

## COVID-19 PANDEMIC VERSES STUDENTS PROMOTION CRITERIA AT HIGHER EDUCATION LEVEL

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**Abstract-** The study was conducted to know about the “covid-19 pandemic verses students’ promotion criteria at higher education level”. The main objectives of the study were to obtain the perception / views of the students regarding promotion criteria. To find out whether the student’s promotion into the next classes on the basis of their previous year’s performance was up to their (students) satisfaction or did they have any reservations regarding this method. Another fact to find out was that whether this promotion method, considering their previous performance would affect their academic career, whether it bought negative or positive effect on their future academic progress. The population for this study comprised of one school. The total number of respondents were 30 of the school. In order to collect the relevant data a questionnaire consisting of 24 suitable and relevant questions to find out the perception of students regarding promotion based on three-point scale. The three-point scale options were yes, no, undecided. The developed questionnaire was collected back personally by the Researcher for data analysis, the response of students was tabulated through using simple percentage.

**Keywords:** covid-19, students, three-point scale

### I. INTRODUCTION

#### **Background of the study**

The name "coronavirus" is derived from Latin corona, meaning “crown” or “wreath”, itself a borrowing from Greek, “garland, wreath”. The name was coined by June Almeida and David Tyrrell who first observed and studied human corona viruses. The word was first used in print in 1968 by an informal group of virologists in the journal Nature to designate the new family of viruses. This morphology is created by the viral spike peplomers, which are proteins on the surface of the virus Corona viruses are a group of related RNA viruses that cause diseases in mammals and birds. In humans and birds, they cause respiratory tract infections that can range from mild to lethal. Mild illnesses in humans include some cases of the common cold (which is also caused by other viruses, predominantly rhinoviruses), while more lethal varieties can cause SARS, MERS, and COVID-19. In cows and pigs they cause diarrhea, while in mice they cause hepatitis and encephalomyelitis. Generally, there were no vaccines or antiviral drugs available for use against coronaviruses until the COVID-19 pandemic which broke out in late 2019 (Garazzino S, Montagnani C, Donà D, et al., 2020).

The international lockdown of educational organizations is going to reason main disruption in students’ education. The international effect of Covid-19 pandemic is complex and is clearly established in nearly all sectors, particularly the health, economic and education sectors. Since the statement of the disease as a pandemic in third month of 2020, there have been an excess of daily reports on its impact on the lives of millions across the world. It has been observed that every country want to reduce the effect of this pandemic with the help of using many fruitful techniques (Mukhtar 2020).

#### **What is a coronavirus? What is COVID-19?**

Covid-19 disease, which appeared in China in late 2019. Very frequent, they can cause a simple cold as well as a serious respiratory infection and now with Covid-19 (for Coronavirus Disease). COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the last coronavirus that was discovered. This new virus and this disease were unknown before the outbreak appeared in Wuhan (China) in December 2019. Coronaviruses, which owe their name to the crown shape of the proteins that coat them, are part of a large family of viruses, some of which infect different animals, others humans. They are likely to cause a wide range of diseases. For humans, these diseases begin with a simple cold to a severe lung infection, responsible for acute respiratory distress (Toussaint et al 2020).

In early December 2019, an outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), caused by a novel severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), occurred in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. On January 30, 2020 the World Health Organization declared the outbreak as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. As of February 14, 2020, 49,053 laboratory-confirmed and 1,381 deaths have been reported globally. Perceived risk of acquiring disease has led many governments to institute a variety of control measures. We conducted a literature review of publicly available information to summarize knowledge about the pathogen and the current epidemic. In this literature review, the causative agent, pathogenesis and immune responses, epidemiology, diagnosis, treatment and management of the disease, control and preventions strategies are all reviewed (Rodriguez-Morales, 2020).

The coronavirus disease 19 (COVID-19) is a highly transmittable and pathogenic viral infection caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), which emerged in Wuhan, China and spread around the world. Genomic analysis revealed that SARS-CoV-2 is phylogenetically related to severe acute respiratory syndrome-like (SARS-like) bat viruses, therefore bats could be the possible primary reservoir. The intermediate source of origin and transfer to humans is not known, however, the rapid human to human transfer has been confirmed widely. There is no clinically approved antiviral drug or vaccine available to be used against COVID-19. However, few broad-spectrum antiviral drugs have been evaluated against COVID-19 in clinical trials, resulted in clinical recovery. In the current review, we summarize and comparatively analyze the emergence and pathogenicity of COVID-19 infection and previous human coronaviruses severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus (SARS-CoV) and Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV). We also discuss the approaches for developing effective vaccines and therapeutic combinations to cope with this viral outbreak (Qiu et al, 2020).

