

The Impact of COVID-19 on the Job Market (With Specific Reference to the Online Job Sector)

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Abstract: *The paper focuses on the skill segment and its impact on the youth during the lockdown period of Corona Virus Pandemic. The Academic sector and its alignment to the online platform is specially studied and the dynamics of the global lockdown on this sector with its positive and negative impact has been studied. As the paper has been drafted during the COVID-19 lockdown phase the language of the researcher would vary as per the global sentiments drifting from deep pessimism to highly optimistic approach. The study also takes into consideration the impact of the lockdown on the global environment and its relevance for the generations to come. No doubt the immediate infected toll for COVID-19 is vast (more than 1 million in United States) and has spread to most developed countries, it would be more practical to study the real impact of the pandemic in the coming months, where the economy has to struggle and restructure itself after a major setback. The study highlights a section as Silver lining which looks upon the positive aspect in terms of Jobs and new explored online platform for interacting to performing of various arts and skills.*

Keywords: COVID-19, Corona Virus, Skill training, Employment, Online platform, Jobs, Retrenchment, Government

1. Academics and Skill training

The study has been an elaborate medium to explore the possibilities and probe upon the results of the extensive investment and the all out efforts of the state, central government, concern agencies like NSDC, DGET, UGC, AICTE, ITI's (both private and public), other training partners and scores of the agencies and organizations involved in the skill sector. Not to forget the important role played by the Sector Skill Councils across various trades, ranging from beauty sector to the automobile, from retail to the computer sector. The host of activities has been coordinated and synchronized to a great extent by the Skill ministry. The scenario had no doubt drastically changed after the establishment of a dedicated ministry of Skill development by the Central Government. The 3S (Skill, Speed & Scale) has been the driving force and has been the war cry for the inception of the great task ahead that our prime minister Mr. Narendra Modi, (in his website, www.narendramodi.in last update 07-May-2020) had given the nation and the agencies that had been involved in the formulation of the strategies and were identified to shoulder the responsibility to sphere head the skill mission. India has been in a long pursuit of the objective of training its youth for skill enhancement and make them ready to face the global challenges being thrown by the globalization of the business world, thus throwing great job opportunities for the skill ready youth. Indian job market has been long raising the slogan for a need of skilled and trained person instead of a naïve youth with a literary degree and no exposure to the technical skills whatsoever. Our education system needed a thorough cleansing so as to realize that orthodox education that had long lost its motive was the gift of English education system that needed more and more clerks and office workers to enhance the mode of rule that they had been implementing on us.

Orthodox system v/s Current trends

The moment we realize that the need of the hour is not only the orthodox system of education but it is the most important time to incorporate the skill training into the regular system of education. It is the technical skills that would ensure a sustainable employment to the student and not just the theoretical education that the students are mugging into their heads. The community college concept was incorporated long back into the education system of the west but our education sector or the intellectuals governing the segment were far too involved into the trivial aspect of education then to realize the fact that the global scenario is changing fast and if we does not respond to the globalization factor we would be left far behind in this race of sustainable employment to our youth. In his article "Factors affecting the education system of India", (*Jasdeep Singh, March 2020*) different factors that are impacting the education system in India are elaborated. After the detail study of the skill sector and myself spending almost half of my working academic career of 30 years into skill sector, I could possibly be the right person to claim that the success or failure of skill industry depends on how well we are able to perceive the future trend and align the skill industry with the dynamics of business that are changing on a day to day basis.

Take the example of work from home which was a far cry a few years ago, or may be a few months back we have heard less of working from home, online work, but the global trends the new in thing is work from home. We need to get the work done, without making much fuss on the setups and work areas, reporting time and offices. The advent of high speed net has made a distance dream possible but the important question to ask is that is our society ready for such a drastic change, are we ready to cope up with the new dynamics of globalization and business. More important or so is to ask that is our youth ready for such a drastic change of mindset and is he prepared in terms of technical skills and resources to cope up with the new dynamics of business opportunities that have entered the society from the

