

Access to Higher Education During Covid-19: Challenges and Key Success Factors

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Abstract : Purpose: Globally, the pandemic of COVID -19 has created a massive distraction for educational reforms influencing learning options, education access, and outcomes of students in more than 190 countries which has carved marks in history. To explore the challenges and complications confronted by students and faculty members while ensuring access to online education, qualitative research was conducted. Methodology: For this purpose, a series of focus group discussions were conducted in different regions of Pakistan, which revealed interesting findings shared by Panelists, which include Vice-Chancellors, Rectors, and Deans of different private and public sector universities of Pakistan. The qualitative research aims to explore the challenges and success factors of online educations by students with diverse backgrounds of higher education institutions to maximize student educational outcomes. Findings: The findings revealed several challenges and opportunities when it comes to online education for students of higher education institutions. Simultaneously, the researchers discovered the key success factors necessary for online education. Lastly, the paper presents the research limitations and future research recommendations to streamline online education in a better way ensuring the students' success. Originality: The pandemic has forced the closure of social, business, and educational activities, which has drastically influence the quality of education with its subsequent impact on the economy. In response, numerous universities across the globe are forced to suspend their educational activities by closing the universities. Though online education has been adopted worldwide by the universities, which brought numerous issues for academia, particularly for underdeveloped countries, and Pakistani higher education reforms are no exception to this.

Keywords : online education, higher education institutions, COVID-19, challenges, key success factors

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