

## IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON COLLEGE GOING STUDENT'S SOCIALIZATION PROCESS: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY

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### **Abstract:**

COVID-19 pandemic influenced all walks of life; the higher education sector is not an exception. Since WHO declared COVID-19 as a pandemic in March 2020, lockdown, social distancing, work from home, and online classes became part of life. Distance education replaced regular face-to-face classes; higher education institutions (HEI) rely heavily on a distance learning model to continue offering their programs. HEI invested heavily in IT infrastructure, trained staff and students, and moved their different activities online, including teaching and assessment. The shift, however, caused several concerns for students and staff. A few recent researches have explored the challenges encountered by students during the pandemic. However, all these studies suggested the need for further studies on students' responses towards online learning and their concerns. Distance Education (DE) includes all study methods and all levels of education that does not enjoy direct and continuous supervision by teachers attending with their students in traditional classrooms. Still, the education process is subject to planning, organization and directed by an educational institution and teachers distance learning experiments with synchronous or asynchronous environments using different devices such as mobile phones, tablets, or laptops. Participants interact with their teachers and share their ideas with colleagues remotely. It offers many benefits, for instance, flexibility. Besides, the course contents are accessible to students anytime. DE is not costly as it saves the costs of establishing

new classrooms and saves electricity, water, and others. However, a low level of motivation, feelings of isolation, and loneliness are some of the challenges affecting DE's effectiveness. The current coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is having a profound impact, not only on people's health, but also on how they learn, work and live. Among the most important challenges created by COVID-19 is how to adapt a system of education built around physical schools. At its peak, more than 188 countries, encompassing around 91% of enrolled learners worldwide, closed their schools, colleges to try to contain the spread of the virus. The present paper would like to explore how college going students faced the challenges toward interdependences, Interdependence in College, Benefits of Social Interaction in College, Form Deep and Lasting Relationships, Develop Good Study Habits, Develop Good Study Habits, minimize stress, share interests, and develop social skill, communication strategies for effective interactions.

### **Key words:**

Socialization Process, COVID-19 Pandemic

### **Objectives:**

- To know the impact of socialization process during among college going students

### **Research Methodology:**

The present paper is based on secondary data, Journals, discussion with experts and literature

### **Introduction:**

The school and colleges are the second agency of socialization. In the school the child gets his education which moulds his ideas and attitudes.

A good education can make the child a good citizen, while a bad education can turn him into a criminal. Education is of great importance in socialization. A well-planned system of education can produce socialized persons.

The playmates and friends also are an important agency of socialization. The relation between the child and his playmate is one of equality. It is based on co-operation and mutual understanding's. They are mostly of similar age. As told above the child acquires something from his friends and playmates which he cannot acquire from parents. From them he acquires cooperative morality and some of the informal aspects of culture like fashions, fads, crazes, modes of gratification and forbidden knowledge.

#### **Socialization process of College going students and Pandemic:**

Socialization is the process through which people are taught to be proficient members of society. It describes how people come to understand societal norms and expectations, accept society's beliefs, and are aware of societal values. Socialization is not the same as socializing (interacting with others, like family, friends, and co-workers) the COVID-19 era, while we are encouraged to be physically far away from each other, social and scientific networking is needed more than ever. The dire consequences of social distancing can be diminished by social networking. Social media, a quintessential component of social networking, facilitates the dissemination of reliable information and fighting against misinformation by health authorities. Distance learning, telemedicine, and telehealth are among the most prominent applications of networking during this pandemic. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic highlights the importance of collaborative scientific efforts.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, my socialization skills kind improved even with the restrictions to meeting people face to face. As I

used apps like Omegle I was able to talk with new people across the world. It has been a rollercoaster ride with emotions because it was only me at the end of the day that had to take care of myself (although my parents were around n touch would none of us test positive)... However, it was devastating to see the news about the death of so many loved ones. Henceforth it was post-COVID was extremely difficult. COVID 19 while having its paralytic blow did inculcate a whole new area of socialization for me. Getting in contact with a lot of NGOs, and organizations including the NGOs gave me a whole new context. I had a new experience and a lot of interesting conversations with people from all around the country who were going through the pandemic, each with their perspective. Socialization wasn't limited for me and neither was interaction as I was around outside during the lockdown assisting various organizations in various aspects. COVID has affected us in such a way that we were uncomfortable doing the things that we used to do in our daily life before it happened. People lost a sense of touch and became more virtually connected.

When we went back to the traditional ways of communication it took a little time. The social life of all the generations was affected heavily as we are kind of accustomed to being very far-off people. That case seems to return to normal as time passes and people get back to their daily chores, office, schools, and many other things. I believe that after COVID people realized the value of interacting and socializing with others and because of such realization they tend to get closer to the people they value and admire. More gathering has been increased. Now people are more aware of various ways through which they can have got to gather for example people are now indulging in online meetings and interactive sessions online which shorten the distance between people. COVID 19 affects my socialization a lot as I was able to meet a lot

of people to talk with on a platform called discord... Meet people from different countries, and shared our thoughts about our common topic. After COVID 19 socializing with people were hard as it we weren't able to know how to get start a conversation and it was awkward. People who met on online platforms got busy with their life but still are in touch. In offline people are hard to ignore a lot. Socialization was affected mainly due to social distancing emphasized by who and the state. It made people you distance themselves physically and mentally.

