https;//www.ukfiet.org/2020/COVID-19-school-closures-may-further-widen-the-inequality-gaps-between-the-advantaged-and-the-disadvantaged-in-ethopia/.

UNESCO. (2020).COVID-19: *Impact on Education*, *UNESCO*, Retrieved from https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse.

Vahid, F.(2020). *A message from a professorto fellow professors and students about at-home learning during COVID-19*. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DAqgSUaX8fA&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR2O DT FlDugrghcvY5cdxMOBIMR2GLU0yawVue5372hKHjpl2aExZAN5yOc%29.

Mohamedbhai, G.(2020). COVID-19: What consequences for higher education? *University world News, Africa Edition.* Available at :https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20200407064850279

Pandit, S. (2020). Sankatma nirantar sikai, Gorkhaparta (07 May). Available at:https://gorkhapatraonline.com/education/2020-05-06-13805.

Phuyal,D, K.(2020). Challenges of virtual classes. *The Himlayan (29 April.* https://thehimalayanstimes.com/opinion/challenges-of-virtual-classes/.

Pudasaini,S. (2020). Learning in the time of COVID-19.*The Kathmandu post* (06 May), Available at:https://kathmandupost.com/columns/2020/05/06/learning-in-the-time-of-COVID-19.

Sabates, R.(2020). Think local: Support for learning during COVID-19 could be found from within communities. *EdTech Hub*. Available at:https://edtechhub.org/2020/04/16/think-local-support-for- learning-during-coronavirus-COVID-19-could-be-found-from-within-communities/.

Tiruneh, D. T.(2020).*COVID-19 school closures may further widen the inequality gaps between the advantaged and the disadvantaged in Ethiopia.* Available at: https;//www.ukfiet.org/2020/COVID-19- school-closures-may-further-widen-the-inequality-gaps-between-the-advantaged-and-the-disadvantaged- in-ethopia/.

UNESCO (2020). COVID-19: *Impacton Education*, *UNESCO*, Available at:https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse

Vahid, F.(2020). *A message from a professor to fellow professors and students about at-home learning during COVID-19*.Available at: https//www.youtube.com/watch?y=