

Transformation to online academic activities amid viral spurs: Report from
Bharati Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be University) School of Audiology and
Speech Language Pathology, Pune

The pandemic of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak across the globe has created massive interference in daily living with a complete lockdown across India. The lockdown has directly affected the academic sectors which were among the initial ones to be closed and will continue to be shut until the pandemic is under control.



However, this unplanned shut down of academics has initiated unprecedented trial with tele-education or online mode of learning for students and work from home for teachers at Bharati Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be University) School of Audiology and Speech Language Pathology [BV(DU) SASLP].

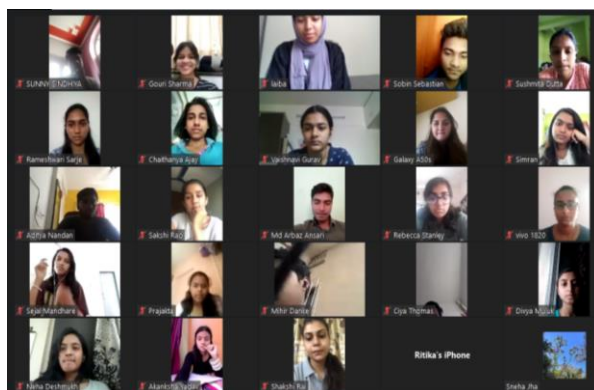


Easy access to smart phones and other electronic media, cloud platforms such as Cisco WebEx, Zoom as well as in-house e-learning platform by BV(DU) has made it possible to continue academic and research activities. e learning is the only practical option of continuous learning and the enthusiastic staff have made it an effective tool for the students with virtual notice boards, chats, audio-visual conferencing of classes, clinical cases and journal presentations.

Some of the measures accommodated for interactive distance activities by BV(DU) SASLP in this period of irregularities to avoid educational loss of our students are described below.

- **Live-stream Classes**

Faculty members at BV(DU) SASLP have started using e- Learning cloud platforms for live teaching and interaction with students. Faculty members organize classes as the host for undergraduate students and share their computer screen with presentations on specific topics being taught along with virtual whiteboard teaching for better understanding.



Post graduate classes are conducted in a similar way but during postgraduate classes, students carry out oral presentation on the topics assigned to them. Question-answer sessions are organized after the completion of lecture where students can have discussions on the topic in audio-visual or live-chat mode. Similar to physical classrooms, students also have the option of

clearing their doubts during lecture by raising their hand and using audiovisual or chat option for discussion.

- **Live practical classes**

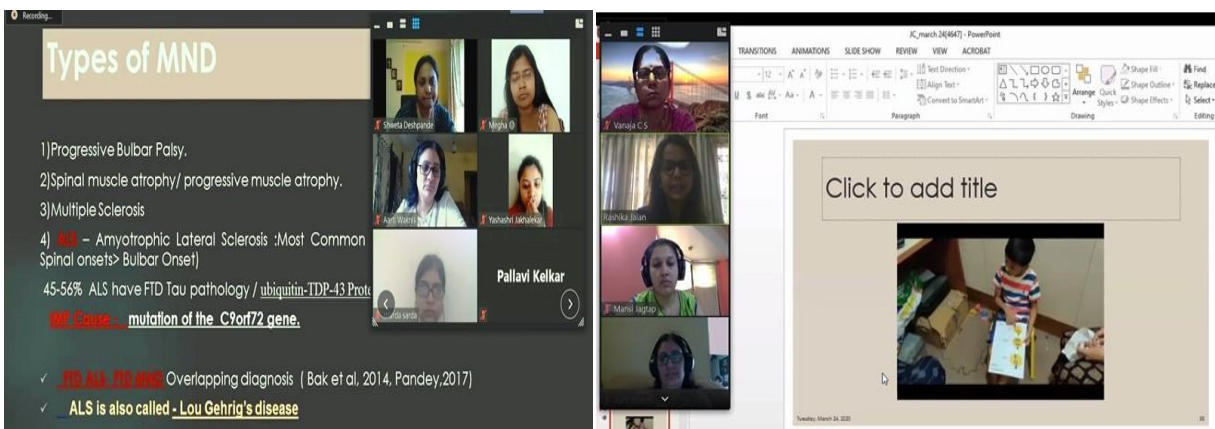
Various practical sessions on the procedures of audiological assessment and management, speech language sciences as well as speech language pathology are taken by clinical staffs/supervisors via similar online cloud platforms. PowerPoint presentations and question banks are circulated among students via in-house e-learning notice board by BV(DU).

- **Assignments**

Assignments are the integral part of regular curriculum and it has been accommodated in distance learning too with cloud platform such a Gmail, yahoo, hotmail etc. Assignments are planned by faculty members based on the topics priorly discussed in the class and students have to submit it within the stipulated time. These assignments are evaluated and marked by respective faculty members for internal assessment of the students.

- **Clinical conference/Journal club**

Clinical conference and journal club are part of academic activities of UG and PG programs. Faculty members of BV(DU) SASLP are continuing to guide their students for case presentations and journal article presentations with online conferencing platforms.



Undergraduate, graduate students and staff take part in virtual clinical conference/journal club in which students critically review a published research article and related clinical case evaluated at our clinic. The conference includes power point presentations along with videos, followed by discussions on the topic in audio-visual as well as live-chat mode. So far we have had these conferences for 2 hours on 2 days with 100 attendees and have got a positive feedback on the same.

- **PG dissertation**

PG students have to submit dissertation by the end of academic year and April 30th was the deadline for the same. Fortunately, the data collection has been completed by a majority of the students and guides/supervisors are supervising statistical analyses and report writing by students via online platforms such as learning management system, conferencing softwares and social media.



The synopses of the dissertations are being verified through an online meeting where a student are presenting the summary of results and analyses which are discussed by faculty members and statisticians.

- **Rehabilitation meet**

With shutdown of the clinical activities of the college, many specially-abled children who were benefiting with rehabilitation at BVDU SASLP have been severely affected. Therefore, this loss

has been tried to be minimized by our clinical staffs and faculty members through regular meetings via conferencing platforms regarding the home training activities for children based on their hearing and language age. These home training materials are provided to parents via online platform followed by the verification on the precision of activities being performed at home.

- **Material development for awareness in regional language**

“Work from home” has been utilized effectively by clinical staffs at BV(DU), SASLP with the developments of various awareness generating pamphlets in Marathi such as cochlear implant candidacy, importance of auditory verbal therapy and mapping, importance of newborn screening for early intervention of communication disorders and hearing aids counseling. These materials are going to enhance the efficiency of clinical activities at SASLP in upcoming days.

- **Webinars**

Students and staff members at BVDU SASLP are utilizing their free hours by participating in



webinars and online teaching classes organized by various recognized universities and organizations. These participations are surely going to enrich the academic performance in upcoming days.

- **Administration**

Even in these hours of crisis, our administrating staff members are continuously striving on smooth functioning of the institution. “Work from home” has been well employed in formulating

academic plans and programs, administering record keeping for various purposes and managing student guidance services with the help of technological link via various e-platforms.

Thus, even in this crisis scenario, the activities of BV(DU) SASLP are going on in full swing, utilizing different online platforms for its smooth functioning. Along with the theoretical and practical coursework, various other curricular activities such as case presentation/journal club, synopses etc. are being organized avoiding any kind of loss in academic activities. We are progressing as per our scheduled academic plan with the joint effort by our students, teaching staff, clinical staff and non-teaching staff.

Thanks to advancement in technology which has made online curricular activities lively and interactive; the entire team of SASLP, who always strive hard to achieve success; University authorities for the whole hearted support and encouragement to all our activities.