

IMPACT OF PANDEMIC COVID-19 ON EDUCATION IN INDIA

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Abstract

Education is the building block of any nation, it builds skills, habits, knowledge and mind of the child. Any nation cannot afford the suspension of its education system. In recent times of two years, we have seen a great change in education system and scenario of Indian Education pattern. This has happened due to occurrence of covid-19. Slowly and gradually the education system switched from offline education system to online education system. Teachers was substituted by Android phones, computers and laptops. The role of teaches which was quite important in imparting education to students was replaced by many online sources of education. The pivot of the education system i.e. teachers became passive and just an observer. Present paper is an attempt to highlight education system before and after covid-19 both in school education and higher education. The paper will also highlight that though Covid-19 has somehow became passive but its impacts are still seen in education system.

Keywords: Covid-19, School, Education, Online Classes, Virtual Classes

INTRODUCTION

First school of the child is home and first teacher is mother. But we know that if we want to develop our child's social life and efficiency so we need to send them to school. For our economic growth schools are increasing children's social awareness, skills, and ability in many ways. Only a short time children spend in school and learn more things. Our child can learn better when he/she interacts with teachers and peers in a physical classroom. They can develop their social life and they can learn more effectively.

The pandemic Covid-19 has spread over whole world and compelled the human society to maintain social distancing. It has significantly disturbed the education sector which is a critical factor of a country's economic future. It was first identified in Wuhan, China on December 31, 2019. The first case of the COVID-19 pandemic reported on 30 January 2020 in the state of Kerala and the affected had a travel history from Wuhan, China. In India, more than 32 crores of students have been affected by the various restrictions and the nationwide lockdown for COVID-19. As per the UNESCO report, about 14 crores of primary and 13 crores of secondary students are affected which are two mostly affected levels in India. Due to this COVID-19 pandemic, most of the countries have close their schools, colleges and universities. It seems like students' growth just stopped in the way. But due to the awareness of our government, students are getting their education by online mode. In this way, their learning is becoming an ongoing process without interruption.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also had a severe impact on higher education as universities closed their premises and countries shut their borders in response to lockdown measures. Although higher education institutions were quick to replace face-to-face lectures with online learning, these closures affected learning and examinations as well as the safety and legal status of international students in their host country. Perhaps most importantly, the crisis raises questions about the value offered by a university education which includes networking and social opportunities as well as educational content. To remain relevant, universities will need to reinvent their learning environments so that digitalization expands and complements student-teacher and other relationships.

To prevent spread of pandemic COVID-19, the Government of India has taken number of preventive measures. The union government declared a countrywide lock-down of all educational institutions on 16 March 2020. Central Board of Secondary Education postponed all examinations of secondary and higher secondary schools on March 18, 2020 throughout India. CBSE released revised guidelines for examination centers to conduct examinations by maintaining a distance of at least 1 meter between the students taking the exam with a class not having more than 24 students. If the rooms of the examination centers are small then the students should be divided into different rooms accordingly. The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) postponed the interview for the Civil Services Examination 2019. Similarly most of the state Governments and other educational boards postponed examinations due to outbreak of COVID-19. Govt. of India has observed one day nationwide Janta-curfew on March 22 and implement lockdown from March 25, 2020 onwards in different phases.

Govt. of India has been extending lockdown periods from time to time adopting different strategies to fight with the pandemic but educational institutions remained closed continuously. Almost all state government ministries have taken measures to ensure that the academic activities of schools and colleges do not hamper during the lockdown period. They have instructed the schools to hold all their classes online. The lockdown has accelerated

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adoption of digital technology. It has provided a chance to develop new and improved professional skills/knowledge through online learning in more efficient and productive way. Online learning is the best solution during this pandemic Covid-19 situation. So, the digital India vision of the government is developing as a vital tool for solving the present crisis due to Covid-19. It is a fact that technology-based education is more transparent with all respect. Looking at this challenge of colleges and schools being shut, government of India, as well as state governments and private players have undertaken proper initiatives. The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has made several arrangements, including online portals and educational channels through Direct to Home TV, Radios for students to continue learning. During lockdown, students are using popular social media tools like Whats app, Zoom, Google meet, Telegram, YouTube live, Facebook live etc. for online teaching learning system

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present research paper focuses on the following objectives:

- To analyze the COVID-19 impact on education.
- To highlight various positive impact of COVID-19 on education.
- To enlist some negative impacts of COVID-19 and to put some effective suggestions for continuing education during the pandemic situation.

Education before Covid-19: Before Covid-19, the black board teaching approach to education has been very common at all. Classrooms were run by teachers who deliver lessons that start and end with a bell. Teachers set tests, watch over examinations and post grades that might delight, disappoint or even surprise parents. The students get all social, emotional, academic teachings support from school campus. In short, teacher plays a role as the source of education, and students are recipients of teacher's knowledge. Teachers respond to student assignments and encourage them to provide additional responses.

Education after Covid-19: The Covid-19 has resulted in schools and Colleges shut all across the World. Globally, over 1.2 billion children are out of the classroom. As a result, education has changed drastically with rise of digital learning.

