

Challenges of Online Education during the Crisis of COVID - 19 edited by Dr. Udayan Mandal and Mr. Ujjwal Mahato Published by New Delhi Publishers, New Delhi.

#### © Publisher

Edition: August, 2021

ISBN: 978-93-91012-13-7

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### **NEW DELHI PUBLISHERS**

Head Office: 90, Sainik Vihar, Mohan Garden, New Delhi - 110 059

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Branch Office: 216, Flat-GC, Green Park, Narendrapur,

Kolkata - 700103

Tel: 011-23256188, 011-45130562, 9971676330, 9582248909

E-Mail: ndpublishers@rediffmail.com/gmail.com

Website: www.ndpublisher.in

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# Online Education and the Digital Divide in India

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Abstract: A democratic society, committing itself to the welfare of the citizens, necessitates the guarantees of certain rights. These rights, either negative in scope forbid unnecessary hindrances in the life choices of an individual or guarantee certain positive emoluments towards bettering of the same. Education is considered as one of the fundamental necessities of mankind. Recognizing the importance of education both at the level of individual growth and community progress, and the dismal state of elementary education in India, the Indian state guaranteed the Right to Education as a fundamental right in 2002 (Art. 21-A) via the Eighty Sixth Constitutional Amendment Act. While all rights are important, fundamental rights do have a special significance as the Indian state itself becomes the guarantor of such rights. The COVID -19 pandemic came as a rude jolt to everyone particularly the administrators and not excluding those entrusted to educate the populace. As education must go on, the modern India, imagining herself as a digital bigwig in information technology soon opted for online teaching. However, has this online method of teaching reached everyone, particularly those leaving in the remotest corners of the country? Or has it, in the wake of a neo-liberal India, got increasingly commoditized and thus failed to benefit the greater sections of the society? This is what this paper seeks to find out.

Keywords: Digital Divide, Education, Pandemic, Lockdown, Welfare.

## Introduction

No matter how much a state plans for exigencies, there comes situations against which immediate and, if need be, unprecedented actions become necessary. Despite making great inroads in futuristic technological developments and applying the same in all walks of life as far as possible, nature, at times, still appears to be triumphant over human expeditions. The ongoing global pandemic could be