### **The impact of COVID-19 at the national general education level**

According to UNESCO reports, more than 1.5 billion students in about 165 countries have been affected by the lockdown of institutions and campuses. As a result, institutions, colleges and universities were forced to shift in some way or another to online learning as a replacement for on-site delivery. Needless to say, the Sultanate of Oman is no exception. In response to the lockdown decision by the Supreme Committee, the Ministry announced other alternatives for public institutions (e.g. on-air lessons and some e-learning platforms) to keep the students in touch with the schooling process and continue their education from home. On the other hand, both the Private and International Institutions were able to shift to online schooling using various platforms such as Google Classrooms, Schoology, Seesaw, Blackboard and Moodle. However, due to the exponential increase in societal transmission of the virus, the Supreme Committee took further safety measures and decided to end the academic year for all students in public and private institutions, on 7 May 2020, and authorized the Ministry of Education to implement suitable assessment alternatives for students' transfer to higher levels from grades 1 to 12. Accordingly, the Ministry issued the following guidelines for all public and private institutions (Lu, 2020).

Grades one to eleven in government and private institutions (with exception of international institutions applying the international qualification program in grades 10–12) will be promoted to higher grades based on the results of students' performance before the lockdown (Oman News Agency, (2020). Nevertheless, low performing students will be provided with complementary program at the beginning of the next school year (Lima, 2020).

The Ministry of Education also devised alternative assessment and statistical measures to assure fair and accurate prediction of students' performance on the General Education Diploma and its equivalents, based on their performance in the first semester. The General Education Diploma or its equivalents were calculated in accordance with an approved statistical formula developed by a team of experts in measurement and evaluation from the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of higher Education and Sultan Qaboos University. The same formula applies to the students who are required to do a re-sit exam for the General Education Diploma or its equivalents. However, both Private and International institutions offering other international qualification program for grades 10–12 (e.g. IGCSE, IB, O-level, A-level, etc.) will have to implement the assessment methods endorsed by their respective accrediting institutions (Lee, 2020).

### **Statement of the problem**

The main purpose of the study was to find out the, "Covid-19 pandemic verses students promotion criteria at higher education level" with the help of perceptions.

## Research Objectives

Following were the objectives of the study

1. To ascertain the views of the students about their promotion during COVID-19 Pandemic.
2. To find out whether this criterion of promotion was up to their satisfaction.
3. To find out whether this criterion had the capacity to Judge the performance of the students.
4. To find out whether this system is capable enough to be used permanently in future.

## Significance of the study

The study may be significant due to following reasons

Through the teacher play a basic role in the assessment of his students' educational capabilities the most effective method of teaching in the class room where students and teachers are face to face. COVID-19 was totally new disease for the world. It effects all walks of life, the same way it created hurdles in the conventional educational system of teaching and conducting examination, therefore new system of on live classes at home was introduced were the student and teacher reminds in contact through internet and delivered / received lectures. It was probably a good idea in the present situation, through it had some problems also on non-availability of internet service in some parts of the country. The only option left for the same way; the previous year's performance of the students was made as creative for promotion to the next class which was a logical creative for promotion.

## Delimitations

This study was delimited to:

1. Only the school students were included in study.
2. Only students of one school girls were included in the study.
3. Only 30 students were including in the study.

**Research Methodology:** The current study was descriptively in nature. The descriptive study describes and interprets the conditions or relationships that exist, opinions that are held, process that are going on, effects that are evidence or trend that are developing. It is the preliminary concerned with the present, although it often considered part events and influences as they relate to current condition. All the formal higher education Dera Ismail khan city as constituted the population. The researcher was taken 330 students through convenient sampling technique due to COVID-19 pandemic situation. The researcher used convenient sampling technique to select the sample. The researcher personally visited the institutions and collected the data. Researcher collected the data through questionnaire and use percentage to analyze and to find the conclusion. Valid and reliable Questionnaire was used for this purpose, this questionnaire comprised of 22 questions which are related to the topic. After the collection of data, the researcher was analyzed data through tabulate and use simple percentage

## II. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

**Table #1: Were any online class conducted in COVID-19**

OPTIONS	Online class conducted in COVID-19			Total
	Yes	No	Undecided	
Real numbers	116	110	104	330
%age	54	33	13	100

Students with online session, about 55% students were agreed and on other hand 33% students were not agree, and 13% students were undecided or you can say confused.

**Table #2: Are you satisfied with your online classes?**

OPTIONS	Satisfaction with online classes			Total
	Yes	No	Undecided	
Real numbers	118	107	105	330
%age	60	24	16	100

Satisfaction in online class about 60 % students were satisfied / agreed and on other hand 24% students were not agreed, 16% students were undecided.

**Table #3: Were these online classes conducted on time?**

OPTIONS	Online classes conducted on time			Total
	Yes	No	Undecided	
Real numbers	116	110	104	330
%age	50	34	16	100

Regarding online classes 50% students were agreed and 34% students were not agreed, on other hand 16% students were undecided.

