

## **Role of Information Technology and Social Media during COVID-19 Crisis**

**Deepak Jyoti**

*Assistant Prof. Computer Sc. & IT  
Shanti Devi Arya Mahila College, Dinanagar.*

---

### **ABSTRACT:**

Almost two hundred countries are under siege by nature and in most of the Countries, governments implemented complete lockdown or curfew to stop the further transfer of deadly corona virus which started from China and took over all developed, developing and under developed countries. Rich, poor, healthy, regular patients, physically strong or even weak persons are under attack and virus is targeting everybody without any discrimination. According to updated statistics almost one million people are affected either with mild or serious health threats by Corona virus and numbers are rapidly increasing. People all over the world are either in self or forced isolation or being quarantined. Middle and lower working labor force from mechanical, technical and civil sectors is badly affected and facing financial crisis which are increasing day by day. However, back-office and desk job working class is trying their level best to provide their services and complete assignments and projects online to meet their targets and deadlines. Professionals from sales, marketing, research, teaching and many more sectors are using modern tools of technology and different social media applications to run their routine work from their homes. The role and cooperation from top management of these sectors is also very effective and supportive during working from home situation. Although there are some public and private sectors where physical appearance in offices is necessary. But for back office work, during disasters and communicable or viral diseases, with the use of modern technology, homes are best places to work and complete back office assignments and deadlines. In current pandemic crisis, modern tools and equipment of science and technology are available so majority of working class is contributing with their efforts to run the system with zeal and zest. With these internet and smart phone facilities and high number of smart phone users, there is a lot of potential in India to use modern online meeting and work from home facilities. We have online meeting, webinar and video conference call software and tools which can be used on computers and at smart phones as well. Lot of mobile applications are also available to run all these soft-wares easily on smart phones. Use of social media can also be very helpful in present lock-down situation. Modern social media tools can also be positively utilized for work from home. All social media tools can also be utilized for marketing, sales, meeting, live streaming and meetings. Usually people use these social media tools negatively. Government should ensure that users do not use social media to create any panic or any propaganda. Keeping social distancing in mind, safe and secure online working environment is very important in current health emergency and crisis. Governments need to make full use of digital technologies to fight with the COVID-19 pandemic and address a wide range of pandemic-related issues. The pandemic is compelling governments and societies to turn toward digital technologies to respond to the crisis and, increasingly, is requiring governments to adopt an open government approach and to use digital communication channels to provide reliable information on global and national COVID-19 developments. With lockdowns and other social distancing measures in effect in many countries, and with more people relying on the internet for information and advice, governments are being urged to deploy effective digital technologies to contain the outbreak. Finally I want to work to find the role of information technology during lockdown in both cases either in positive and negative in various categories.

---

Date of Submission: 11-07-2020

Date of Acceptance: 27-07-2020

---

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The COVID-19 pandemic is a health crisis. The world is fighting with COVID-19, healthcare workers are giving tirelessly efforts to prevent citizens from infection and to save those who are already infected. In such a tough scenario, technology innovations are steadily making a difference to healthcare systems. Countries are mustering all resources at their disposal and deploying cutting-edge technology to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 and profile people at danger. Internet has been essential during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Internet of Things (IoT) and along with other technologies like Cloud and AI, is of great use during the crisis. According to a study by researchers at MIT, overlaying geographic information system (GIS) on IoT

mobile data can assist epidemiologists in their search for patient zero and can help identify all the people who have come into contact with the infected patients. The technology also helpful in monitoring patients who are at high-risk and hence can be the source of information to healthcare staff to take required action.

Connected thermometers are being used by hospitals to screen patients and staff. The mobile application alert users when their body temperature is higher than 37.5 degrees. While reading the movement of the human body, this app releases radio signals from which the distance from another bracelet can be retrieved; when two mobiles are in proximity, they get vibrated, thus producing an alert signal that helps people respect social distancing.

There are many other fields where IT played a vital role in our lives like education, social interactions, medical health and nutrition, entertainments. It is also helping research scholars in their research because they utilized the lonely time they received during lockdown.