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economic front and is ready to take the Indian orthodox education and learning system by the horns. Are we as the academicians, industrialists, politicians who are the policy makers and architects of the road of progress for the future generation to follow ready for such an advent of opportunities or are we still leaning on the same age old formula of Victorian norms that had been forces upon us as slaves to the British empire. The same may be valid or sustainable in those times but is the same picture applicable to us at the turn of the century. Are we to follow the same syllabus from the year 1920 that was decided by the education fraternity who in their wildest imagination may have not thought about the progress and orientation of the modern life, youth and the opportunities that the change in technology would bring? Are we changing as fast as the situation, the technology, and the opportunities or are we still waiting for things to happen and then respond accordingly. The analysis of the sample data has brought forward several issues that are staring on our face to be addressed. Is the schemes that the government launching for the good of the youth in being skilled reaching to them at the grass root level or is it still the middlemen on whom our system depends to certain extent setting up the per student rate to jeopardize and compromise on the entire scheme, thus changing the system to just a report generating and data creating system.

Skill market v/s Labor market

One thing needs to be understood that skill training or technical knowledge until and unless converted into a sustainable employment facet, would be worthless and would do no good to the trainee or to the industry for which it was meant to be. Until the skill segment works in a close pattern with the employment industry, it would be lacking the final punch that would decide upon its fate as success or failure. Analyzing the sample data had made things very clear that most of the participants attach the success of the skill enhancement training program to the relevant advantage in the job scenario or the placement assistance that it provides thereafter. No doubt many participants while being in the formal education are more inclined towards the completion of the degree or the diploma in which they are involved into, cause apart from the formal education degree it is more of a social stigma that they need to fulfill by either being a school pass out or a graduate or a post graduate. Just a handful of the participants have been into skill training exclusively for the same of learning a skill or their interest in the skill that is being imparted. The ministry and all the dedicated department with the skill industry needs this clarity that until the skill training sector is linked to the relevant industry that may be the recipient of the skilled labour, the skill training would not fulfill its desired goal. The responsible people making skill policy should focus all their energies and resources into setting up the liasoning between the unorganized job market and the skill training segment. Not all the skilled labour can be absorbed in the organized sector. Opportunities should be exploited in the core job market, which comprises of mostly the unorganized job sector.

The World Economic Forum (Jian Lu, *www.weforum.org*, 05th Jul 2019) Jian Lu states that Skill is the new Currency of the labor market, stated with reference of China but true

globally. The Government at this juncture has to realize the potential of youth in the country and the talent that the basic education system has already provided to the industries and the job market. The youngsters once out of school and colleges needs exclusive tracking in terms of the future prospect when contributing to the family or the society. Career counseling has to be an integral part of the school curriculum in the higher education system. The students or the skill trainees for that matter needs to be trained and updated regarding the skill set they need to be expert in and the probable job opportunities that would be presented if they complete the learning process into that skill set. Not only the students need to be informed at the school level regarding the necessary subject that they need to pursue if they wish to excel in certain sector or segment. The main challenge before the government is that they need to closely coordinate between the various agencies that form an integral circle to complete the Skill segment and truly make it a success venture. The globalization again plays an important role in the success of the skill segment as the business is truly dynamic these days. Just take an example of the work from home segment. This was virtually unheard of in the Indian pretext, as we have been programmed to follow the routines of going to the work place and working from the office or industry or site for that matter. This segment has taken the Indian industry by storm. As these days we are facing a lockdown due to COVID-19 threat, the entire world is virtually locked indoors and boom, here we have a segment that is booming at the expense of everyone and all the students especially locked in their homes. Learn from home or in for the job aspirants it is teach from home. Several new startups had been launched which promote the learning platform from home. The parents are also taking a great deal of interest in joining the online learning platforms through real time video tutorials as the students are studying in front of their eyes and they can supervise the studies and the schedule of the students by themselves. All the major coaching classes and even the traditional academic schools and colleges have shifted their focus towards the new online learning platform through audio and video conferencing. The New flashing speed of internet upto 1 GBPS (some cases even more) has proved to be a boon, a blessing that the online platform had bestowed upon. Several companies such as Whitehat etc, are providing the young graduates and even graduation undergoing students with great opportunities to earn from home and even work in the flexi mode of 24 x 7. The platform have generated international clientele and greatly benefitting by the current situation that the globe is facing at this point of time (Mar-Apr – 2020)

