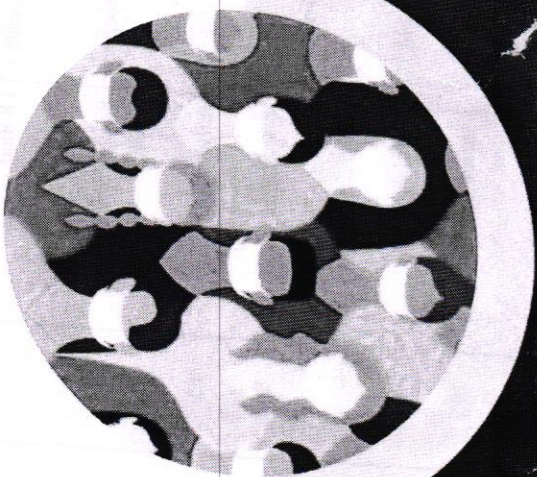# MANAGING EDUCATION

## POST COVID CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

**Editors**

**Prof. Brij Kishore Kuthiala**

**Prof. Rajeev Kumar**

**HARYANA STATE HIGHER EDUCATION COUNCIL**

Bays No: 7-12, Sector 4, Panchkula, Haryana 134112

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Managing Education Post Covid Challenges & Opportunities

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# Online Teaching: The Strategic Paradigm

Tejinder Sharma*, Dimple Khosla**

Life was going on well, but all of the sudden, we were caught unaware. Lockdown came almost immediately after Janta Curfew of 22nd March 2020 and suddenly all the students and teachers of schools, colleges and Universities went off the campus. The initial Lockdown 1.0 of 21 days duration from 25th March to 14 April 2020 was a mix of extended holiday, jokes, feasts, Tik Tok videos, social networking, etc. With a newly discovered tool of online video conferencing, everybody started hosting meetings and other events. Driven by variety of reasons, including commitment to class, passion for learning new things and of course the Government diktats, most of the teachers started switched to online teaching. Facebook was flooded with screenshots of classes and classroom videos by the new enthusiastic teachers and students. Teachers were inducted into the Whatsapp groups of the classes and soon the students found floodgates of digital content opening for them. Piles of e-books, Youtube videos, presentations and other resources were dumped into the Whatsapp groups.

Students once rebuked by parents for excessive use of cell phones got a valid reason to be with their devices. Everybody seemed to be enjoying this novel experience. PR exercise was at peak with all regulatory agencies sending circulars of list of online resources for the students and Universities came with press releases of the newly found pedagogy, each boasting of meeting the course requirements in the lockdown phase. Time tables were announced and record of classes and other academic activity was ready for presentation in the follow-up meetings. Flexi learning, handling of queries and freedom in learning was taken well by all. Regulators, universities, and teachers

started claiming completion of syllabus and students started compiling the truckloads of digital contents to make notes for their exams.

However, the euphoria soon ended in Lockdown 2.0 and the subsequent ones. Fatigue seemed to set into the experience with online teaching. The effect of unplanned switchover were visible by the first week and students found generous notes given to them comprised of books of 400 pages or more, with hardly any guidelines on the relevant chapters to be read. Switchover from the common point-wise cramming to understanding based learning became a difficult pie to digest. Digital divide due to infrastructure and connectivity added to the barriers of learning. But then within the prevailing uncertainty this was the best that could be done.

## Visiting facts

To understand the experiences of online teaching during the pandemic, an online survey of 407 respondents comprising of students, teachers and parents was conducted with the help of a questionnaire especially designed for the study. Data was collected from all three major stakeholders of online education, i.e. students, teachers and parents. Results show that online teaching has been received well by a majority of the students and teachers. Learning curve has been smaller than expected and people have relied on freeware to reach out and engage the students. However, the diversion at online platforms and the physical inactivity of the students were causes of concern of the parents. Some of the results of the survey are depicted herein:

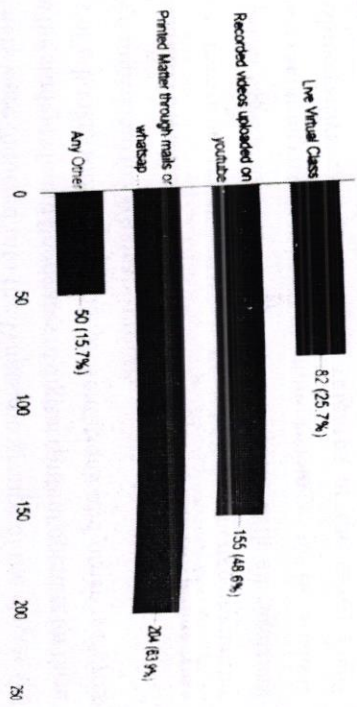## Student Experiences from online teaching

