

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON MEDIA AND EDUCATION
SYSTEM

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Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic, lockdown, and self-isolation have changed many things around the world and the same is found happening in Russia and Uzbekistan too. The article examines the impact of COVID-19 on society with an emphasis on the education sector and media of both countries. The study argues that COVID-19 disrupted the education system in schools, colleges, and universities, and the educational institutions were closed in an attempt to contain the spread of the virus. Schools were forced to replace the compulsory face-to-face in-class education with online learning and home-schooling helped by both teachers and parents. The study reveals that students and teachers adapted to the online education system and were obliged to follow distance learning. However, there have been challenges adjusting to these changes for students, teachers, and parents. Also, the pressure on the medical infrastructure increased considerably. The health sector was finding it difficult to manage both professionals and the administrative aspects of handling the overall load on the medical system. Conceivably, the initial reluctance of the administration to recognize the possible enormity of the threat is probably responsible for their medical system's failure in some parts of Russia and Uzbekistan during the pandemic. Owing to the massive influx of patients, and the inadequacies of social support, the situation deteriorated and healthcare sectors were found to be increasingly overwhelmed. The COVID-19 pandemic has taught both nations that access to healthcare and medication is of utmost importance for the survival of the state itself. The COVID-19 pandemic taught that there is a necessity to change the lifestyle and the overall teaching and learning process and upgrade the technology.

Keywords: education, media, pandemic, distance learning, home-schooling, lockdownю.

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Media Trends during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Many changes happened in the mass media during the Covid-19 pandemic in Uzbekistan. Media was quick enough to inform the citizens of the country about all the pandemic related information, through the information and news channels, specifically mentioned as «Coronavirus Info», that worked as an official source of information on the issue of COVID-19 virus through television, print media and social media.

Mass media in Uzbekistan tried to avoid any falsification and spreading of false information during pandemic. In the analysis of the “Coronavirus Info,” the “Telegram,” channel showed that the number of users had increased dramatically by 12 times in the first 6 hours of the channel's creation. (Koronavirus, 2020). At 3:00 p.m., when the first message on the channel was

announced, there were almost 100 users on the channel, and by 8:00 p.m., this figure reached to 1,200. (Pandemiya, 2020). The first message on the channel was announced on March 15, at 3:12 p.m., and it was an official message that was announced about a case of coronavirus infection was registered in Uzbekistan (Koronavirus, 2020). The audience of the channel was around 105 users at this time. This and every subsequent message on the channel was accompanied by the hashtags #vahimasizkarantin and #karantinbezpaniki. (Koronavirus, 2020). The purpose of this message was not to arouse panic among the citizens in response to the measures implemented by the government, but to inform citizens not to go out of their houses if not essential.

It is worth noting that the second message on the channel was a statement about controlling any false information during the pandemic by country's law and justice system. Of course, there were no punishment for false information, but the fact that the same issue was emphasized was of great importance. (Muratova, Nikadambaeva, 2021). All the media channel were asked to provide reliable information about the COVID-19 pandemic in whole of Uzbekistan. For some media houses, the topic of the pandemic became a decisive factor in the sharp increase in audience. For example, the "Gazeta.uz" internet publication, which operates mainly in Russian language, launched a Uzbek-language "Telegram" channel during the pandemic, and in a short period, a large part of the Uzbek-speaking audience was able to attract part of it. (Gazeta.uz, 2021). The increase in each channel's audience showed effectiveness of the editorial work and allowed to take a note that media was taking its responsibility correctly among the Uzbek-speaking audience. (Muratova, 2020). The other media trends were important to note about the coverage on COVID-19 pandemic in Uzbekistan like:

1. News journalism in the country was restructured. Commentaries and reports widely used on official TV channels had taken the shape of real reports. All news and information programs acquired the status of breaking news. However, during the pandemic, the role of bloggers and public journalists, who previously openly published false posts that caused many conflict situations, decreased relatively. This, in turn, prompted the elimination of the "deficit of trust" in the mass media. The public, earlier were unable to independently verify information but during COVID time began to rely heavily on the official information sources. The reason was due to the reliability and confidence factor, that changed by the official media, in particular, TV and online publications. (Yuldasheva, Mukhopadhyay, 2022).

2. In the mass media, it was observed that the growth of UGC (user-generated content), the videos and photos, reflected

the correct conditions in the state mass media and official media and in the TV channels (Kodirova, 2021).