These factors were far from our imagination and would have constituted a nice fiction story a few years back, maybe a decade back when we use to admire the speed of the net if we could download an email without interruption. The cyber world had truly revolutionized the job market and this is where the skill training dynamics need to be at place to cater the demand that has arisen due to the current global medical emergency. Another important point has been highlighted in this testing time (or opportunity for online platform agencies) that the world is one, the term globalization or a global village had been in use for more than a decade but now it has been proved that if the world is one, the problems that the globe face is also but one and so are the

opportunities. The skill market needs to be dynamic in nature so as to realize the changing scenario and react to the demand of the market with great speed. The major challenge that we as the skill trainers and the policy makers are facing that after formulating one set of rules and policy in the skill market, we cannot sit at ease because the wave of change is surely to sweep away all the home work and would surely present with new challenges and opportunities all rolled into one. The fact that business related to the online forum had threatened the physical brick and mortar business is of no doubt, but then another segment that is far away from the online segment has promoted as being the client of the physical business. Even after such propaganda and funfare, the humble kirana store that operates in the neighborhood is still doing a roaring business. This difference that is being faced by the skill market needs to be closely monitored and analyzed and the skill segment should react to the same at a great speed so that the youth and skilled labour may be available to the business when the demand arises for the same. Like the early starters in the online business are having a great deal of advantage and have taken a vast lead from the late starters. It is rightly said that if you want to win a race, either start early or run very fast. This is all the matter of judging the skill market and taking the necessary steps to react to the upcoming tide of employment.

COVID-19 effect

At this juncture while working on the computer to type the conclusion of the study, I would like to take on the opportunity to pen down my experience in this phase of life. When I call this a phase of life, I am sure that this is my first experience that I had in the past five decade of my life that I had spent. No doubt I had seen many emergencies like curfew, communal riots, emergency but this state of life is one of the rare and would not hope to see again. We always use to talk and teach our students 30 years back or so as the IT skill trainers that there would be some day when the world would be one. We are all advancing towards the globalization that this world would be a global village. We would be some day all joined by a network and would lose the difference of boundaries. So finally in the advent of the year 2020, we were able to do it or to put it more correctly a Virus was able to do it. Yes friends I am referring to COVID-19 (Corona Virus Disease) due to which we are in a global lockdown state. We in India on this Easter Week (07th April 2020) are locked down in our homes for the past 20 days or so, and the lockdown has been officially till the 14th of April for the entire country. We in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, India are in a state of Total lockdown. The patients of COVID-19 had already crossed the 150 till date and a official death toll of around 20. These figures are officially released but what the ground reality may be quite different. The people are shocked and the daily wages workers are walking down to their destination small towns that are thousands of kilometer away.

In her article relating to the stress in which the rural economy is going through (*Jayashree Bhonsle, Economic times, web www.economicstimes.indiatimes.com*) "Lockdown puts rural economy under stress", states that prolonged lockdown along with rain and hail storms have put the rural economy under tremendous stress. Every day the news is full of horrifying stories of people from UP and

Bihar walking or more appropriately trying to walk down to their home towns that are nearly 1000 or more kilometer away from their work place. These people are Hungry & Thirsty with no resources what so ever to take care of their basic needs. All they know is to keep moving in the direction of their home towns, just like migrating birds, no choice just follow your gut feeling. Now this is the situation that has redefined the work scenario. As our study concerns less with the class of daily wages workers but then this is the segment that forms the backbone of the job market and industries could hardly imagine to move an inch further until this segment of workers apply their shoulder to the grid. The majority of industries apart from the Pharma industries are entirely shut down as per the Government directives to control the spread of Corona virus. The employment sector had taken a plunge along with the stock market and all financial institutions are dead stuck in the track. The scenarios is just like a Hollywood flick, which dramatizes the situation to make it look like one that would apply the brakes to the spinning of the Globe. US which is one of the most advance countries in the world has been lately hit in one of the worst possible way. As on More that 3.5 lack of Corona patients have been identified and the death toll rising with each passing day, in more of an exponential manner. Italy, Spain, Japan had been badly hit after China from where the entire script of the current Global disaster had been written. It is most important to document the facts as of today, because it is for sure that we would move on and the world would again surge forward as it had always done after every known disaster. Our country India is being led by the Prime Minister MR. Narendra Modi is taking sensible decision till date and the citizen are trying to follow the instructions of the prime minister to the last word. We not only hope but we strongly believe that post COVID-19, the world would surely be a different place to live in, first and for most much cleaner and environment much congenial for all to live in. The leaders of the world has come together at this point of time in the hour of distress and are all coordinating and cooperating with each other so as to face the situation as on one Global Platform.

