

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 Mera Vidyalaya" 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 Gujarat 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 Gujarat 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'

websites which are being continuously accessed by the students in order to complete their course curriculum."

Method of the Present Work

The detailed survey has been made by the authors on question answer basis over phone, what's app, e-mail. All the Principles and TICs of twenty four different colleges under Bankura University had been requested to provide the information about the on-line class status of their respective colleges. They individually had made contact with their subject teachers and collected data regarding the number of students actually attending the on-line classes. In some cases, exact figure regarding the Programme students of different subjects in several colleges could not be ascertained on account of lack of communications in the remote areas. So, in those cases some nearest approximate number have been mentioned. The modes of communications for on-line classes have also been enquired of, on college to college basis. All the data regarding the total number of students and respective number of them who are being able to avail themselves of the opportunities of on-line classes along with the modes of communications have been shown in the tabular format so that, the total picture of on-line class performances of those the 24 colleges under Bankura University can be reflected at a glance.

Results (Refer to Table 1)

Observations & Analysis

From the above survey on on-line class performances of different colleges under Bankura University (Table 1) it is clear that the percentage of the number of beneficiaries in respect of both Postgraduate & Undergraduate Honours students, is comparatively higher than that in cases of UG Programme students. It is above 95% in all those colleges where Postgraduate courses are taught.

In cases of UG Honours courses the same is within the range from 70% to 99% (highest in Kabi Jagadram Roy Govt. Degree College, Mejia). Similarly, in case of Programme courses this range is from the lowest 10% (Birsha Munda Memorial College) to the highest 80% (Kabi Jagadram Roy Govt. Degree College, Mejia).

Modes of communication in most of the colleges are through Whatsapp groups (Departmental), e-mail, college websites where study materials and video lectures are uploaded on regular basis and students respond by sending their questions to the teachers. In some colleges Zoom software were being used at the initial stage for direct link between the students and teachers through webcam. But, later-on it has been replaced by the special CAMS software, Skype, G-suite, Google Meet, Cisco Webex, and Learning Management System through which the students have been getting full benefits of On-line classes.

Further, it has been observed that responding of the students to these on-line classes vary from department to department within the same college. Students of some departments of the same college can not avail themselves of this on-line class facilities upto a satisfactory level in comparison to

other departments. This is because of not having Smart phones or Net connections or Technical knowledge of using the devices in respect of students of remote areas. This fact is applicable in case of Programme students also.

Moreover, it is also being observed in some colleges the teaching staff are more attached to the Honours students in comparison with Programme students. In some colleges systematic on-line class routines have been made for the uniform distribution of classes, so that, one class does not overlap with another.

It is also observed that the ratio of boys and girls as availing of the said facilities may be enumerated as 58(boys):42(girls) as reported in most of the colleges except BZS Mahila Mahavidyalaya (Wholly meant for Girl students only).

Conclusion

From the above statistical survey, it is also clear that Bankura District, being economical backward area, is considerably advanced one, so far as education through on-line classes is concerned. Huge number of students is being benefitted from this alternate provision for their academic advancement, thus compensating their huge loss due to failure of attending classes physically in respect of completion of their syllabi.

The failure of a good number of students for being unable to avail themselves of the opportunities of on-line classes for various reasons as mentioned earlier, is a common phenomenon in other parts of our country also. Both teachers and students are facing unprecedented challenges to continue communications through virtual lectures or portals like massive open on-line courses because of absence of proper digital infrastructure. According to many, all is not rosy in India. Problems like lack of technology, of digital training and bandwidth, are posing challenges for many families and teachers. According to Dr.Saroj Rani, a Professor at Delhi University's Maitreyi College, "The importance of classroom learning is undeniable and this pandemic proves that we are not yet ready to handle on-line classrooms." A teacher from Mahatma Gandhi Central University, a government institute at Motihari, Bihar said, "How does the government expect us to teach students in rural areas through mobile and classes? We have decent network for a video call for a few minutes. But how will they continue a forty minute class?"

While a computer would be preferred for on-line classes, a smartphone could also serve the purpose. However, the phone might be convenient for apps, but not for carrying out lengthy arrangements or research. While 21% Indian own a smartphone, only 11% household possess any type of computer which could include desktop computers, laptops, notebooks, palmtops or tablets. According to the 2017-18 National sample survey report on education only 24% of Indian household have internet facilities while 66% of Indian population lives in villages, only a little over 15% of rural households have access to internet services and for urban households the proportion is 42%. In the states like Delhi, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Uttarakhand more than 40%

household have access to internet. The proportion is less than 20% for Odisha, Andra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal.

Moreover, as per the Internet and mobile association of India report, 2019, while 67% men had access to internet this figure was only 33% for women. This disparity i.e. gender gap is more prominent in rural India where figure are 72% and 28% for men and women respectively.

In the present work it has been found that a good number of girl students have enrolled themselves in the college and universities which may be considered as the outcome of 'KanyashreePrakalpa' the government of West Bengal project. The number of beneficiaries in respect of the girl students is proportionately higher than that of the above said ratio.

So, it may also be concluded that the above said disparity or gender gap in accessing the internet facilities i.e. availing of the on-line class facilities has been lowered up to a satisfactory level i.e. from percentage proportion of Men: Women 72:28(all India level) to 58:42 (approx.) (Bankura University level).