New Social and Educational Trends during the COVID-19 Pandemic

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in Russia in the middle of March 2020 affected the population with unexpected disruptions in almost all spheres of life and drastically altered the lifestyle of the population. The lockdown announced on 29 March, 2020 to contain the infection and slow down the spread of the virus was an extraordinary decision taken by the government in post-Soviet history (Institute Montaigne, 2020). The COVID-19 crisis reached the country when the government was busy focusing its political decisions to push for constitutional amendments to allow its president to stay in power after 2024. However, as the coronavirus cases started increasing, the state government hurriedly declared lockdown measures and asked citizens to stay at home and maintain physical distancing. Russia's response to the coronavirus outbreak started much earlier and it was quick in deciding to close its borders of about 2,615 km long with China. On 27th January 2020, the state also created a special coronavirus headquarters. However, on 31st January, two regions announced that two Chinese tourists carried the virus, making them the first confirmed cases in the territory. Chinese tourists were temporarily banned from entering in the cities from 20th February 2020. However the closing of borders raised many other related problems and therefore, the border had to partially reopen (Mahmood, 2020). The government was active in controlling the cases in January and February as the situation was still under control and the number of virus cases was much lower. But things changed fast and confirmed cases gradually spiked up and looking into the situation, the government had to announce the strict quarantine orders.

Russia rapidly climbed up the global COVID-19 ladder in May 2020, reaching third place globally after the COVID-19 case numbers in Brazil overtook the country. According to data compiled by John Hopkins University, by the end of May, the daily incidence figures appeared to have plateaued in the state. It gradually overtook the cases in France and Germany. More than half of the COVID-19 cases were found in big crowded cities like Moscow and St. Petersburg thus making the healthcare system in these cities overwhelmed. Reports of extreme stress in healthcare sector personnel's physical and mental health issues also came up. The article tries to examine the impact of COVID-19 in societies, in the education sector,

focussing on the pandemic measures taken by the administration to continue regular life, at the same time, protecting the citizens from the deadly virus.

COVID-19 affected a huge number of people in the country and within a short time, the pandemic made people change their daily routine. Though Russia has good experience in controlling infectious diseases and disease-like plagues, within a short period, the threat of COVID-19 became much more dangerous than any other threat. However, the disruptions in normal life became evident as educational institutions were closed, and almost all the entire sectors of the economy closed down. At the same time, along with the COVID-19 health crisis, the economic crisis deepened too in Russia. The pandemic has pushed many into poverty and many faced difficulties in storing food and paying their bills. To manage the pandemic and at the same time, implement mechanisms to successfully rescue the economy became quite difficult for the country.

Virus Escalation Factors

Many factors played in the case of Russia's increase in COVID-19 infections. Like in many other countries, the health care sector also faced significant shortages of personal protective equipment (PPE). Russia's healthcare sector workers became more vulnerable due to PPE shortages (BBC NEWS, 2020). Also, the hospitals faced problems due to the shortages of ventilators. Above all, there were regional variations in the availability of PPE and ventilators. As such the quality of the health care system differs greatly across the regions. This is because of varying levels of preparation and available types of equipment. This differentiation caused problems with the overall public health system and in tackling the hardship caused during the pandemic (Rainsford, 2020). During the COVID-19 pandemic, many countries suffered due to the lack of clear political leadership. In the case of Russia too, it has been noted that the President's response to the pandemic was not as per the requirement. He avoided handling the situation directly and refrained from addressing citizens regularly on how to tackle the crisis, which became routine affairs for many countries' leaders (Deprez, 2020). Strong leadership in the face of the global pandemic was essential and that was missing.

The popularity of the first leader peaked within the country immediately after Russia annexed Crimea. However, the discontent among the country's working population grew up due to the fall in real wages, the economic pain caused due to COVID-19 and unhappiness about its handling by the government (Raghavan, 2020).

For the last two decades in Russia, people relied on President Putin's direct intervention and control over any crisis. However, the President's intervention during the COVID-19 pandemic was considerably limited (The Lancet, 2020). His response to the pandemic was quite unusual for a centralized state power like Russia.

Teaching and Learning During Pandemic

COVID-19 disrupted the education system in schools, colleges, and universities in Russia. All the educational institutions were closed. Like in many other countries, the Russian government also decided to close the schools in an attempt to contain the spread of the virus. Schools were forced to replace compulsory face-to-face in-class education with online learning and homeschooling, helped by teachers and parents (OECD, 2020). Due to the closedown of the educational institutions, students and teachers adapted to the online education system and were obliged to follow distance learning. There have been challenges adjusting to these changes for students, teachers, and parents. The COVID-19 crisis has changed the lives of many students. Students and their families both started learning to operate under a condition of uncertainty and risk prevention, which also affected students' academic motivation levels. Students needed both the support of their parents and teachers to engage with their learning and reduce anxiety in the stressful time of COVID-19. In the Russian Federation, about 84% of students felt that their parents and their teachers both supported their efforts. Many universities changed from in-class learning to distance learning and immediately granted free access to the study materials, attracting students to continue their learning process across Russia (Vermishev & Dmitriev, (2020). Students were allowed to take online courses pass the exams and receive credit from their universities.

The teachers monitored attendance regularly and checked everyone's presence in the screenshot. Teachers started conveying information in the same way online as they used to do in the class lectures. Teachers also addressed the gaps of parents of young students who were struggling to learn how to navigate the online tools and assist their children. During online teaching, students and teachers maintain continuous communication with one another, especially, through email or video communications. Students started communicating with their friends and classmates through social media portals and became used to this medium of communication. During the pandemic, people became more resilient.

