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**ROLE OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION IN PANDEMIC
PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE MEASURE FOR REDUCTION OF
STIGMA, PREJUDICE, DISCRIMINATION & INEQUALITIES: AN
ANALYSIS**

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INTRODUCTION

Covid-19 declared as pandemic by the World Health organization has created the deadly impacts on the world. Starting with Wuhan (China) in the year 2019 has now spreader to most of the nations. At the present, India has almost 937844 cases on July 15, 2020 suffering from Coronavirus. The Indian government is following every measures to safeguards its citizens. The slogan of “Stay Home, Stay Safe” is widely practiced by Indians today. If we gaze upon state government then, things are same. These governments are also trying every possible way to protect its citizens. In this lieu, the government of Haryana is also active 24*7 for its citizens.

Till 12 July, 2020 in Haryana total 21,240 cases have been noticed having coronavirus. The state government of Haryana is announcing innovative ideas to keep the citizens safe from this pandemic. The role of educational institutions in this regard is supreme as they are future builder. These institutions such as schools, colleges and universities are the one who laid the foundation for the human resource development of any nation and state. When students enter in the educational premises they used to be raw but getting nurtures but the academicians at every front, they emerged as the assets. When we talk about the role of educational institutions in the time of crisis especially during pandemics like of covid-19 then, it become imperative and multi-faceted.

Now, the question can be raised that why only about the role of educational institutions not about other sectors. Well, every individual at least in present time get himself/herself enroll in the educational institution as in today’s fast changing world one cannot move ahead without the helping hand of education. That’s why educational institutions are the best option to make oneself ready for preparing towards crisis dealings. The education we get remain with us until our last breath. Although, some things gets blur over the time but we cannot vanish the complete education or learning of anyone. With this approach, we can assign the

paramount task of pandemic preparedness & response measure for Reduction of Stigma, Prejudice, Discrimination & Inequalities to the educational institutions.

As the studies on pandemic preparedness especially in regard to education is a recent phenomenon. Actually, the present covid-19 has altered the way of thinking and it has also modified our needs. Earlier, we used to focus on only disaster management and social empowerment or upliftment. That is why a large literature is available on the same but when we talk about the pandemic preparedness but literature is almost negligible. No significant literature is available on this topic. This paper is a small attempt to fill this gap in existing literature. Through this paper, the author will highlight the Role of Educational Institution in Pandemic Preparedness & Response Measure for Reduction of Stigma, Prejudice, Discrimination & Inequalities.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER

- To analyze the role of educational institutions in Pandemic preparedness
- To study the role of educational institutions response measure for reduction of stigma, prejudice, discrimination & Inequalities

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology is analytical in nature. For data collection both primary and secondary data have been collected. The primary data has been collected with the help of 300 respondents (selected on snowball sampling method) who are the resident of Haryana and for a questionnaire with the google forms software was made for this purpose. Furthermore, the secondary data has been collected with the help of online browsing including websites. The analysis of the found data has been done with the simplified percentage method. The codification and tabulation was also done as per requirements.

Limitations: The time period for collection of data is from April, 2020 to June, 2020 only.

ANALYSIS

The analysis of the study is presented below:

Role of educational institutions in pandemic preparedness



Source:

<https://government.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/education/lockdown-impact-governments-e-learning-platforms-witness-surge-in-subscribers/74870839>

The analysis of the role of educational institutions in pandemic preparedness is mentioned below in the table 1:

Sr. No.	Variables	Yes		No	
		f	%	f	%
1	Role in creating awareness regarding pandemic whereabouts	250	62.5	150	37.5
2	Role in distributing knowledge about how to tackle with pandemic	300	75	100	25
3	Role in organizing academic events on regular basis	350	87.5	50	12.5
4	Role in preparing students as volunteer to serve during pandemic	360	90	40	10
5	Role in supporting research activities related to pandemic studies	310	77.5	90	22.5

Source: Questionnaire

From the table 1, it can be said that 62.5% respondents are having opinion that role in creating awareness regarding pandemic whereabouts of educational institutions is significant as this institutions can be the source of spreading latest whereabouts. 75% respondents said that role of educational institutions in distributing knowledge about how to tackle with pandemic is crucial as they can guide students about the procedure and cautious steps needed to be taken at the required time. 87.5% respondents replied that role of educational institutions in organizing academic events on regular basis should be enhanced as this institutions can serve as the medium for dispersion of updated knowledge and developing new approaches in people through events like symposium, conferences, seminars, discussion, panels and many others. Majority of the 90% of the respondents said that role of educational institutions in preparing students as volunteer to serve during pandemic should be give due importance as this institutions can serve as the great source of preparing future volunteer. This can help in solving the menace of less numbers of volunteer during any crisis or pandemic. 77.5% respondents believed that role of educational institutions in supporting research activities related to

pandemic studies should be enhanced as this institutions can promote future studies related to pandemic and similar occurring.

