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## **A STUDY ON ISSUES AND CHALLENGES OF ON-LINE ASSESSMENT OF COLLEGE STUDENTS**

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### **Abstract**

The present paper studied the various issues and challenges of student's assessment that has been faced by college teachers and students of Kashmir division during Covid-19 Pandemic. Assessment is the major aspect of the education system. The student assessment is the act of evaluating student's abilities and achievements. It is ongoing process and integral part of the teaching and learning process. The teacher makes judgments about the students learning or to determine student's interest through assessment. It helps the teacher to reflect on each student's level of achievement as well as to customize their teaching plans accordingly. After Covid-19 Pandemic the student assessment has been shifted more to the online assessment. The teachers have faced lot of issues due to lack of access of internet and technology. In every sphere of education there is a great impact of technology on the students learning that has been done after Covid-19. The present study was descriptive- survey based study. Both primary and secondary sources of data were collected. For the secondary sources of data the investigator had reviewed various national and international papers related with the present study. The sample comprised of 400 college students and 400 teachers from various degree colleges of Kashmir Division. Self- developed interview schedule and self-constructed were used for the data collection. The investigator has conducted a group interview of 10 college's students and 10 teachers separately that constituted of 80 interviews. On the bases of these 80 group interviews the researcher developed themes of all interviews and analyzed all these into specific themes. The investigator suggested some recommendations for improving the better assessment of students through remote learning. The study indicated that there are major six

challenges in the context of online assessment i.e., lack of internet connection, language problem, parental attitude, mental disturbance, heavy work load and inaccessibility of smart phones.

**Keywords:** Assessment, Challenges, College Students, Issues, and Kashmir Division

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Higher education is the top most stage of education. The important part of higher education is the college levels of education students are curious to learn something new. The assessment is an integral part of the college level of education. The online assessment implementation presents a practical concern and theoretical interest in the context of emergency remote learning. Archer (2017) assessment serves the purpose of offering certificate for learning of the guaranteeing progress, transfer and intended outcomes. The systematic basis for making inferences about the development and learning of students is the process of assessment. It is the act of designing, selecting and using information to promote student's learning. The aim of assessment is to gather the important and useful information or to determine student's interest to make judgments about the student's progress. There are number of ways were students can be assessed to determine their interests, abilities and capabilities. In earlier times the assessment of students was done through tradition method but due to covid-19 pandemic each and every aspect of education was affected, the assessment of students has changed from physical mode to online mode. Capsim. (2020) studied during covid-19 pandemic that there are the five levels of assessment challenges in higher education. Firstly supportive learning, to provide progress and transfer to the students, intended out comes, learning certification and to execute accountability. There are various challenges that the teachers and students have faced during the covid-19 pandemic. The context of emergency remote learning presents a practical concern for the implementation of online assessment. Due to covid-19 pandemic the educational institutions were forced to shut down and then after situation came into a normal track there were made an attempt to continue education slowly. In almost all countries of the world have turned their educational institutions into emergency remote education. The instructional strategy has temporary turned into the remote learning modality that provides students with necessary instructional support in the time of corona virus crisis. Thus the system of education has drastically changed and improved into the way. Within the context of

Philippine, the higher education commission is the national body that regulates higher education policies. The covid-19 advisory 2020 articulating guidelines on how assessment can be reorganized in the actual phase. Such important guidelines were adopted by various colleges and universities across the globe within the consideration of different contextual conditions. The system of formative and summative evaluation has dropped and the new method of evaluation of students has come out i.e., online-assessment. The problems identified in the online assessment were less coverage of learning outcomes of students, academic dishonesty, commitment of students on assignment submission and lack of assessment tools and infrastructure. Zhang et.al, (2020) studied that due to covid-19 pandemic crisis student and teacher experiences on online teaching, the change on working time and for part time students the inconvenience of working at home are the additions problems of remote teaching.