So friends let's all consider this as a wakeup call and specially the skill industry has the greatest opportunity in this hour of distress to make a lemonade of the lemon that had been handed over to it. Today all the major industries are shut down due to the lockdown of COVID-19, but still there is one segment that is slowly but sturdily growing out of the rumbles of the economic slowdown and distress that the business and job market is facing and that is the WFH (Work From Home) segment. All of a sudden the WFH has been the in thing and as the number of the patients keep ticking over the world without a sign of slowing down and the in response the lockdown extends, the companies and the organizations, specially the service, Academic and the software industry had woken up to the reality and had realized the importance of work from home. Today the newspaper had a whole page describing the advantages of the work from home segment, the huge saving on the cost of transportation, infrastructure cost, cost in terms of wastage of manhours around the coffee machine and canteen is suddenly being taken into account by the industries. The contribution and productivity of the employees has suddenly risen to 200% without the employee complaining about the

24x7 job segment that he is into. All of a sudden the family is one unit again, getting together for all three meals and then finding their own space in the house to work from and getting the same salary or even earning more at this juncture due to the increased productivity. Suddenly the stress hours getting ready and travelling to the work place have disappeared and a comfort zone has been created. All of a sudden employers and employee are talking about Zoom meetings and are dot on time for the reporting of the work and following the schedules to second's arm of the clock. The job industry is exploring the opportunity of increasing more and more productive options while the employees are at connected through virtual networks.

Here two industries are to be mentioned and kudos to the forerunner like Google, Apple, Infosys and several IT companies that had already given the WFH option to its employees and were the ones that were most prepared for the upcoming disaster in the form of COVID-19. When the world is facing the lockdown and largely doomed upon the future of the business and industries, they are the one that had already have a contingency plan at place and have immediately shifted gears onto the track that is steering them safely into the helms of continuity of work, if not increasing the productivity but at least the unbreakable sequence of continuity. The Academic industry has suddenly realized that the students could be very well connected through a virtual world and while the parents are at home they could always monitor the presence or to the attendance of the student on the online app, whereby the learning goes on without interruption. The students as of now would be saving a lot of time and energy which they use to spend while commuting to and from the school and in interacting with the other students in a physical sense. That too have its positive advantages but socialization as of now is banned, while the time is ticking away and parents across the globe are in dilemma as to how to keep their kids engaged in a positive sense, how to keep them, at least for a few hours away from the games and useless stuff like pubgi and online games and score of other activities that they are involved into at the moment. The schools have suddenly woke up to the necessity and the sense of responsibility for getting the students back into the academic mood and at least for a few hours in the entire day, get them back to their studies. It is a welcome and an encouraging step that has been taken by the academic fraternity. Suddenly the demand for online teaching and coaching has increased many fold and parents are ensuring that apart from a regular learning academic session, their kids are into something constructive which may help them to increase their Skills.

The Worst Hit Sectors:

There may be hardly any sector that may have not suffered a fatal blow in the period of lockdown but some of the sectors are worst hit. MSME (Medium, Small and Micro Enterprises) seems to be in the worst case scenario (*Mudit Misra, Explained: why are ... , indianexpress.com*) and that does not need any explanation as the moment you see millions of migrant laborers migrating towards their native places. As a business study one thing is for sure that this tenure of COVID-19, is going to have a vital and great impact on the Global economy. Be it negative (far more impact) or positive (far less impact) but this time of global

lockdown is sure to crash the economy and bring the giants of the globe to their knees. The Indian market has crashed to a great extent from 50k to 25k and is now hovering around 30k and not sure which news would again make it dip to new lows. The US today has the current statistics of approx 5 lakh of Corona Virus positive cases and the death toll has risen to 18,700. This surely can be marked as one the greatest failure by the world superpower in predicting or controlling the predictable epidemic. The Job market is surely to suffer a great blow, especially due to the economic slowdown the companies and the industries are not going to hire new work force any time soon and that would certainly affect the job seekers and the youth sitting idle in search of a job. The scenario may seem to be grim at the moment and it is expected to last in this way for some time as of now.