### **Education**

Many countries have rightly decided to close schools, colleges and universities during Covid-19. This crisis crystallises the dilemma policymakers are facing between closing schools for maintaining the social distancing to save lives or keeping them open to continue the session education. Finally lockdown imposed by the Prime Minister of India, to save the lives of public from 24th March 2020. All educational institutes remained closed till the next order. Now the government decided to promote the students upto 10th standard to higher level without exam. The question is, from an educational perspective, what do these students do when educational institutes are closed? If the lockdowns were to continue for some more time, how would higher education be affected? What are some of the deeper issues that require introspection? And what does this mean for the students going forward? Technology seems to be the answer. We will only skills effective this is often after the crisis, but it does seem to be an honest use of children's time. Online education or home schooling might be an answer. Covid-19 has pushed institutions, faculty and students on to online learning like never before. There is no option but to adapt and utilize online education. A midst the nationwide lockdown, schools and universities are depending on the online modes of teaching in order to maintain continuity of education. While faculty grapples with new ways of managing this sudden transition to online education, students are left clinging on to their mobile phones and computer screens. As soon as the Covid-19 crisis started in India, the larger universities like Delhi University (DU) and Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) announced the suspension of classes until March 31. While others waited to see what would happen next, they started exploring online classes. The IITs, medical colleges, MITs all, also shifted to conducting online classes, and sharing study materials and audio files with students over the internet. Schools are launching apps, conducting classes over Google Hangouts or Zoom, and sending interactive worksheets and videos for learning. Even though internet-based teaching is that the most appropriate stop-gap arrangement now, it's highlighted the inequalities within the education system. Teachers are taking help from the central government's digital learning portal DIKSHA, which has lessons in multiple languages for all classes from primary to senior secondary. Some teachers are also making videos for practical concepts like teaching photosynthesis or geometry. These videos are then shared on the WhatsApp groups to connect to their students.

The faculty members are available online during interactive sessions for students to clear their doubts by maintaining the social distance. Depending on the nature of the course and students internet access, teachers are supplementing Moodle (an open-source learning-management system) with assorted social media and online platforms. The spread, use and availability of technology is vital, as is that the availability of online learning materials, also as devices and therefore the level of internet connectivity reception. The universities and teachers reached out to agreed that their transition to online teaching had not been very difficult. However, if the lockdown continued over an extended period, some investment in infrastructure and extra training for teachers and students would be required. Finally we can say that, Online education is conducted in two ways. The first is through the use of recorded classes, which, when opened out to public, are referred to as Massive Open Online Course (MOOCs). The second one is via live online classes conducted as webinars, or zoom sessions. Universities require high-speed internet and education delivery platforms or learning management systems, besides stable IT infrastructure and faculty members who are comfortable teaching online. Students also need high-speed internet and computers/mobiles to attend these sessions or watch pre-recorded classes. There are many platforms created to enable online education in India. These are supported by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), and the department of technical education. There also are initiatives like e-PG Pathshala (e-content), SWAYAM (online courses for teachers), and NEAT (enhancing employability). Other online platforms aim to increase connectivity with institutions, and accessibility to content. These are utilised for course materials and classes, and running of online modules. They include the National Project on Technology

Enhanced Learning (NPTEL), National Knowledge Network, (NKN), and, and National Academic Depository (NAD), among others.

Obviously the hours spent in school makes for better learning. The concentration and involvement in the classroom are different. Here we cannot even assess the learning level. When schools open a lot of students will be lagging in their learning. But we are at least trying to keep the continuity in the education, as much as possible. The online education model cannot replace the physical classroom. The biggest negative point of shifting courses online has been the absence of face-to-face contact with students and their cutting off from the university library. Students often do not have access to online facilities, especially the underprivileged ones who live in places with poor connectivity and who cannot afford to buy the required equipments. I agree that mentoring, debates, and casual conversations are better in traditional classrooms. There is just no comparison. I find students asking fewer questions online. The greatest advantage of face-to-face teaching is eye contact. It is easy to gauge if students are following what I am saying. There is an excitement present in the real classroom. Online education should be a supplement only during such crisis.

