

TITLE: “COVID-19, the virus that remodeled the education system”

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As of January 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) has declared the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak caused by SARS-COV2 originating in the Hubei province of Wuhan in China as a public health emergency of international concern.

First identified in the year 1960, the Human Coronaviruses were accountable for a considerable amount of upper respiratory tract infections in children.^[1] The world also saw coronavirus outbreaks in 2002 and 2012 in China and Middle Eastern countries in the form of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus (SARS-CoV) and the Middle East respiratory syndrome-related coronavirus (MERS-CoV) respectively.

The mode of transmission of the current novel COVID 19 is through person-to-person, from an infected individual who can be either symptomatic or asymptomatic, making it one of the most feared infections to date with no definitive treatment.^[2]

The complete global lockdown that followed to curb the disastrous transmission has resulted in a shift to online classes and exams, a sort of distance education that re-innovated teaching and learning methods.

Used as a tool to foster self-directed learning in these unprecedented times, e-learning has been recognized to be as efficacious as conventional education.^[3] However, its effectiveness varies among students and the subjects they learn.^[4] Thus, e-learning, although fruitful, indisputably has a significant influence on the atmosphere in which students learn, and interestingly, most medical students fail to see it substituting traditional didactic methods and instead, see it as an

accompaniment to regular instructor-led training. In doing so, they establish a type of blended-learning approach.^[3,4]

This shift to online education has a prime impact, especially on the medical sector of education. With educational methods continually evolving and new innovative approaches of teaching sought after, numerous improvements in the field of medicine like 3-Dimensional animated videos and associated software tools for magnification and superimposition are now possible.^[5]

Nonetheless, the major drawback of online learning is that there is no technological replacement for learning the intricate details of the human body through hands-on experience.^[3-5]

Another major drawback of distant online education is difficulty in staying motivated. When faced with public health emergencies, college students' mental health is significantly affected, requiring attention, help, and support from their families, teachers, and peers.^[6] This problem should be addressed to deliver high-quality, crisis-oriented psychological services to college students, making students focus better on their education.

With no training, inadequate bandwidth, and diminutive groundwork, while some believe that the unexpected and rapid move to online learning will result in weak educational growth; others believe that this new hybrid education model will emerge with unique benefits. As of now, the disruption of the spread of the virus through social distancing is essential. In order to attain the same standard of medical education, the classes imparted through E-learning platforms should have a proper protocol that must be integrated within the current traditional system throughout universities. Moreover, useful apps and E-learning tools can enhance studying, which the students can use to evaluate their skill and knowledge progression. We have an opportunity to evolve, and we ought to make the best use of the current scenario. We shall be well prepared for our calling to this noble profession and be the best doctors humanity can have.

KEYWORDS: COVID-19; E-learning; Medical education system

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