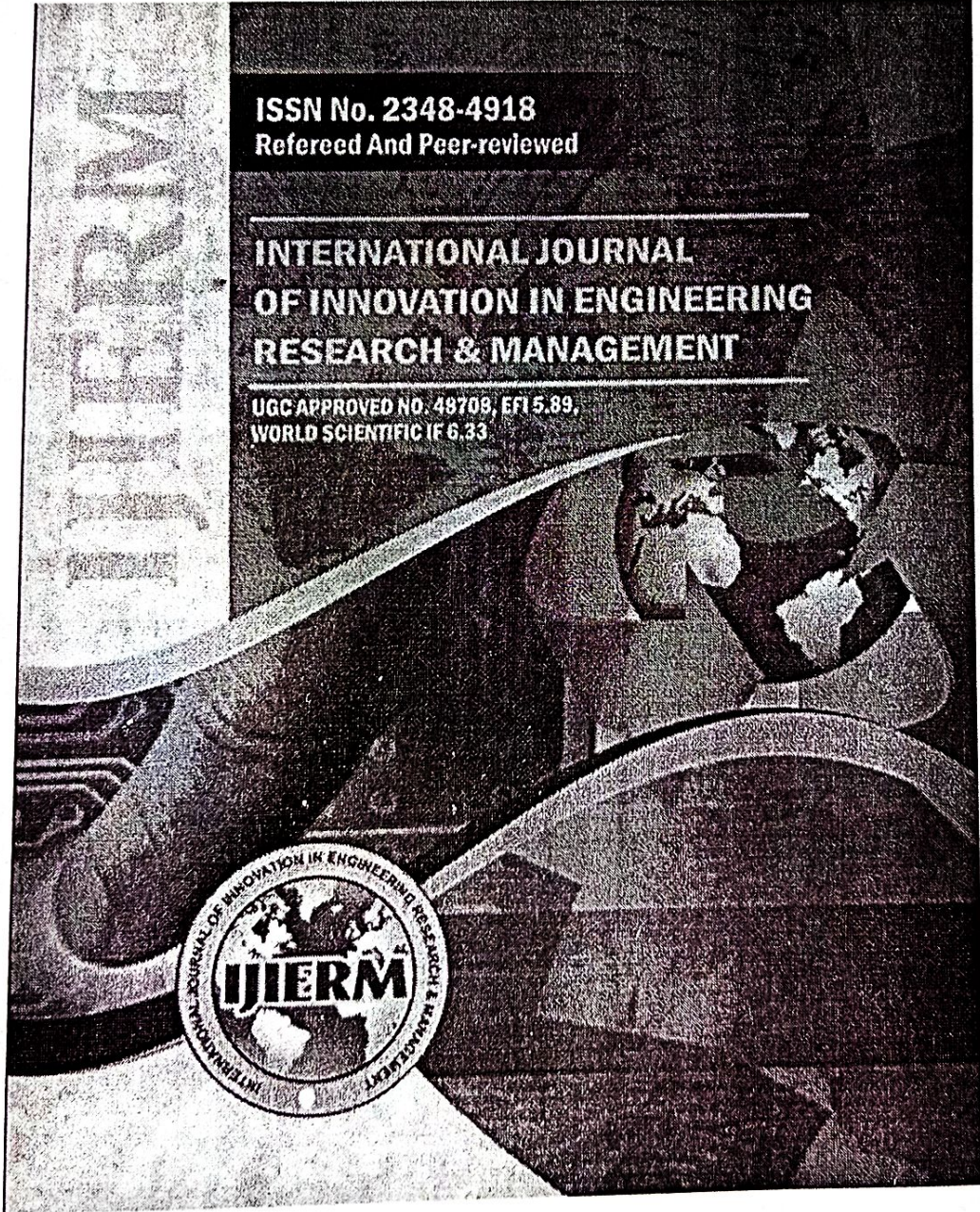


Annex



*Annex*

## COVID-19: OPPORTUNITY FOR REDIRECTING EDUCATION SECTOR

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**Abstract** - In the process to satisfy its greed, human has harmed nature to significant extent. The nature, in turn, possesses mechanism to heal herself and maintain the earth's balance. The literature witnessed several pandemics like Black Death, Spanish flu, Plague, Covid-19 etc. The world witnessed recent Covid-19 pandemic which provided human another opportunity to rethink its development. Although it halted growth of life's every aspect, yet it played significant role towards spreading digital revolution in India through several steps like classes through online platforms, online assessment, UPI, etc. Therefore, it helped education to reach every section of India through digital literacy.