1. COVID (Dis) connected people with others.

This means that virtually we are connected to others, but physically disconnected by social distancing. The physical enjoyment of gathering and celebration was broken. This has made people prone to psychological disorders. A huge number of cases of disorders popping after the pandemic is an example. This made already prone people to trigger the disorder.

2. As humans, we need support, attention, and care from others. While social distancing happens, the daily routine of jogging, chatting, and peers interaction was stopped suddenly. This made people to a feeling of boredom to anxious sitting at home for a long.

3. Children lost peer interaction which is crucial for the development of emotional development. They learn emotions from interaction with others. Also, they felt isolated from their parents working at home. This made them feel a sense of connection and emotional loneliness. This may even lead to Fomo- fear of missing out - to social anxiety or even suicidal thoughts.

For adults, they lost connection with colleagues. Tea time and fun chat. Virtual communication had limits.

Old age, people or elders were the most affected. Their freedom of movement was affected. They only enjoy taking a walk or meeting their people on street and chatting with them. The sudden presence of the family at home only increased their isolation with grandchildren having online classes and children working from home with hectic schedules or feeling fear of the bleak future of their job. Two ways socialization was affected- were disconnected individuals that made sense of a lack of connection and emotional loneliness to an extent.

And our freedom of movement which includes seeing others and waking simply was affected. During COVID 19 my socialization ability has decreased. I find it difficult to have conversations with new people. I tried to take initiative and talk to people but I started to stutter. Also, my social battery gets drained so fast by the end of the day that I feel like not talking to people and just feel like being in my comfort zone alone. Life before covid-19 and life after covid-19 is a complete mess. People might view it as technological development but some factors have affected socialization a lot. Moments that should be celebrated with happiness, smiles and joy completed got overshadowed with just sending greetings, emoji's and videos. This creates a problem for the future generations as they would face problems in real life and in socializing with people such as communication problems, lack of confidence and also just sticking away from the stage. Everything is one click way and no one even have to step out of their comfort zones, which might appear as a boon but in reality stepping out for basic needs might also be cost efficient and better quality type. To conclude, socializing is an important element for any person to know the world and learn from it. People might be masked, but world isn't.

What missed by college going students during pandemic? Be Proactive in college: While preparing for your future and choosing a meaningful career are usually the main reasons people attend college, it's also important to have a social life. You can't -- and shouldn't -- spend all your time behind your books. In fact, students who successfully integrate social activities into their lives usually have an easier time with academics, according to the University of New South Wales.

**Stress Relief:**

Stress relief is one of the key benefits of having an active social life. College can be one of the most stressful times of your life, with worrying about the future, cramming for exams, completing assignments on time and making sure that you achieve the best grades possible. Everyone needs to let loose and unwind from time to time. Too much stress can result in feelings of anxiety or irritability, decreased quality of sleep and other troublesome symptoms. Socialization helps create a sense of belonging, promotes feelings of connectedness and alleviates loneliness..

**Study Partner:**

Befriending your fellow classmates doesn't just make your classes more enjoyable; it might actually help improve your grades. It's often easier for some people to study in groups, so having social contacts who share your classes can make it easier to form study groups. Working with your peers might help you grasp the material more deeply, help you take better notes and increase your motivation, according to the University of Michigan. You can also enlist the help of your classmates if you miss a class and need to borrow notes or catch up on assignments.

**Lifelong Friendships:**

During college, many people form some of their most meaningful, long-lasting friendships. Friends who have stuck with you through the thick and thin of college life might be some of

the best friends you'll ever make. And there's nothing like being able to call up an old friend to reminisce about the good times you shared in college. According to a Purdue University study, having a shared history, like attending college together, can help establish the bonds for strong lifelong friendships. This is especially important since it can be harder to make meaningful connections during adulthood due to increased geographical and personal distance and the influence of technology and the media.

**Improved Physical Health:**

You might be surprised to learn that socialization can also result in some significant benefits to your physical health. During college, many people unknowingly cut back on taking care of their health by sleeping too much or too little, eating more unhealthy foods, increasing their alcohol intake and reducing their daily physical activity. While socialization isn't necessarily a cure for poor lifestyle habits, it may help you feel better in the long run. According to Value Options, people with strong social ties tend to experience reduced blood pressure, fewer colds and lower heart rates than their less-social counterparts.

**Conclusion:**

In the unique setting of a college campus, students are exposed to, live with, and befriend people from different regions, with different customs and worldviews. Ideally, this experience teaches them how to interact with other members of society after graduation. In short, it transforms these very different individuals into a unique class. Going to college also thrusts most students into a new world of independence, characterized by a constant flurry of adult decisions and responsibilities. For the first time in many of their lives, students must set their own schedules, manage their own finances, and learn how to navigate relationships without the comfort of being under their parents' roof.

They are given a test run of their adult life. Students are in an environment that challenges them to make important decisions every day.” And those decisions and challenges are not confined solely to their academic pursuits. Residential and liberal arts colleges are as much an academic experience as they are a social one. While the process of socialization could be achieved elsewhere—in one’s job or active participation in one’s community—it certainly could not occur via distance learning. The nature of distance learning hampers the students’ ability to socialize, limiting everything from spontaneous, casual conversation with professors to opportunities to forge lasting relationships with other students.

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