Travel & Tourism:

The worst hit sectors would be the travel and tourism, hospitality, aviation and sports. Why at this juncture I had mentioned sports would certainly justify with reasons, but let us first get to the industry that would take a jab on the chin due to the current situation and that is for sure the Travel and Tourism industry. As of now most of the future travel plans have been canceled due to the uncertainty of the lockdown period, as nobody knows when the same would last, would it take a few days more, few weeks or maybe a few months. Travel to most of the Corona hit countries would be a far cry. The single point agenda that the travelers have at this juncture is to somehow get back to their home town and then stay tightly locked inside, until the Corona scare is over. Most of the travel plans have either been cancelled or postponed indefinitely. Every traveler knowing for sure that travelling to Corona hit countries may be fatal and may prove to be the greatest mistake of their life. Even the governments have postponed the major flights and the travel industry is virtually at a standstill across the Globe. The figures are really scary with which the epidemic is rising at a community spread stage. The virus spread is categorized in four stages, the first being the one from which a travel history of the infected person is traced to a country or location with infection of Corona virus. The second stage is the one where the infected person is traced to be in contact with the person from stage 1, that is had a travel history of infected location. The stage 3 is the stage where the chain gets longer but is still traceable to the point of inception of the disease. Then comes the stage 4 which in itself is a great threat as the source of the virus is unknown and untraceable, which really makes it difficult to control the spread of the disease on the community level. It is this stage in which the disease had now entered in many developed countries, including France and USA. Traveling to these countries has been a taboo now and in the near future the travel prospects seems bleak and so does the tours and travel industry has taken the greatest hit and the job market in these segments is sure to be in a worst case scenario situation. One thing is sure and that is the uncertainty looms largely in this scenario and the clouds of doubts are not going to end anyway soon.

Hospitality:

It does not take a great logic or Einstein brain to contemplate the effect of the COVID-19 on the hospitality industry. As the tour and travel industry is hit, the same goes true with the hospitality as it goes hand in hand with the tours and

travel industry. The hospitality industry is another that is worst hit as the global scenario in terms of holidays and travelling is grim and people would surely abstain from traveling in near future and so would be true for vacations and partying along. The celebrations and hospitality is closely knit together and when one is hit the other suffers as well. When there are global signals of social distancing, the hotel industry is hit as it is the one that caters to the demand of the social events and holidaying. As if to add up to the plight of the hotels, the government in many as cities / countries have taken over the major hotels and converted them into Corona patients quarantine areas. That is the major hotels in the countries / locations which are worst hit the hotels have been the staying place of the Corona suspects.

This would be certainly play as a long term spoil sport for the recovery process of the hotel industry. As of now dated 13th of April 2020, most of the hotels in US, UK, France, Sweden, India is in a lockdown state and many of it are providing a refuge to the Corona suspects. The Share market has nosedive for across the spectrum but as I write along this line the BSE (Bombay Stock Exchange) index over the past month to date scenario is a grim picture of Red lines

A sector scan at Money control website brings forth the sad story.