**Table #4. Did every teacher takes online class regularly?**

OPTIONS	Classes taken regularly			Total
	Yes	No	Undecided	
Real numbers	118	109	103	330
%age	60	30	10	100

Regarding regular class by staff, 60% students were agreed, 30% students were disagreed, they don't agree with teachers/ staff attendance on regular base where 10 % students were undecided, they were confused.

**Table #5: Were you satisfied with teachers' method of teaching in online classes?**

OPTIONS	Satisfied with method of teaching			Total
	Yes	No	Undecided	
Real numbers	116	112	102	330
%age	53	40	07	100

Regarding with method of teaching, 53% students were agreed / satisfied with methodology, on other hand 40% students were not agreed and 7% students were undecided or you can say they were not sure.

**Table #6: Do online classes takes more time than regular classes?**

OPTIONS	Online class takes more time than regular classes			Total
	Yes	No	Undecided	
Real numbers	115	114	101	330
%age	50	46	04	100

Regarding online classes vs regular classes, about 50% students were agreed, 46 % students were not agreed and 4 % remains undecided.

**Table #7: Did you takes online classes regularly in COVID-19?**

OPTIONS	Online class was taken regularly			Total
	Yes	No	Undecided	
Real numbers	113	115	102	330
%age	43	50	07	100

Regarding online class regularly 43 % students agreed that they took classes regularly, 50 % students were not agreed and 7% students were remains undecided.

**Table#8 Was you concept clear enough in online classes?**

OPTIONS	Concept was clear in online classes			Total
	Yes	No	Undecided	
Real numbers	114	111	105	330
%age	46	37	17	100

Regarding concept clear in online sessions in which 46% students were agreed and 37% students were not agreed, as well as 17% students were undecided.

**Table #9: Did your teacher responded to your questions asked during online classes?**

OPTIONS	Teacher Response to your questions in online classes			Total
	Yes	No	Undecided	
Real numbers	107	113	110	330
%age	23	43	34	100

Response to question during online session, about 23% students were agreed with response to question, 43 % students were disagreed and 34% students were undecided.

**Table #10: Were you satisfied with your Teacher's answer to your question?**

OPTIONS	Satisfied with teachers answer			Total
	Yes	No	Undecided	
Real numbers	122	103	105	330
%age	74	10	16	100

According to consecutive online classes 74% students were agreed and 10% students were not agreed, 16% students were not satisfied / undecided.

**Table # 4.11: Were you satisfied with consecutive online classes?**

OPTIONS	Satisfaction with online classes			Total
	Yes	No	Undecided	
Real numbers	116	110	104	330
%age	54	33	13	100

Regarding to consecutive classes 54% students were agreed and 33% students were not agreed with consecutive classes and 13 % students were undecided.

**Table #12: Were you allowed relaxation time during online classes?**

OPTIONS	Relaxation time during online classes			Total
	Yes	No	Undecided	
Real numbers	111	117	102	330
%age	36	57	07	100

Regarding relaxation time in online sessions in which 36% students were agreed that they were allowed relaxation time during online classes and 57% students were not agreed with the opinion and 7% students were undecided or you can say confused.

**Table #13 Do you have internet facility at your home?**

OPTIONS	Internet facility at home			Total
	Yes	No	Undecided	
Real numbers	119	103	108	330
%age	63	11	26	100

According to internet facility at home 63% students were agreed that they have the facility while on other hand 11% students were disagreed and remaining 26% students were undecided.

**Table #14: Did you feel connectivity problem during your online sessions?**

OPTIONS	Connectivity problem in online classes			Total
	Yes	No	Undecided	
Real numbers	119	108	103	330
%age	64	26	10	100

Regarding connectivity problem in online session 64% students were agreed and 26% were not agreed to this statement, 10% were undecided Or they were not sure whether they felt it or not.

**Table #15: Are you happy with your promotion as per your online classes?**

OPTIONS	Happy with promotion on bases of online classes			Total
	Yes	No	Undecided	
Real numbers	111	117	102	330
%age	36	57	7	100

According to promotion 36 % students were agreed to these criteria while on other hand 57% students were not agreed to this and only 7% students remained undecided.

**Table # 4.16: Are you in favor of the online system of teaching instead of conventional method of teaching in the class?**

OPTIONS	Satisfied with online teaching method instead of conventional method			Total
	Yes	No	Undecided	
Real numbers	113	115	102	330
%age	43	50	07	100

According to this 43% students were agreed and 50% students were not agreed to this method, while 7% students remained undecided.

**Table #17: Are you satisfied with promotion criteria on bases of online classes?**

OPTIONS	Satisfied / happy with promotion criteria based on online classes			Total
	Yes	No	Undecided	
Real numbers	116	110	104	330
%age	54	33	13	100

According to promotion criteria 54% students were agreed to it and 33% students were not agreed, on other hand 13% students remained undecided.

