

# Success of Online Teaching and Learning in Higher Education-Covid 19 Pandemic: A Case Study Valley View University, Ghana

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## Abstract

In Ghana, starting from March 2020, the outbreak of the COVID-19 caused all the universities to close down. The Valley View University initiate live online teaching method for students using BigBlueButton for the all the campus and centres of Valley View University. This research paper is focuses on success of online teaching education in Valley View University. The paper focus on some high-impact principles for online education: (a) Expect the unexpected and remain flexible, (b) effective delivery on online instructional information, (c) adequate support provided by faculty and teaching assistants to students; (d) high-quality participation to improve the breadth and depth of student's learning, (e) Create and maintain a strong presence. In Ghana, only the Valley View University build an own server for the BigBlueButton for live online teaching and learning methods.

**Keywords:** Internet, COVID-19, online teaching, Participant observation, Case study, BigBlueButton.

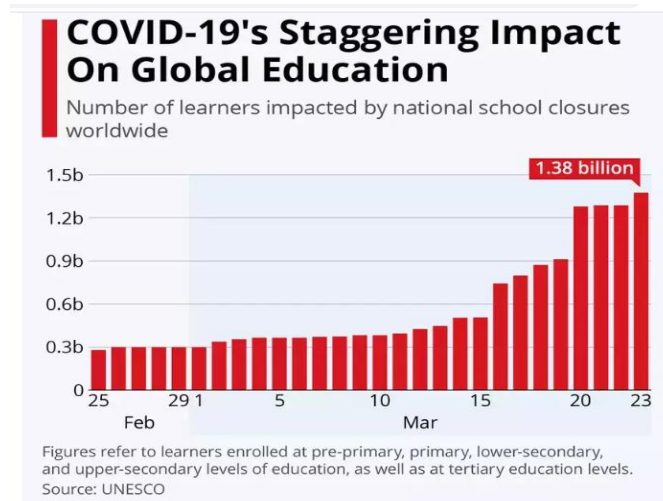
## I. INTRODUCTION:

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected educational systems worldwide, leading to the near-total closures of schools, universities and colleges. Most governments around the world have temporarily closed educational institutions in an attempt to contain the spread of COVID-19. As of 7 June 2020, approximately 1.725 billion learners are currently affected due to school closures in response to the pandemic. According to UNICEF monitoring, 134 countries are currently implementing nationwide closures and 38 are implementing local closures, impacting about 98.5 percent of the world's student population. 39 countries' schools are currently open.

On 23 March 2020, Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) released a statement announcing the cancellation of Cambridge IGCSE, Cambridge O Level, Cambridge International AS & A Level, Cambridge AICE Diploma, and Cambridge Pre-U examinations for the May/June 2020 series across all countries. International Baccalaureate exams have also been cancelled. In addition, Advanced Placement Exams, SAT administrations, and ACT administrations have been moved online and cancelled. School closures impact not only students, teachers, and families. But have far-reaching economic and societal consequences. In response to school closures, UNESCO recommended the use of distance learning programs and open educational applications and platforms that schools and teachers can use to reach learners

remotely and limit the disruption of education.

The World Health Organization WHO declared it as pandemic in March 2020 and issued safety measures and preventions to deal with this precarious enemy. The whole world gets into locked down including educational Institutes. According to a recent report by UNESCO, 150 countries around the globe closed educational institutes that affected more than 80% students during the month of March 2020. The president of Ghana declared it a national emergency in 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 and locked down the country in First week of April 2020 as the situation got serious with the report of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Accra and Kumasi. All educational institutes were closed including Junior high school, Senior high school and universities. Due to the widespread of Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Ghana. The Vice-Chancellor and Pro-vice Chancellor of the Valley view university introduced the "nonstop teaching and learning," for the students, most Ghana universities have started online education using Google class room, ZOOM, but the Valley View University introduced and build their own server for the online teaching(BigBlueButton). Whenever the students use the BigBlueButton for their live lectures the students will not lose or lost their data bundle. The students can play back their live lectures using BigBlueButton whenever they want it. All the lectures live videos, study materials and other related documents stored in the VVU server. In a short time period the ITS directorate and his team members trained how to use the Moodle platform for both faculty and students, after the training all the faculty members started to teach in front of a computer screen, and their students have to stay at home and take the courses through the internet.