<https://www.moneycontrol.com/stocks/marketstats/sector-scan/bse/month-to-date.html>

Sector	Market-Cap	% Chg	Advance Decline Graph	A/D Ratio	Advance	Decline
▼ Hospitality	27,525	▼ -64.61%		0.05	2	41
⊕ Amusement Parks/Recreation/Club	897	▼ -61.23%		0	0	2
⊕ Hotel, Resort & Restaurants	24,953	▼ -57.65%		0	1	33
⊕ Leisure Services	3	▼ -99.65%		0	0	1
⊕ Travel Services	1,672	▼ -89.28%		0	1	5

As can be seen above the worst hit is the leisure service and the travel services, as things are depicted, life is more precious than leisure, which quite down the line at this moment. The Government across the globe are ensuring that the social distancing is strongly adhered to, which means no functions, no concerts, no Olympics (yes that is true, the Olympics to held this year in Japan has been postponed, even the IPL (Indian premier league), the England football league and all major sports events are either postponed or are cancelled thus directly affecting the business of the hospitality industry. As the quote goes there is blood on the wall street, any sector you point towards is bleeding. I may not probe much deeper into this segment as it would derail us from our skill training scenario but it is clear that the

sheet that I would be displaying on the next page would show the month to date percent fallout of the Market which in other words would be displaying the general sentiments across all the sectors which surely does include the job market and the employment scenarios in terms of global trends at the moment. Not to name the other hard hit sectors as Aviation, Automobile, Electrical, Infrastructure. You name it and we have it, as the saying goes. The sheet speaks loads for itself.

<https://www.moneycontrol.com/stocks/marketstats/sector-scan/bse/month-to-date.html>

The below table may be rightly titled as bloodbath at the Wall street (BSE, NSE)

BSE	NSE	Displaying results for Month to Date		Advance Decline Graph	A/D Ratio	Advance	Decline
Sector	Market-Cap	% Chg					
▶	28	▼ -32.78%		0.00	0	1	
▶ Agri	78,387	▼ -36.82%		0.07	6	89	
▶ Alcohol	72,674	▼ -16.38%		0.00	0	16	
▶ Automobile & Ancillaries	664,969	▼ -52.45%		0.02	3	153	
▶ Aviation	44,377	▼ -29.62%		0.00	0	6	
▶ Banks	1,503,761	▼ -46.57%		0.03	1	31	
▶ Capital Goods	231,128	▼ -45.28%		0.09	13	150	
▶ Chemicals	535,627	▼ -4.57%		0.18	27	153	
▶ Construction Materials	290,857	▼ -32.97%		0.04	3	73	
▶ Consumer Durables	114,016	▼ -13.50%		0.17	5	29	
▶ Containers & Packaging	5,202	▼ -53.59%		0.00	0	26	
▶ Diamond & Jewellery	109,614	▼ -14.86%		0.50	7	14	
▶ Diversified	129,887	▼ -46.44%		0.12	3	25	

As I continue typing in the research, locked in the realms of my home with the home quarantined period of around 40 days I still wonder as to how we would be able to recover from the global jolt that the world had received in the form of Corona virus. The word Epidemic seems to be miniscule in relation to the current situation, which is rightly being addressed as Pandemic. The World Health Organization (WHO) on 11.03.2020 has characterized COVID-19 as pandemic.

The ministry of Shipping had even floated an advisory to be implemented at the ports, thereby putting in all efforts to prevent the corona virus from spreading across the nation via water transport system, dated: 01-04-2020

<https://dgshipping.gov.in/writereaddata/News/202004010321451228269Addendum3-COVID-19.pdf>

As of date 29-04-2020, the total figures have crossed 3 million corona positive patients across the globe, with a death rate of more than 214k and US have been finally in the top position as the worst hit country, with a total patients of more than 1 million as of now. As I proceed to talk of the concluding employment scenario in India, I am time and again forced to emphasize myself onto the global situation. As at this point of time, we are one with the world, and not in virtual sense but in true physical sense. The world across is in a state of lockdown. The job market updates in India are bleak, and so is the situation across the globe. In India itself several crores of people have lost the job and have done mass exodus from the work centres to their respective towns and villages, while suffering the worst kind of nightmares in the journey, as in most of the cases the labours are either stranded on the border of the different states which are not ready to open up or let the labors travel through the cities on the way back home. Shockingly most of the labors are on foot and horrifying stories of people walking for more than 1000 km to reach the destination are floating in the newspapers every day. Scores of the death on journey go unreported and no doubt, maybe first time in history the Growth rate for this April quarter is going to be ZERO.