Now, the question arises that what is the role of educational institutions in the time of present pandemic in India and mainly in rural areas. The lockdown announced to prevent the transmission of coronavirus has provided many opportunities to do the research. “All schools, varsities, workplaces have been shut down to contain the spread of this novel virus. It was expected that the shutdown would impact the learning process to a great extent. But it is actually not the case. All thanks to technology.”

Role of Educational Institutions Response Measure for Reduction Of Stigma, Prejudice, Discrimination & Inequalities



Source: www.unsplash.com

The analysis for the role of educational institutions response measure for reduction of stigma, prejudice, discrimination & Inequalities is presented below in table 2:

Table 2: Role of educational institutions response measure for reduction of stigma, prejudice, discrimination & Inequalities

Sr.No.	Variables	Yes		No	
		F	%	F	%
1	Role in fighting against prejudices towards patients during pandemic	270	67.5	130	32.5
2	Role in tackling with social stigma emerged during pandemic	260	65	140	35
3	Role in preventing the occurrence of violence during pandemic	300	75	100	25
4	Role in stopping the expansion of rumors during pandemic	280	70	120	30
5	Role in supporting the equality & justice during and after pandemic	310	77.5	90	22.5

Source: Questionnaire

From the data given in table 2, it can be said that 67.5% of the respondents mentioned that role of educational institutions in fighting against prejudices towards patients during pandemic should be increased as during the present covid-19 pandemic it has been noticed that people who are having positive cases of coronavirus as treated as untouchables. They are

marginalized by the society in every regard. Not only are these, their families also treated harshly. This attitude need to be altered as the corona patients need care not the harassment. 65% respondents replied that role of educational institutions in tackling with social stigma emerged during pandemic should be enhanced as they can help in dealing with the various stigmas and can provide the possible alternatives to get rid of these stigmas. 75% respondents said that role of educational institutions in preventing the occurrence of violence during pandemic should be accelerated as during present crisis, the one cruel thing in the form of domestic violence has emerged not only in Haryana or India but in most of the part of the regions where lockdown was imposed due to transmission of coronavirus. 70% of the respondents replied that role of educational institutions in stopping the expansion of rumors during pandemic should be given preference as rumors can be hazardous for everyone. 77.5% respondents said that role of educational institutions in supporting the equality & justice during and after pandemic should be increased as these institutions can pave the way for enlighten that can help in bringing sense of equality and justice too.

On the basis of above analysis, it has been noticed that in India, present pandemic has opened the various dimensions in the field of educational responsibilities especially in the field of removal of social prejudices and stigmas. As Undoubtedly “India, along with the world, is fighting the COVID-19 virus while ensuring education in schools and colleges does not suffer. The fight, it seems, will be a long one, and the way we educate our next generation has undoubtedly changed.”ⁱ

CONCLUSION

Indeed, covid-19 has opened the broad gateway for doing research as till today scientist are trying to find the vaccination to cure their people from this pandemic. Educational institutions are trying to search for new prospects to provide quality education by virtual platform. Education is the best way to enlighten The education institutions in Haryana has exceptional role in ensuring the supremacy of this state The discussion highlighted that indeed, the educational institutions are playing effective and active role in pandemic preparedness by teaching students, organizing seminars, webinar, conferences and symposium at regular interval on the same for both faculty and students. Along with that educational institutions such as universities, colleges can also help in building response measure for minimizing the pre-defined misconceptions, prejudice and discriminatory ground existing in our society. As this area still need our attention.

These days, every educational institutions are organizing online or virtual seminar, conference, webinar, symposium, discussion, faculty development program, MOOCs and many others. Their main theme should be based on educational institution’s pandemic preparedness. For this, there is an urgent requirement on the part of educational institutions to realize their responsibilities toward society and its wellbeing. As, “We can't ignore that at this time of crisis effective educational practice is needed for the capacity-building of young minds. Central Government and State need to take some measures to ensure the overall progress in the country. Time never wait, this tough time will also pass. Till then stay safe, stay at home!”

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