## II RELATED WORKS

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E-LEARNING, distance education or online learning, refers to the method of content dissemination and rapid learning through the application of information technology and Internet technology. The “e” of e-Learning stands for electronic learning, efficient learning, exploratory learning, experiential learning, expanded learning, extended learning, easy-to-use learning, and enhanced learning. The United States is the birthplace of e-learning. After 1998, e-Learning has been being spread worldwide, and has rapidly expanded from North America and Europe to Asia. Online education is one of the important education methods today. It has developed rapidly around the world and has gradually become an important category of school education. Countries around the world are actively exploring how to effectively educate students through the Internet, and many good examples of online education have emerged, resulting in many valuable experiences in online education. Although online education is developing rapidly around the world, more applications of online education are used as a supplement to regular school education. In the normalized education and teaching practice, more students go to schools to participate in traditional classroom teaching, and large-scale online education lacks practical application scenarios. The outbreak of COVID-19 in Wuhan, China, at the end of 2019, was a major public health emergency that had the fastest spread, the widest scope of infection, and the most difficult to prevent and control in China since its establishment (Xinhuanet, 2020). Affected by the epidemic, the government requires departments at all levels to organize forces to limit or stop crowd gathering, and requires non-essential enterprises to suspend production and business operations, and normal economic and social activities were greatly affected (Guangming.com, 2020). The World Health Organization-China Joint Expert Expedition calls the powerful public health measures China has taken in response to the COVID-19 epidemic, which may be “the most ambitious, flexible and active disease control in human history” (People’s Network, 2020). Against this background, offline education and training institutions nationwide suspended their courses, elementary and middle schools postpone the start of 2020 spring semester, and actively conducted online teaching activities such as online teaching and learning as required by the Ministry of Education. This provides necessary learning support services for elementary and middle schools students’ home study, guarantees the teaching progress and teaching quality during the COVID-19 epidemic prevention and control, and achieves the goal of “School’s Out, But Class’s On”.

Jianping Xia Xia. *School-Family Cooperative Education during the COVID-19 Epidemic*. SCHOOLS and families are indispensable subjects in the healthy growth of children. Building a harmonious home-school relationship and forming a pattern of cooperative education are of great significance to the development of students. During the COVID-19 epidemic, the school’s regular teaching activities could not be carried out normally, and the family became the only place for students to learn. The implementation of “School’s Out, But Class’s On”, i.e., “School is closed, but student learning is continuing

online” or “Online Home Study” (This refers to the Official Website of the Chinese Ministry of Education: <http://en.moe.gov.cn/>). Made the family and school cooperate much closer. Schools and families need to establish a unified goal to ensure the quality of student learning, cultivate students’ autonomous learning ability, and promote the all-round development of students. Guide parents to actively cooperate with the online teaching activities carried out by the school, participate in student education, create a good learning and education environment for students, and achieve student development goals. Zhenjiang Experimental School of Jiangsu Province, through home-school co-operation, gives full play to the important role of family education in the “School’s Out, But Class’s On” period, guides parents to actively participate in online teaching activities and offline academic guidance, and effectively promotes students’ home study To achieve healthy and happy growth of students. This study used the School-Family Co-education practice of Zhenjiang Experimental School during “School’s Out, But Class’s On” as an example to explore how to integrate school education and home education during the epidemic. It ensures the quality of students’ home study and promotes their comprehensive and healthy development.