The researchers also defined that online instructors faces various challenges: to collect data for the assessment judgments and second provide feedbacks to the students based on the assessment judgments'. The large distance between instructor and the students and the capability of technological tools for the communication and the workload demands. The student situation is laden with number of difficulties in remote learning because of unstable internet connectivity, electric power interruptions and inadequate learning resources. On the other hand teachers themselves also face numerous problems for on line assessment because of the lack of awareness about the latest technology. There are various educational issues raised by the "Global Education Monitoring Report" i.e. the concern of assessment component and student learning. The covid-19 crisis extended the actual phase of assessment from stressing continuous instruction and technology access to one essential outcome, i.e., grade. The new assessment practices such as previous grades from mock exams that considering prior grade expectations. The focus after pandemic situation on assessment of students at every level of education is on online assessment but both teachers and students have faced number of challenges. Fook and Sidhu (2015) stated that there are eight main learning challenges faced by students in higher education: cognitive challenge the most critical challenge that most the students faced at the higher education level; to become the active learner is the second critical challenge of a student at higher level, active learner does not mean only remain active while learning but need to prepare for the class in order to be active

in classroom discussion being a passive learner hampers the students involvement in the discussion of the class; dealing with reading material; students should always remained to read relevant reading material from the on course websites from time to time. Reading material is the important for students to coping with day to day question that were assessed by the teacher in the classroom; language barrier; to understand the ideas in English that is big challenge for students to catch up the everyday lessons, problems of instruction; the delivery of lesson in an unsystematic and unorganized way also hinders the students expectations. Lack of time management also a big problems faced by undergraduate students. Assignment burden is also a big issue raised by various levels of students. The last important issue raised by undergraduate students is the cultural difference that leads a top most challenge that every students at college level faces individually. These are the challenges that students at undergraduate and post graduate level faced but the covid- 19 pandemic has develop more some issues of learning at the higher education of level. The first challenge for the college level student is the remote proctored exams that are very stressful for students than the proctored exam it not only adversely affects the students performance but also the students mental and physical health. Because students are not willing for the supervision of camera exam. Cooper & Tschobotko, (2020) mentioned in the study that during covid-19 higher educational institutions have rushed to online classes and remote teachings. It does create the challenge to get use of technologies and access of essential facilities i.e., laboratories. Guangual, et.al. (2020) stated that covid-19 not only adversely affects the teaching learning process but dishonestly limited the unfair distribution of student's marks and the efforts of the students were demotivated and also dropped the quality education. Gaytan & McEwen (2007) said that online instructors to identify assessment found assessment effective particularly in the online environment. Cahapay (2021) stated various issues of online assessment through his in-depth investigation: Anxiety over tracking tools means messages displayed on tool detected multiple faces; incompatibility of browser means out dated browser is a little issue in the path of online assessment; unstable internet connection: a sudden shut-down or lost of internet package; electric power interruption: sudden light off and less electric supply in the particular areas is the great challenge; distraction in the environment: social issues and environmental crisis affects online assessment of students as well as teachers. Accessibility issues unknowingly:

the access of browser and other device at the same time distracts the whole system and time passes within knowing what is happening in the remote system.

Thus the purpose of the study was to find out the various issues and challenges that the college level students and teachers faced during covid-19 pandemic. To determine the various challenges of on-line assessment faced by undergraduate students as well as teachers. The investigator had conducted an in-depth study in the current context of online assessment that is very important for the investigation. It will be surely helpful for the improvement in the continuous assessment practices in the difficult situations and generates the better theoretical knowledge in the areas of specialization.

## **2. Methodology**

### **Objectives**

1. To study the perspectives of undergraduate students towards online assessment during covid-19 pandemic.
2. To study the perspectives of teachers towards online assessment of students during covid-19 pandemic.
3. To study the experiences of college students on remote learning.

The present study was based on descriptive-survey method. The method elaborates the in-depth investigation about particular case or phenomenon. The investigator visited all colleges personally and got consent from the Principals of various degree colleges of Kashmir. Then investigator firstly approached the teachers then students of different colleges and find appropriate time to get data from both teachers as well as students during February and March months in the year 2021. The researchers had selected four hundred undergraduate students and four hundred teachers from various colleges of Kashmir Valley with the help of random sampling technique. Interview schedule was used to get the qualitative data from students as well as teacher on the online assessment during covid-19 crisis. The investigator also distributed hundred questionnaires among the hundred students to get perspectives of students on experiences of remote learning. The analysis of the data was done on the basis of thematic analysis.