**Table #18: Do you agree with the principle of special/ re-exam in case one is not satisfied with marks?**

OPTIONS	Principle of special re exams for unsatisfied students			Total
	Yes	No	Undecided	
Real numbers	119	108	103	330
%age	64	26	10	100

According to the principle of re-exam about 64% students were agreed and 26% students were disagreed to it on other hand 10% students remained undecided.

**Table #19: Do you think you lost the chance of competition due to this system of promotion?**

OPTIONS	Lost the chance of competition due this promotion			Total
	Yes	No	Undecided	
Real numbers	111	117	102	330
%age	36	57	07	100

According to loss the chance of competition 36% students were agreed and 57% students were disagreed on other hand 07% remained undecided.

**Table #20: Are you satisfied with passing marks given to fail students?**

OPTIONS	Satisfied with marks given to fail students			Total
	Yes	No	Undecided	
Real numbers	116	110	104	330
%age	54	33	13	100

According to marks given to fail one's in which 54% students were agreed and 33% students were not agreed on other hand 13% students remained undecided.

**Table #21: Do you think that brilliant / toppers should have been given additional marks in recognition of their previous year's performance for fair competition?**

OPTIONS	Additional marks to toppers			Total
	Yes	No	Undecided	
Real numbers	111	117	102	330
%age	36	57	07	100

According to situation in which additional marks given to toppers, about 36% students agreed to it and 57% disagree to these criteria while on other hand 7% remained undecided.

### III. FINDINGS

Following were the findings of the study

1. Students with online session, about 55% students were agreed and on other hand 33% student were not agree, and 13% students were undecided or you can say confused.
2. Satisfaction in online class about 60 % students were satisfied / agreed and on other hand 24% students were not agreed, 16% students were undecided.
3. Regarding regular class by staff, 60% students were agreed, 30% students were disagreed, they don't agree with teachers/ staff attendance on regular base where 10 % students were undecided, they were confused
4. Regarding with method of teaching, 53% students were agreed / satisfied with methodology, on other hand 40% students were not agreed and 7% students were undecided or you can say they were not sure.
5. Regarding online classes vs regular classes, about 50% students were agreed, 46 % students were not agreed and 4 % remains undecided.
6. Regarding concept clear in online sessions in which 46% students were agreed and 37% students were not agreed, as well as 17% students were undecided.
7. According to consecutive online classes 74% students were agreed and 10% students were not agreed, 16% students were not satisfied / undecided.
8. Regarding relaxation time in online sessions in which 36% students were agreed that they were allowed relaxation time during online classes and 57% students were not agreed with the opinion and 7% students were undecided or you can say confused.
9. According to internet facility at home 63% students were agreed that they have the facility while on other hand 11% students were disagreed and remaining 26% students were undecided.
10. According to promotion criteria 54% students were agreed to it and 33% students were not agreed, on other hand 13% students remained undecided.
11. According to the principle of re-exam about 64% students were agreed and 26% students were disagreed to it on other hand 10% students remained undecided.
12. According to loss the chance of competition 36% students were agreed and 57% students were disagreed on other hand 07% remained undecided.
13. According to marks given to fail one's in which 54% students were agreed and 33% students were not agreed on other hand 13% students remained undecided.
14. According to situation in which additional marks given to toppers, about 36% students agreed to it and 57% disagree to these criteria while on other hand 7% remained undecided
15. Regarding connectivity problem in online session 64% students were agreed and 26% were not agreed to this statement, 10% were undecided or they were not sure whether they felt it or not.
16. According to this 43% students were agreed and 50% students were not agreed to this method, while 7% students remained undecided
17. According to promotion criteria 54% students were agreed to it and 33% students were not agreed, on other hand 13% students remained undecided
18. According to the principle of re-exam about 64% students were agreed and 26% students were disagreed to it on other hand 10% students remained undecided
19. According to loss the chance of competition 36% students were agreed and 57% students were disagreed on other hand 07% remained undecided.
20. According to marks given to failed one's in which 54% students were agreed and 33% students were not agreed on other hand 13% students remained undecided
21. According to situation in which additional marks given to toppers, about 36% students agreed to it and 57% disagree to these criteria while on other hand 7% remained undecided

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

From the data analysis and finding of the study it was observed that this promotion criteria was only suitable for pandemic situation and only one time experienced because brilliant students were not satisfied due to the loss of chance of competition on the other hand average students were satisfied. The remaining failed students did not get the chance to improve their position due to passing marks criteria.

#### V. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is suggested that in future if such type of pandemic situation arise again, more better methods should be adopted and student shall be given a chance to appear in the examination in person, in order to improve their position. It is further suggested that the government for the future should adopt such type of online/physical examination system for the students, which will dissolve the complaint of the students not getting satisfactory marks.

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