Covid-19, the Challenges and Opportunities of Educational Systems in the World

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Abstract

Dear Editor-in-Chief,

The Covid-19 pandemic is the biggest challenge facing global education systems so far. It is evident that the phenomenon of the Covid-19 pandemic is a major crisis in global health and has led to fundamental changes in human behavior on a large scale (1, 2). In this regard, the education sector has been one of the most vulnerable sectors (3, 4). To deal with the consequences of the closure of educational centers and the cessation of educational processes, learners and teachers were forced to use various forms of online education (5-7). With the onset of the Covid-19 crisis, many countries have closed their schools and higher education institutions to allow nearly half a billion students to continue their education remotely. Moreover, the continuation of this process and the subsequent challenges draw an unknown prospect for the global education system (8). The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) estimates that 89% of students are now facing school closures worldwide, which will have profound impacts on the future of the education system of Iran (7). In addition to the closure of university classrooms, exams, conferences and other public events have been canceled, leaving the next academic year and the admission of new students to universities in a state of ambiguity.

Key Words: COVID-19, Learning, Medical Student, Professors, Online Teaching.

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The closure of schools and universities may have unforeseen social consequences beyond educational issues. The impacts of COVID-19 are evident in many families. Childcare has become a challenge for dual income families in which at least one parent has to stay home. Many children in poor countries need free food provided by schools and will be exposed to malnutrition if the school closure is continued (9).

Many families do not have the facilities and skills to educate their children at home. Moreover, many families suffer from "digital inequality", which means a lack of access to the internet and computers (10). In the United Kingdom, the United States, and a number of European countries, universities are financially dependent on the income from the foreign student tuition fees. The outlook for the coming school year is now ambiguous and it is not clear when education will resume. Also, international students do not feel safe about their health. Consequently, this has led to a major financial crisis for universities and private schools. Other private classes are also in crisis on a global scale. Teachers of private classes, ranging from music and sports to tutoring, have lost their students and, subsequently, their source of income. Due to economic pressures and austerity, most extracurricular sports and arts activities are now closed. The only remaining activity that could fill the teenagers' time was the normal school hours, which are also lost due to the pandemic and quarantine. These societies now face a large number of idle adolescents who have no space for education, recreation, entertainment, and sports. Working women now have to take on the responsibility of teaching children in addition to all their housework and their online job. Continuation of this situation will create a serious crisis in the lifestyle of contemporary families (11-14). However, these are only one side of the problem. Although COVID-19 has caused many problems for families (15, 16), students, university students, and societies, significant achievements in this period have been achieved, experienced, and can be useful in the future. Despite the problems and crises associated with distance education, it is still too soon to judge. Overall, online teaching can transform the identity and meaning of inter-personal relationships. Although spending a lot of time with parents at home may be challenging at first, it will, in the long run, develop a new form of family that can have a positive achievement (14, 17). The widespread use of the Internet for educational purposes can make it an essential necessity for individuals. As Amazon was able to replace many small businesses, a similar phenomenon is expected to happen to schools and face-to-

face education by large technology companies. Governments are also likely to have no objection against such a process because of the reduction in public education expenses, which they are likely to even encourage. In the meantime, a form of educational integration at the international level is also expected. Moreover, political boundaries will become stricter and stronger at the same time. Therefore, the concept of continuing education abroad and the phenomenon of foreign study will undergo substantial changes and the results will inevitably appear in the economy (17-19). However, although the atmosphere of the global education system will fundamentally change, it is still too early to understand its dimensions.

CONCLUSION

With regard to the COVID-19 pandemic, online teaching has provided access to education for many students during the epidemic, and this access rate will undoubtedly increase in the coming years (20). Online teaching is therefore one of the best ways of education as it has been growing for years and provides new opportunities for teachers, students, professors, educational planners, and educational institutions (20). However, it should also be noted that online teaching has created problems for teachers, professors and educational centers, including unfamiliarity with new technology and unknown challenges (21-24). In the post-corona era, it is necessary to turn problems into opportunities with careful planning, looking at educational problems from a new perspective, and finally, starting a new chapter in education, while taking into account the principle of education for everyone, everywhere, and with any facilities.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: None.

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