## **4. Analysis of the data**

### **Primary data analysis**

The investigator had developed the six themes of the interview taken from students and teachers from various colleges of the Kashmir division. The number of teachers as well as students highlighted the same issues and challenges that they have faced but the investigator developed only these major themes from all the eighty group interviews;

1. **Lack of internet connection:** The big number of undergraduate students said that we are belonging to a rural area every three or five days the internet facility has been banned because of the some critical situation in the area. We were unable to fulfill our online assignments on time due to the distractions and lack of internet facilities available in our area. Some of the teachers also said that it is big challenge for the teachers that have faced during lockdown unavailability of internet connection on proper time that affected our whole system of education.
2. **Language problem:** English is the third language for the people of Kashmir. The great barrier in the path of education system is the English language. In the physical classroom we were using the regional language to cope our educational problems but due to covid-19 pandemic the focus was given on an international language i.e., English, lack of vocabulary, proper arrangement of sentences and grammatical errors are the great hurdles in the path of online assessment said by various students of different colleges of Kashmir valley.
3. **Parental attitude:** the teachers said from various colleges that parents unwilling to keep their students online throughout the day or four to five hours that disturbs the whole system of online assessment of students. Parents hesitate to found their children assessment through virtual mode. They feel that it affects the grades of our children which will be very harmful for the future.
4. **Mental disturbances:** The covid -19 pandemic affects both mental and physical health of the people throughout the world. Some of the teachers as well students of different colleges said that during pandemic we are distorted our mental health due to continuous use of virtual education throughout the year. To keep ourselves alert for virtual assignments, classes, programmes it really harms our mental health badly.
5. **Heavy work load:** The major challenge during covid-19 pandemic that the teachers have faced was of the over burden of assignments and work. The teachers of various colleges highlighted that to address the vulnerable learning needs of students is the hectic job that

always leads a various stressful situations and to screening the students questions answers and manage all work through virtual mode is the big issue faced by college teachers.

6. **Inaccessibility of smart phones:** The students highlighted in the interview who belongs to a rural and poor families, that we don't have smart phones our parents are not financially sound when covid -19 crisis developed the schools colleges and other institutions remained shut down but the education system continuous for the development of education among students for this purpose the remote learning came exists everywhere. We are visiting our neighbors and friends for attending our online classes and assignment we have wasted lot of time for the regard. And only half an hour they allow us in their homes because of the corona virus disease.

**Table 1: Showing the experiences of students on remote learning**

Remote learning experiences	Number		Percentage	
	Yes	No	Yes	NO
Maximum use of internet	70	30	70%	30%
Good internet knowledge	56	44	56%	44%
Availability of internet connection	75	25	75%	25%
Command on latest technology	45	55	45%	55%
Difficult to use technology	65	35	65%	35%
Technology impact on mental health	80	20	80%	20%

Table 1 shows the experiences of college students on remote learning. The table depicts that 70% student said that they use internet maximum hours in a day and 56 % students revealed that they have good knowledge of internet and 75% students responded that there is no lack of internet facility in their concerned living area. Whereas, only 45% students said that they have good command on latest technology. The table further revealed that 65% students have faced difficulty to use technology during covid-19. Lastly 80% students perceived that the

online system of educations directly impacts on mental health. Therefore the above data indicated that online learning has positive as well as negative impacts as per the experiences of students at college level it enhances to improvement in use of technology in education but also develops a great hurdle in the physical life of the students.

### **Secondary data Analysis.**

1. On the basis of present context of online assessment the investigator has reviewed various research papers related to the present study.
2. To collect high –quality data and longitudinal data on students out comes there is need of high digital education system that avoids the burden situations and maximizes the problems of remote learning and students’ online assessment.
1. Student involvement in curricular as well co-curricular activities helps to take critical examinations of students that may be determined the predicted experiences, performance and growth of students and will be reduced in survey responses.
2. The online assessment will be more helpful when the well-designed questionnaires can yield accurate students outcomes and estimated gains. The longitudinal assessment and self-reported assessments of cognitive outcomes provide strong divergent findings of the student performances.
3. Online assessment should be student-centered through using multiple item questionnaires, simple words and provide sufficient time to fulfill their work and give advantage of students who possessed the well grade through remote learning.
4. The covid-19 pandemic already developed great stress among young youths in terms of their education. To get well aware of remote learning there should be proper facilities for students as well as teachers to cope up their educational problems.
5. The various challenges highlighted by various students like assignment burden, mental pressure and language barrier. Keep all these things into consideration the previous students suggested that there should be proper execution and planning in advanced for remote learning.
6. Formative and summative assessment has been now declared as traditional method. The suitable method for the assessment of students is the online assessment that addresses the various challenges of students regularly and students also get acquainted with the latest technologies like Google meet, zoom application and many other.