Students have adapted well to the online mode of teaching and they have reported taking them seriously. Online classes offered flexibility of learning, which made them interesting and effective. However, the following exhibits also show some of the pitfalls of online teaching.
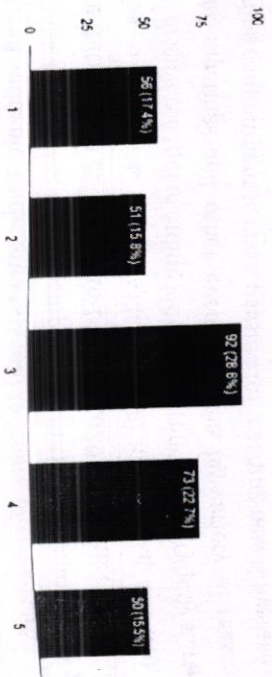
## Online Teaching: The strategic paradigm

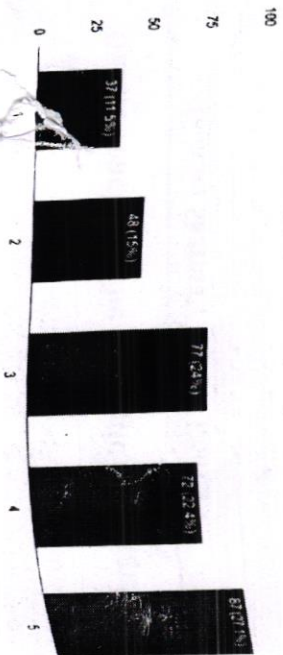- **I am being taught through**
  319 responses



  - Live Virtual Class: 82 (25.7%)
  - Recorded videos uploaded on youtube: 155 (48.6%)
  - Printed Matter through mails or whatsap...: 264 (83%)
  - Any Other: 50 (15.7%)

- **I am comfortable in adopting this mode of education**
  322 responses



  - 1: 56 (17.4%)
  - 2: 51 (15.8%)
  - 3: 92 (28.6%)
  - 4: 73 (22.7%)
  - 5: 50 (15.5%)

- **I am taking my online classes seriously**
  321 responses



  - 1: 37 (11.5%)
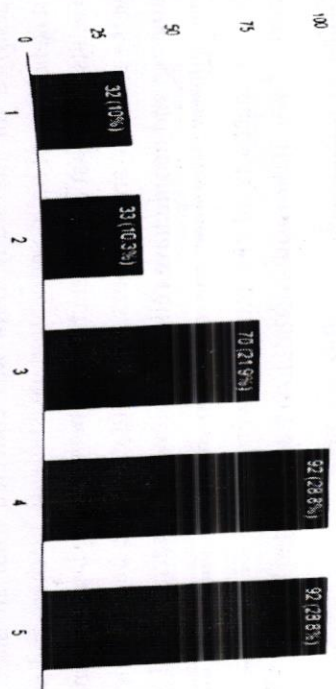  - 2: 48 (15%)
  - 3: 77 (24%)
  - 4: 72 (22.4%)
  - 5: 87 (27.1%)

## Online Teaching: The strategic paradigm

- **I prefer online mode because I can hear or read the material any number of times**
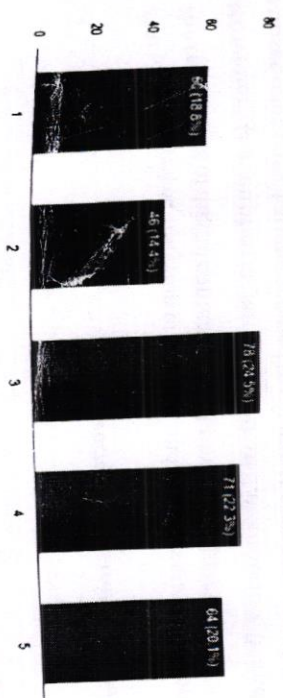  319 responses



  - 1: 32 (10%)
  - 2: 33 (10.3%)
  - 3: 70 (21.9%)
  - 4: 92 (28.8%)
  - 5: 92 (28.8%)

- **I am unable to concentrate while studying online.**
  318 responses



  - 1: 54 (17%)
  - 2: 71 (22.3%)
  - 3: 71 (22.3%)
  - 4: 60 (18.9%)
  - 5: 62 (19.5%)
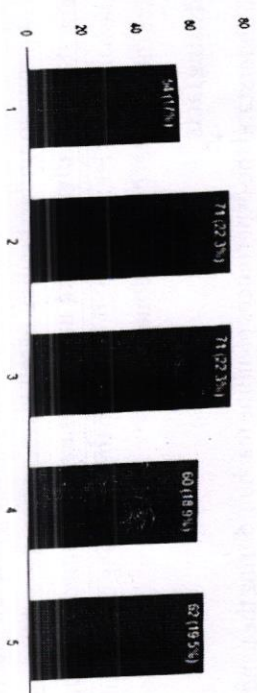
- **While studying online I usually switch to some other app (playing game/you tube etc) leading to more time wastage.**
  319 responses



  - 1: 60 (18.8%)
  - 2: 46 (14.4%)
  - 3: 78 (24.5%)
  - 4: 71 (22.3%)
  - 5: 64 (20.1%)