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SURVEY ON ON-LINE CLASS STATUS IN RESPECT OF BANKURA DISTRICT COLLEGES UNDER BANKURA UNIVERSITY

SL No	Name of the College	Name of the Principal/ TIC	Total Number of Students				Number & Percentage of Students availing themselves of the On-line class facilities			Mode of Taking On-line Classes
			Honours	Programme	PG	Total	Honours	Program me	PG	
1	Bankura Christian College	Dr. Fatik Baran Mandal	1908	1004	92	3004	1813 (95%)	803 (80%)	91 (99%)	By uploading Study materials in departmental Whatsapp groups, College Website, through Zoom call/ G-Suite/ Google Meet, Qüestion-answer and Interactions on academic matters through Emails.
2	Bankura Sammilani College	Dr. Samir Kr. Mukherjee	1494	969	21	2484	1360 (91%)	756 (78%)	20 (98%)	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatsapp groups, College Website, through Zoom call/ special CAMS software, Question-answer and Interactions on academic matters through Emails.
3	B.Z.S. MahilaMahavidyapith	Dr. Siddhartha Gupta	1900	350	50	2300	1140 (60%)	123 (35%)	50 (100%)	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatsapp groups, College Website, through Zoom call/ G-Suite/ Google Meet/ YouTube/ Emails.
4	Barjora College	Dr. Arun Kumar Roy	513	1199	0	1712	436 (85%)	719 (60%)	NA	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatsapp groups, College Website, through Zoom call/ Emails.
5	Birsha Munda Memorial College, (Raipur)	Md.Jabed Ali (TIC)	126	359	0	485	50 (40%)	36 (10%)	NA	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatsapp groups, YouTube, Emails.
6	Chatra Ramai Pandit Mahavidyalaya	Dr. TarakNath Roy	420	980	0	1400	328 (78%)	412 (42%)	NA	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatsapp groups, College Website, through Zoom call/ Emails.
7	Chhatna Chandidas Mahavidyalaya	Shri Sujay Sain (TIC)	280	551	0	831	238 (85%)	276 (50%)	NA	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatsapp groups, through Zoom call, Emails.
8	Gobindaprasad Mahavidyalaya, Amarkanon	Dr Tusar Kanti Halder	410	710	0	1120	205 (50%)	320 (45%)	NA	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatsapp groups, College Website, through e-classroom,

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										Emails.
9	Indas Mahavidyalaya	Tapas Ray (TIC)	366	814	0	1180	348 (95%)	570 (70%)	NA	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatsapp groups, College Website and through Emails.
10	Jamini Roy College,Beliatore	Dr. Pradip Kumar Banerjee	524	1110	0	1634	368 (70%)	444 (40%)	NA	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatsapp groups, College Website, through Learning Management System, Email.
11	Khatra Adibasi Mahavidyalaya	Shri Kalyan Kanti Dutta	728	1448	0	2176	437 (60%)	652 (45%)	NA	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatsapp groups, College Website, interactive web portals and through Emails.
12	Onda Thana Mahavidyalaya	Dr. Bijoy Kant Dubey	496	604	0	1100	347 (70%)	344 (57%)	NA	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatsapp groups, College Website, through Zoom call and Emails.
13	Panchmura Mahavidyalaya	Dr. Anal Biswas	891	782	33	1706	624 (70%)	274 (35%)	33 (100%)	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatsapp groups, College Website, through Zoom call/ TCS Software, Emails.
14	P. R. Murmu Smriti Mahavidyalaya	Dr. Kuntal Kanti Chattoraj	950	2560	70	3580	618 (65%)	1024 (40%)	67 (95%)	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatapp groups, College Website, through Zoom call, Emails and special CAMS Software.
15	Patrasayer Mahavidyalaya	Dr. Santosh Konar	184	446	0	630	129 (70%)	196 (44%)	NA	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatsapp groups, College Website, through Skype, Google classroom, Emails.
16	Raipur Block Mahavidyalaya	Anandamoy Bhattacharya (TIC)	250	1002	0	1252	175 (70%)	551 (55%)	NA	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatsapp groups, College Website, through Facebook account live class, Emails.
17	Ramananda College,Bishnupur	Dr. Swapna Ghorai	1029	1428	108	2565	720 (70%)	500 (35%)	108 (100%)	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatsapp groups, College Website, through Zoom call, Emails and special CAMS Software.
18	Saldiha College	Dr. Shaikh Sirajuddin	602	1201	22	1825	360 (60%)	240 (20%)	18 (80%)	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatsapp groups, College Website, through Zoom call, Emails.

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19	Saltora Netaji Centenary Collège	Shri Manohar Kumar (TIC))	363	724	0	1087	261 (72%)	253 (35%)	NA	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatsapp groups and Emails.
20	Sonamukhi College	Dr. Bappaditya Mandal	1400	1102	0	2502	1120 (80%)	220 (20%)	NA	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatapp groups, College Website, through Zoom call, Emails.
21	S.D.D. Kathiababa Mahavidyalaya, Bhara	Dr. Kakoli Ghosh Sengupta	300	502	0	802	240 (80%)	100 (20%)	NA	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatsapp groups, College Website, through Zoom call, Emails.
22	Kabi Jagadram Roy Govt. Genl DEG. College, Mejia	Dr. Alok Kumar Das (TIC)	274	197	0	471	271 (99%)	158 (80%)	NA	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatsapp groups, College Website, through Zoom call, YouTube, Cisco Webex, Emails.
23	Govt. General Degree College, Ranibandh	Shri Madhusudan Garain	380	170	0	550	266 (70%)	51 (30%)	NA	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatsapp groups, College Website, You-Tube and through Emails.
24	Akui Kamalabala Womens College	Dr. Pitambar Paul	70	58	0	128	63 (90%)	29 (50%)	NA	Uploading Study materials in departmental Whatsapp groups, Google Classroom, You Tube,, Emails.