Government is taking several steps to bring back, I was about to say the things are being laid back in order where they were but this would be a gross understatement, as the government is torn between controlling the pandemic from further spreading in other areas, along with the main role the government has to play at this moment is to look out for ways to provide the basic needs of the people. The general Lockdown has been extended to 3rd of May in India, while the government is taking bold steps in controlling, quarantining the infected areas, so that they may have a hold on the spread of the COVID-19, it is also making sure that the industries which have the provision of on site stay for the labors may slowly start its operation. The great challenge with the industries would now face would be the lack of labors, both skilled and unskilled as well as the availability of the raw material. As the system has been on a halt for more than a months time now, the transportation too has to be revived in the current scenario, while taking extreme caution as each step so as to not trigger the spread of the disease. It needs to be ensured that the industries are being provided with the raw material and the local labors may be the one that needs to be initiated for the work purpose. The

government needs to give a free hand to the industries at this stage in terms of relaxation on the loans and interest, so that they may gather enough funds so as to pay the recurring expense and help bring back the economy on track at the earliest. All of this is surely going to take time but somewhere or the other a start has to be made, which may be in the direction of recovery and not only the prevention of further downhill approach. Job market at present is bleak and would surely take sometime as of now to recover and regain the lost luster.

The Silver Line

Amidst all the confusion and utter chaos, millions infected and lakhs dead, still there is a silver line to the dark cloud of COVID-19. We are sure of the huge loss that the economy has faced and would be facing in the coming period of post lockdown, we can guarantee that the skill labour market, the employment status is going to be bleak and thousands of the laborers would be shifting their base from the work place towards more near home type of locations. The utmost task in which most of the multinational are engaged is to identify the losses incurred or foresee the upcoming wake of cancelled orders and non productive session. To a great extent this was unstoppable after effect of the pandemic that the world had gone through and we sincerely hope that this is the first and the last time that such a period is encountered in our life.

India today has floated an article ("The silver lining: 26-04-2020, www.indiatoday.in) where it highlights the impact of lockdown on the environment. No doubt that the future generation will remember this period with great awe and fear but the positive effect on environment is sure to last a life time. After the evaluation of the loss and negativity, several of the sectors have started looking at the whole episode with a positive reaction and have started to dance at the tune of the current situation. Academic is one such industry that has explored new avenues in this period and backed up by highspeed internet services ranging to several GB, online platform have proved to be a greatest boon for the students and faculties. Zoom classes has been now a buzz word that is being floated the moment we talk about the academic session and learning. The online platform that was struggling to establish itself among the academic fraternity have now found the most respectable place, centre stage. The smart phone that was banned from schools and colleges have been now a must have for the students to catch up with the fast completing syllabus of the schools and colleges.

Academics have taking a whole new meaning and the academic world has been rocked by the upfront use of technology to not only get the forms filled or the data entered remotely but to interact and teach in a real sense. That is something that has rocked the Academic world as if the event that made Newton wonder that why did that apple not fly up in the air instead of falling on his head. Colleges and Universities across the globe has launched its courses and have proceeded with the completion of syllabus and are planning to hold online assessments. That has no doubt saved a lot of time, energy, fuel and resources for both the faculties, staff and the students. While in consultation with the students on several occasion, it has been noted more and

more of the students and parents are now inclined towards online platform, instead of giving in to the demand of the wards to study abroad or to move to other cities for academic purpose.

Work from Home is the new buzz word that has given a boost to the young techno friendly job seekers. New Avenues have opened up in the Job segment thereby floating millions of opportunities for the youngsters to promote themselves on the online job platform. Several Web based learning portals such as Biju's, Whitehat, Time, Career launcher have launched online job platform that gives the flexibility of working hours and working location to the youngsters. The reason I am repeatedly referring the youngsters is that they are more adept to the changes and have fast graduated to the online platform, which not only gives them a chance to earn a decent living but they have plenty of time for other activities. The scripting and the training platform, may it be online French training classes or online Vocal classes or standup comedy, the online platform is surely the in thing, which is rightly supported by a fast and dependable high speed internet (fiber optic) availability.

So we can rightly state that 'The woods may be dark and deep but we have promises to keep and miles to go before we sleep and miles to go before we sleep.'

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