7. Online assessment in the present global crisis captures problems by exploring experiences of the students in the current moment and also addresses the practical concerns.
8. The instructors thinking and decision making would be worthwhile by which they evaluate the effectiveness of their assessments
9. Through online assessment students progress and understandings should provide actionable feedback and also should technology to communicate with their students and manage time properly.

#### **4. Discussion and Results.**

On the basis of analysis of primary and secondary sources of data. The results can be discussed here;

The study found that there is the internet problem faced by students as well as college teachers from various degree colleges of Kashmir valley the study is in the line of study conducted by Ozden, et.al (2004) & Cahapay (2021) studied that the lack of proper technology facilities hinders the student online assignment but there is room for improvement in technology. The study investigated that language problems become the big issues in the path of the online assessment of students during covid-19 pandemic the study is associated with study explored by Guangual, et.al. (2020) stated that language barrier is the big challenge that international students have faced in the teaching learning process that distorted the catch-up of students in their daily lessons. The study examined the heavy workload of continuous assignments, online examinations, quizzes and other remote learnings of teachers as well as students due to covid-19 pandemic crisis the study is in the connection of study investigated by Guangual, et.al. (2020) studied that assignment burden of students but these assignments were in small scale and not graded but still a burden and have spent a lot of time for it.

#### **5. Recommendations**

The investigator has identified the various issues and challenges of online assessment of students through in-depth investigation. On the basis of these issues and challenges the investigator suggested the following recommendations;

1. To develop appropriate learning strategies for students helps them to fulfill their educational needs in terms of remote learning. The instructor should have good knowledge about latest technology and use of appropriate tools for the online assessment of students.
2. The instructor should divided the learning material into small steps and also encourage the students to complete all the assignments with giving extra time. It enhances the remote learning among students steadily.
3. The government should not ban the internet facilities because of social issues in any particular areas it not only damages the educational life of students but hampers the future citizens of the nation.
4. Parents should change their negative attitude towards their children. They should give the freedom to their children for the purpose for the usage of educational technology.
5. The Government and other non government organizations should provide some financial support to the students belonging to the poor families so that they meet their educational needs and make aware themselves towards the latest technologies for remote learning.
6. The teachers should not give number of assignments on the same topic or subject with fewer grades to the students. It not only wastes the time of students but it also disturbs the mental health of the students.
7. Collaborative learning environment should be created for the students so that students can enjoy teaching learning process and also develops the smooth functioning of the education system.
8. To address the learning issues of the students the college organizations should develop continual reflection and refinement of teaching as one of the hallmarks of an effective teacher it helps the students to develop their own decision making process about any observational phenomenon.
9. Lastly there should be no complexity in the remote learning of students because effective teaching takes place from simple to complex that helps students to develop concepts and clear their confusion properly and accurately.
10. To foster community development and give chance to the students to learn through analyzing and critiquing the work of others by exploring the use of peer-assessment strategies.

## **6. Conclusion.**

The use of technology in education is trending process in the education system written exams quizzes, assignments and other aspects helps the students to meet their technological challenges in the present scenario. In the present context covid-crises develops a big challenge for policy makers, planners and administrators to go in-depth investigations of educational issues related with student problems and their strategies to tackle these issues. The covid-19 crises are the examination of today's teachers the whole education system has been shifted from traditional to technological one. The online classes, workshops, webinars shows us how life and education has changed day by day. The present piece of research suggested that for the future direction of work, the teachers should have proper concerns about the online learning environment. To use the technology for communication purposes with the students there should be proper time management. The instructors critical thinking and advanced decision making in the process of assessment by which they evaluate the students progress effectively and worthwhile.

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## **Declaration of Conflicting Interests**

No potential conflicts of interests with regard to the research and publication of this paper declared by the author

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## **Appendix I**

### **Interview Schedule for Teachers**

**Name of the teacher:** -----

**College:** -----

**Length of service:** -----

**Qualification:** -----

#### **Questions**

1. Do you feel any difficulty while using the technology for online classes?
2. What thing you have learnt from the online teaching during covid-19 pandemic?
3. How technology helps you during covid-19 pandemic for the assessment of students?

## **Appendix II**

### **Interview Schedule for Students**

**Name of the student:** -----

**Class:** -----

**Collage:** -----

**Area of living:** -----

### **Questions**

1. Do you feel that students at college level are able to use the technology properly?
2. What challenges you have faced in the remote learning during covid-19 pandemic?
3. Which new things you have learnt during covid-19 pandemic?
4. What type of attitude does your parents show when you are continuously learn only through mobile applications and computers?

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