**Keywords:** Pandemic, Digital revolution, Digital literacy.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Based on a disease's pace of spread, the WHO distinguishes between pandemics, epidemics, and endemic illnesses. As a result, the distinction between an epidemic and a pandemic has less to do with the severity of the disease and more to do with how widely it has spread. In contrast to localized diseases, a pandemic transcends national borders. Pandemics cause widespread social unrest, economic loss, and general hardship due to their extensive geographic reach. It's crucial to remember that an epidemic that has already been declared can turn into a pandemic. A pandemic is global and out of control, whereas an epidemic is widespread but often confined or predicted in its spread.

A pandemic is an outbreak of an infectious illness that has spread over a sizable area, such as several continents or the entire world, and is affecting a sizable number of people. Widespread endemic diseases with a steady population of sick people, such as seasonal influenza recurrences, are typically omitted since they occur concurrently in numerous parts of the world rather than being transmitted globally.

There have been several pandemics of illnesses like smallpox throughout human history. The Black Death, often known as The Plague, which claimed the lives of between 75 and 200 million people in the 14th century, was the deadliest pandemic in recorded history. Although it wasn't in use at the time, the phrase was later applied to epidemics, particularly the Spanish flu pandemic of 1918. Currently, Covid-19 emerged as another pandemic challenge to the human society.

### 2. COVID-19 Pandemic

A contagious illness called coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is brought on by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. In December 2019, the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 was discovered for the first time in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. It resulted in a pandemic of instances of coronavirus sickness 2019, an acute respiratory illness (COVID-19). Major outbreaks of COVID-19 have been reported in Brazil, Russia, India, Mexico, Peru, South Africa, Western Europe, and the United States, among more than 200 other nations and territories. The World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 epidemic on March 11, 2020, making it the first pandemic to affect the whole world since the swine flu pandemic of 2009.

These numbers are thought to be an underestimate of the actual numbers since testing did not start until after the outbreak had spread and many infected individuals may not have been tested due to their lack of symptoms or mild symptoms. The number of fatalities may possibly be overstated because some deaths may not have been investigated or may have been mistakenly assigned to other illnesses. This was particularly true in large urban locations, where a sizable number of patients passed away in their own homes.

Most virus-infected individuals will suffer from mild to moderate respiratory illnesses and recover without the need for special care. But some people will get quite sick and need to go to the doctor. People who are older and those with underlying medical illnesses including cancer, diabetes, chronic lung disease, or cardiovascular disease are more prone to experience serious illness. The best way to prevent and slow down transmission is to:

- ✓ Be well informed about the disease and how the virus spreads,
- ✓ Protect yourself and others from infection by staying at least 1 metre apart from others,



- ✓ Wearing a properly fitted mask, and washing your hands or using an alcohol-based rub frequently,
- ✓ Get vaccinated when it's your turn and follow local guidance.

The virus can spread from an infected person's mouth or nose in small liquid particles when they cough, sneeze, speak, sing or breathe. These particles range from larger respiratory droplets to smaller aerosols. It is important to practice respiratory etiquette, for example by coughing into a flexed elbow, and to stay home and self-isolate until you recover if you feel unwell.

SARS-CoV-2 enters the nose and throat when an infected person exhales virus-filled droplets and another person inhales them. There it settles down in the lining of the nose (possessing abundant Angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 - a cell-surface receptor. Once inside, the virus seizes control of the cell's machinery to produce countless copies of itself and infiltrate additional cells. An infected person may expel a lot of the virus as it replicates, especially in the first week or two. There may not yet be any symptoms. A fever, dry cough, sore throat, loss of taste and smell, as well as head and body aches, could also appear in the virus' new victim.