Nonetheless, Russian children returned to school

during the first week of September after a six-month break. All necessary measures were taken by the school authorities and by the local government to prevent the COVID-19 outbreak among students or teachers. Mass testing of school employees, daily temperature checks, and intensive handwashing for everyone became compulsory in schools. School timing changed for students to avoid gathering in bigger groups. Instead of students going to teachers, teachers started coming to students to avoid any possible cluster of students in one place. Many schools even installed sophisticated temperature screening devices near the front entrance door. As the children walk inside, cameras take their pictures and a thermometer scans their temperature and the results are displayed on a monitor for security staff (Cris, 2020). The President addressed the nation through a teleconference call to address the back-to-school and the significance of learning while maintaining COVID-19 precautions.

Conclusion

There were various challenges from education to the environment, to economic and healthcare sector, that required apt handling during the COVID-19 era. All these lead to a fundamental restructuring of societies around the ideals of local self-sufficiency, improvised medical practices and environmental sustainability. There is a realisation that managing pandemics like COVID-19 required global support. No country could operate in isolation and there was a need for international collaboration. Russia and Uzbekistan were active at multilateral fora like the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) and in many other such forums, where the issue like pandemic were discussed and joint efforts were also taken.

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ВЛИЯНИЕ COVID-19 НА СРЕДСТВА МАССОВОЙ ИНФОРМАЦИИ И СИСТЕМУ ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ

Аннотация: Пандемия COVID-19, изоляция и самоизоляция многое изменили во всем мире, и то же самое происходит в России и Узбекистане. В статье рассматривается влияние COVID-19 на общество с акцентом на сферу образования и СМИ обеих стран. В исследовании утверждается, что COVID-19 нарушил систему образования в школах, колледжах и университетах, а образовательные учреждения были закрыты в попытке сдержать распространение вируса. Школы были вынуждены заменить обязательное очное обучение в классе онлайн-обучением и домашним обучением при поддержке учителей и родителей. Исследование показывает, что студенты и преподаватели адаптировались к системе онлайн-образования и были вынуждены перейти на дистанционное обучение. Однако учащимся, учителям и родителям пришлось столкнуться с трудностями при адаптации к этим изменениям. Кроме того, значительно возросла нагрузка на медицинскую инфраструктуру. Сектору здравоохранения было трудно справляться как с профессиональными, так и с административными аспектами общей нагрузки на медицинскую систему. Вероятно, первоначальное нежелание администрации признать возможную масштабность угрозы, вероятно, является причиной сбоя в медицинской системе в некоторых частях России и Узбекистана во время пандемии. Из-за массового притока пациентов и недостаточной социальной поддержки ситуация ухудшилась, и сектор здравоохранения оказался все более перегруженным. Пандемия COVID-19 научила обе страны тому, что доступ к здравоохранению и лекарствам имеет первостепенное значение для выживания самого государства. Пандемия COVID-19 показала, что необходимо изменить образ жизни и весь процесс преподавания и обучения, а также модернизировать технологии.

Ключевые слова: образование, медиа, пандемия, дистанционное обучение, домашнее обучение, карантин.

COVID-19 NING OMMAVIY AXBOROT VOSITALARI VA TA'LIM TIZIMIGA TA'SIRI

Annotatsiya: COVID-19 pandemiyasi, karantin va o'zini-o'zi izolyatsiya qilish dunyo bo'ylab ko'p narsalarni o'zgartirdi va xuddi shunday holat Rossiya va O'zbekistonda ham kuzatildi. Maqolada COVID-19 ning jamiyatga ta'siri ko'rib chiqiladi, bunda ikkala mamlakatning ta'lim sohasi va ommaviy axborot vositalariga e'tibor qaratiladi. Tadqiqot shuni ko'rsatadiki, COVID-19 maktablar, kollejlilar va universitetlarda ta'lim tizimini o'zgartirib yuborgan va virus tarqalishining oldini olish uchun ta'lim muassasalari yopilgan. Maktablar an'anaviy ta'limni o'qituvchilar va ota-onalar yordami bilan onlayn ta'lim va uyda o'qitish bilan almashtirishga majbur bo'ldi. Izlanishlarimizga ko'ra talabalar va o'qituvchilar onlayn ta'lim tizimiga moslashgan va masofaviy ta'limga rioya qilishlari shart. Biroq, talabalar, o'qituvchilar va ota-onalar uchun ushbu o'zgarishlarga moslashishda qiyinchiliklar mavjud. Shuningdek, tibbiy infratuzilmaga bosim sezilarli

darajada oshgan. Sogʻliqni saqlash sohasi ham mutaxassislarni, ham tibbiyot tizimidagi umumiy yukni koʻtarishning maʼmuriy jihatlarini boshqarishda qiyinchilik tugʻdirdi. COVID-19 pandemiyasi hayot tarzini va umumiy oʻqitish va oʻqitish jarayonini oʻzgartirish va texnologiyani yangilash zarurligini koʻrsatdi.

Kalit soʻzlar: taʼlim, media, pandemiya, masofaviy taʼlim, uyda taʼlim, cheklash.