### **Social Media:**

Social media sites such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram etc., have become primary sources of information. They are also vehicles for fake news and disinformation. People turn to social media not only for support and entertainment, but also use it as a source of information and fake news. Social media is one of the best ways to share news nowadays (it may be the only way for some people), especially if you are trying to alert people of something serious in a very quick manner. Whether it be COVID-19 news from individual states or news on a national scope, social media gets the message where it needs to go. In the time of Covid-19 Social media plays very important role for individual to stay connected even while physically separated. With the help of social media not only we are learning the latest news updates but we are using platform like facebook and twitter to provide personal and business updates. For business point of view social media supports employees and customers a lot and for government it doing its best to efficiently share up-to-date information.

Very pretty, funny and informative videos related coronavirus seen over the last few days to weeks. The number of people being affected by the illness in almost all states and specific cities and towns. This news has made people aware of how the situation has been constantly deteriorating the sense of normalcy across the nation. Social media has also educated us about the symptoms of COVID-19—in turn, perhaps saving lives. Social media activity in the country grew a large in early March. Video calls are now become very common and affordable for all. The new normal of life under lockdown includes virtual house parties with long-lost friends, job interviews on video conferencing apps, online exercises and meditation learning, live movies/webseries with online companionship on Netflix, amazon or a live charity concert of your favourite popstar performing from home. Video conferencing is one such solution that has been called out by the multiple companies and government organizations to manage their work online. I am thinking of the many funny videos about how people creatively deal with the lockdown, of the neighborhood Facebook groups that organize entertainment and practical support to help neighbours who need assistance with grocery shopping or childcare, and the quick rise of apps and functionalities that allow for live chat and video sessions with multiple people. Social media also gives another benefit during covid19, how to deal with covid 19 by searching remedies of this pandemic and find out symptoms and also how to stop it. It also give suggestions how to deal with fluctuating economy. This is social media in its core and at its best. Platforms have been slow in acknowledging their responsibility in helping platform users distinguish fake news from facts, but they are taking steps in the right direction. Instagram, for example, announced to only include COVID-19 related posts and stories in their recommendation section that are published by official health organizations. In general, my advice is to crosscheck information that you get through social media with at least two other information sources such as government websites and high-quality news outlets. In addition, we all also have a important role to play for society by not further spreading rumors through our social media accounts.

### **Research:**

A very interesting situation when studies with people are limited and impossible but on the other hand, there may be a lot of review studies or laboratory studies published. The policy of stay at home may give us more time to work on our researches online. Only laboratory experiments are not possible. The students are maybe the most affected because they are suspended for a moment in their education and left for self-education through online but research scholars getting benefitted through many research sites as they are having more time to devote to research by searching relevant material from online libraries etc.. The thing is being an academician is more comfortable since it allows you to work from home and to do your job and get paid. Therefore, I find myself productive these days; I submitted one papers, attended online short courses on Daksh, online seminars, Online 5 days workshop, reviewed 3 papers, started new studies, mentored my students more than usual, extended the lecture notes and prepared lots of examples with their answers, and read more outside of my field. In addition, as part of interdisciplinary research topics, I am conducting research on the impact of the

Coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic on the global economy and on the economy of the European Union and my country. This research is possible through the data available on internet. High impact journals sending invitations to research scholars to submit their paper on COVID-19, so it may also change our priorities in research. Most of researchers turn to the issues of COVID 19 as it is usually will be published rapidly even if they are just case reports only.

## **II. CONCLUSION**

In today's circumstances where everyone and everything seems to be at halt. Digital infrastructure has kept us intact. Whether it is education or Social interaction or World's latest updates or gaming platforms or Lectures from expertise, everything is available in just a one go that is information technology. Our country is developing its own secure apps for streaming video lectures for students which is the need of hour. Companies are more into video conferencing and work from home. So finally, I feel IT has been a boon for us in such a critical time.

## **REFERENCES**

- [1]. <https://www.business2community.com/social-media/social-medias-role-in-the-coronavirus-pandemic-02296280>
- [2]. <https://www.expresscomputer.in/editorials/the-role-of-technology-in-fighting-deadly-pandemics-like-coronavirus/51683/>

Deepak Jyoti. "Role of Information Technology and Social Media during COVID-19 Crisis." *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, 25(7), 2020, pp. 35-38.