Thereafter, it marches down the windpipe to assault the lungs, where it can be fatal. The respiratory tree of the lung's thinner, further branches terminates in tiny air sacs called alveoli, each of which is lined by a single layer of cells that is similarly abundant in ACE2 receptors.

Normally, oxygen crosses the alveoli into the capillaries, tiny blood vessels that lie beside the air sacs; the oxygen is then carried to the rest of the body. But as the immune system wars with the invader, the battle itself disrupts this healthy oxygen transfer. White blood cells release inflammatory molecules called chemokines, which in turn summon more immune cells that target and kill virus-infected cells, leaving a stew of fluid and dead cells—pus—behind. This is the underlying pathology of pneumonia, with its corresponding symptoms: coughing; fever; and rapid, shallow respiration (see graphic). Some COVID-19 patients recover, sometimes with no more support than oxygen breathed in through nasal prongs[1].

However, some people start to decline, sometimes rather rapidly, and start to experience acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS). As their blood's oxygen levels drop, they have a harder time breathing. Where the black void of air should be, on x-rays and computed tomography scans, their lungs are laced with white opacities. These patients frequently require ventilators. Numerous people pass away. Their alveoli filled up with fluid, white blood cells, mucus, and the debris of dead lung cells, according to autopsies.

### 3. ERA PRIOR & AFTER PANDEMIC

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Indian economy had begun to experience a cyclical slowdown in 2017–18. The economic decline was reinforced by pandemic situation which forced lockdown as ultimate solution. India, being rural dominant country possessed decrease in Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) while moving from Primary education to Higher education. Education sector possessed traditional educational methods like offline classes, assessment, evaluation, etc. These traditional methods, especially in rural education institutes, resulted in disruptive education flow due to non-imaginative & absence of fascinated interactions, supported by huge backlogs & drop outs. Therefore, in education sector one of prime challenge ahead policy makers are to enhance GER so that all students may get opportunity to learn. The possible solutions to such drastic situation are reform to existing educational system in such way that students get education interestingly. In order to make education more captivating, the government has revamped National Policy on Education, 1986 and introduce National Education Policy 2020 along with radical changes in education sector[2]. The pandemic situation & lockdown situation forced different sectors to rethink their traditional approaches and came out with digital solutions.

Several digital solutions were promoted during this stressful pandemic period, and they offered innovative approaches to teaching and learning. To meet the urgent demand of the education sector, new start-ups have appeared. Applications for video conferencing that already exist, such as Google Meet, Zoom, Cisco Webex, etc., make an attempt to meet the rising market demands in India[3–5]. As a result, a new paradigm shift was noticed in the



Indian educational sector both during and after the pandemic. This paradigm shift increased the digital dividend for society and made everyone aware of digital platforms such as video conferencing apps, assessment apps, data collection platforms, etc.

The use of digital platforms for various educational procedures, such as lessons, assessments, and exams, has therefore been observed in the education sector.

#### 4. FUTURISTIC APPROACH

Online learning, a novel strategy that was offered as a choice during the pandemic age in India, gave students extraordinary access, but it also had several drawbacks, such as the inability to guarantee students' attention, the difficulties of maintaining communication, network issues, etc.

Therefore, the only viable strategy for a futuristic approach must be a hybrid one that provides for both the rigidity of traditional procedures and the flexibility of online methods.

#### 5. CONCLUSION

Humanity must promptly reconsider its course of growth if it is to coexist peacefully with nature and advance while also respecting and balancing the rights of others. The natural healing process of pandemics gives us the chance to reconsider and advance sustainably. The present pandemic, Covid-19, gave us the chance to promptly modify our educational system in accordance with societal demands. The mixed/blended mode offered us a unique way to rekindle students' lost interest in our country's educational system by combining online data collecting with traditional classroom instruction and exams. As a result, this epidemic gave us the chance to reconsider.

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