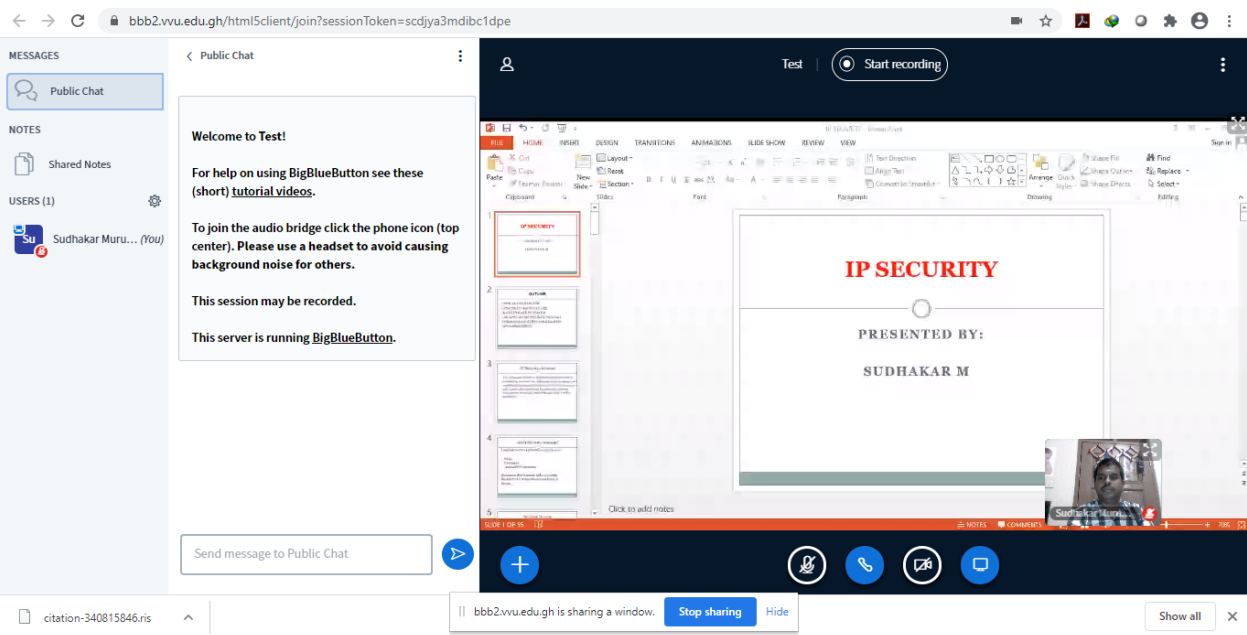
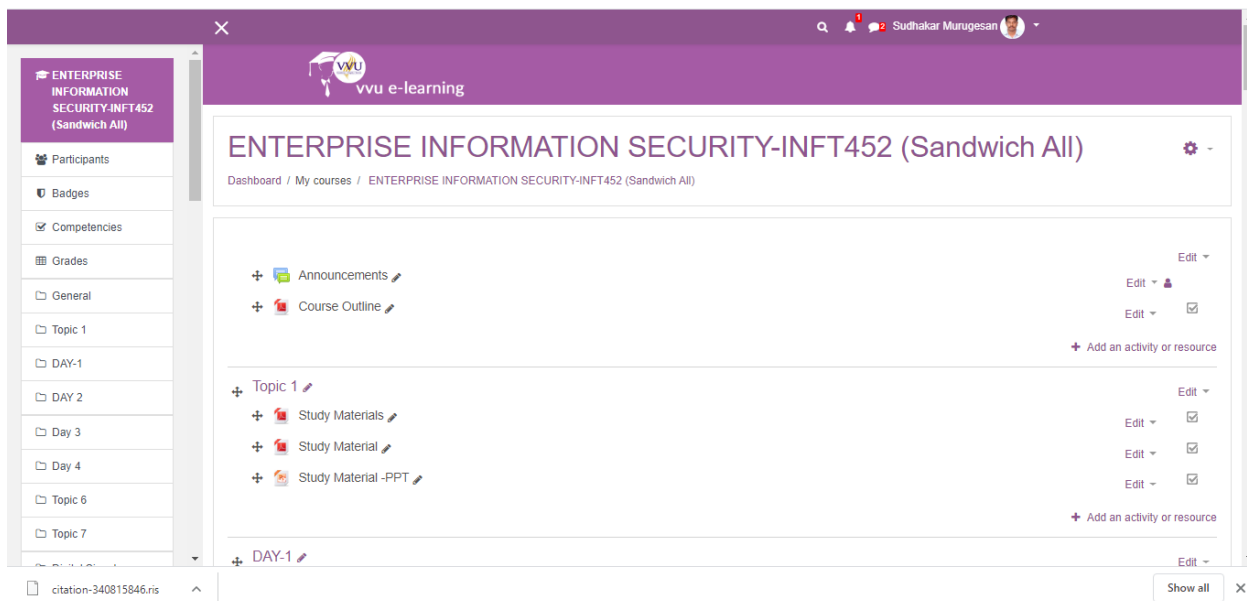
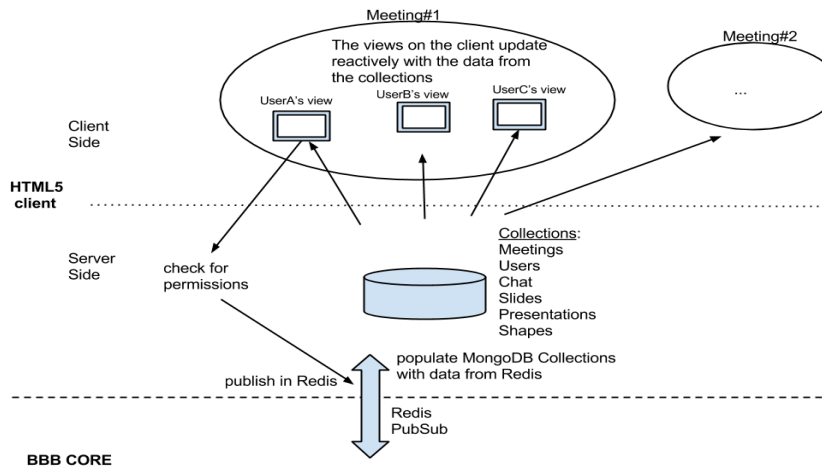
## III. THE FOUNDATION OF THE LARGEST ONLINE EDUCATION CAMPAIGN:

Large scale online education activities need to be guaranteed by a well-established Internet infrastructure. Without strong infrastructure, large scale online education activities cannot be carried out. The country has very good internet service providers (MTN, Vodafone, and AirtelTigo), the Internet infrastructure has been basically improved, providing a basic guarantee for large scale Internet education. The university also has very good internet facilities with the help of Vodafone.

## IV. IMPLEMENTATION:

BigBlueButton extends these core features to enable a teacher to engage students for learning. For example, a tutor can use BigBlueButton’s multi-user whiteboard to help a student with solving a difficult math problem. BigBlueButton has built-in integrations with all the major learning management systems (LMS), including Canvas, Jenzabar, Moodle, Sakai, and Schoology. It also supports Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI) 1.0 for integration with other LMS systems (such as Blackboard and D2L).

- Lecturers can login the eLearning portal and upload all the study materials related to the courses.
- Students also can login the eLearning portal using their Id number and password, they can access all the study materials.
- Using BigBlueButton lectures can schedule for their live lecture for their students and record the live lecture for the feature references.
- Students can participate the quizzes, assignments posted by the faculty.



## V. STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE ONLINE TEACHING

Based on observations of online teaching and learning at Valley View University, this paper classifies some instructional strategies to improve students' learning concentration and engagement in order to achieve a smooth online teaching and learning.

### EMPHASIZING THE USE OF “VOICE AND VIDEO” IN TEACHING

In traditional in-class teaching, body language, facial expressions, and teachers' voice are all important teaching tools. However, once a course is switched to online teaching, body language and facial expressions are under restrictions as it is difficult to use these tools through screens, and only “voice and video” could be fully functioned.

### WORKING WITH TECHNICAL TEAM (ITS) AND GAIN ONLINE SUPPORTS FROM THEM

The technical requirements of online teaching are far greater than traditional in-class teaching for inexperienced faculty members. In view of the fact that most of the faculty at our university are insufficiently trained or supported to operate online education platforms, the support from ITS is particularly important. Faculty should fully communicate with the technical team (ITS) before the class to make sure that they understand the objectives, knowledge framework, and teaching activities of each class. In this way, the technical team can provide effective support in online teaching.

### STRENGTHENING STUDENTS' ACTIVE LEARNING ABILITY OUTSIDE OF CLASS

Compared with traditional class lectures, faculty have less control over online teaching, and students are more likely to “skip the class”. Therefore, the progress of online teaching and its learning effectiveness largely depend on students' high-level active learning outside of class. To this end, faculty should use various methods to moderately modify students' assignments, quiz and reading requirements to strengthen students' active learning outside of class.

### REQUEST REGULAR FEEDBACK

Check in with your students to see how things are going. You can do formal or informal surveys to assess attitudes, workload and challenges. Use ad hoc quizzes to assess learner comprehension of material.

## VI. CONCLUSION

“School’s Out, But Class’s On” is a challenge to both school education and family education. This paper concludes, some principles of high-impact teaching practice to effectively deliver large-scale online education, through eLearning platform. The quantity, difficulty, and length of teaching content should match with the academic readiness and online learning behaviour characteristics of students. The principle of effective delivery. Due to students' characteristics of low concentration in online learning, it is essential to adjust the teaching speed in order to ensure the effective delivery of teaching information. The principle of sufficient support. Faculty and technical assistant need to provide students with timely feedback, including online video tutoring after class. The principle of high-quality participation. Faculty should use various methods to moderately modify students' assignments, quiz and reading requirements to strengthen students' active learning outside of class. Finally, the faculty should get the feedback from their students weekly once for the effective and efficient teaching. Faculty ensure that students can actively and effectively engage in online learning.

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