Now, millions of students across world have been learning and studying using new joint digital tools and resources on a massive scale. They have been physically apart, but virtually together. Technology paves the way for education by helping the students and teachers to connect virtually through online classrooms, webinars, and digital exams and so on.

Positive impact of COVID-19 on education

Although the epidemic of COVID-19 has created many negative impacts on education, educational institutions of India have accepted the challenges and trying their best to provide continuous support services to the students during the pandemic. Indian education system got the opportunity for alteration from traditional system to a new era. The following points may be considered as the positive impacts.

- **Move towards Blended Learning:** COVID-19 has enhanced taking up of digital technologies to deliver education. Educational institutions moved towards blended mode of learning. It encouraged all teachers and students to become more technology understanding. New ways of delivery and assessments of learning opened immense opportunities for a major transformation in the area of curriculum development. It also gives access to large pools of learners at a time.
- **Rise in use of Learning Management Systems:** Use of learning management systems by educational institutions became a great demand. It opened a great opportunity for the companies those have been developing and growth learning management systems for use educational institutions.
- **Enhance the use of soft copy of learning material:** In lockdown situation students were not able to collect the hard copies of study materials and hence most of the students used of soft copies materials for reference.
- **Improvement in shared work-** There is a new opportunity where shared teaching and learning can take on new forms. Sharing can also happen among faculty/teachers across the world to benefit from each other.
- **Rise in online meetings-** The pandemic has created a massive rise in teleconferencing, virtual meetings, and webinars and e-conferencing opportunities
- **Enhanced Digital Literacy:** The pandemic situation induced people to learn and use digital technology and resulted in increasing the digital literacy.
- **Improved the use of electronic media for sharing information:** Learning materials are shared among the students easily and the related queries are resolved through e-mail, SMS, phone calls and using different social Medias like what's App or Facebook.
- **Worldwide exposure:** Educators and learners are getting opportunities to interact with peers from around the world. Learners adapted to an international community.
- **Better time management:** Students are able to manage their time more efficiently in online education during pandemics.

Negative impact of COVID-19 on education

Education sector has hurt a lot due to the outbreak of COVID-19. It has created many negative impacts on education and some of them are as pointed below:

- **Educational activity disturbed:** Classes have been suspended and exams at different levels postponed. Different boards have already postponed the annual examinations and entrance tests. Admission process got delayed. Due to continuity in lockdown, student suffered a loss of nearly 3 months of the full academic year of 2020-21 which is going to further worsen the situation of continuity in education and the as students would face much difficulty in resuming schooling again after a huge gap.
- **Impact on employment:** Most of the recruitment got postponed due to COVID-19 Placements for students may also be affected with companies delaying the on board of students. Unemployment rate is expected to be increased due to this pandemic. In India, there is no recruitment in Govt. sector and fresh graduates fear withdrawal of their job offers from private sectors because of the current situation. The Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy's estimates on unemployment shot up from 8.4% in mid-March to 23% in early April and the urban unemployment rate to 30.9% (Educationasia.in). When the unemployment increases then the education gradually decreases as people struggle for food rather than education.
- **Unprepared teachers/students for online education:** Not all teachers/students are good at it or at least not all of them were ready for this sudden transition from face to face learning to online learning. Most of the teachers are just conducting lectures on video platforms such as Zoom, Google meet etc. which may not be real on online learning without any dedicated online learning platform.
- **Reduced global employment opportunity-** Some may lose their jobs from other countries and the pass out students may not get their job outside India due to restrictions caused by COVID-19. Many Indians might have returned home after losing their jobs overseas due to COVID-19. Hence, the fresh students who are likely to enter the job market shortly may face difficulty in getting suitable employment. Many students who have already got jobs through campus interviews may not be able to join their jobs due to lockdown.
- **Increased responsibility of parents to educate their wards:** Some educated parents are able to guide but some may not have the adequate level of education needed to teach children in the house.
- **Loss of nutrition due to school closure:** Mid-day meals is a school meal programme of the Government of India which is designed to provide better the nutritional food to school-age children nationwide. The closure of schools has serious implications on the daily nutrition of students as the mid-day meal schemes have temporarily been shut. Various studies have pointed out that mid-day meals are also an important contributing factor for increased enrolment in the schools
- **Access to digital world:** As many students have limited or no internet access and many students may not be able to afford computer, laptop or supporting mobile phones in their homes, online teaching-learning may create a digital divide among students. The lockdown has hit the poor students very hard in India as most of them are unable to explore online learning according to various reports. Thus the online teaching-learning method during pandemic COVID-19 may enhance the gap between rich/poor and urban/rural.
- **Access to global education:** The pandemic has significantly disrupted the higher education sector. A large number of Indian students who are enrolled in many Universities abroad, especially in worst affected countries are now leaving those countries and if the situation persists, in the long run, a there will be a significant decline in the demand for international higher education.
- **Payment of Schools, Colleges fee got delayed:** During this lockdown most of the parents faced unemployment situation so they may not be able to pay the fee for that particular time periods which may affect the private institutes.

SUGGESTIONS

It is clear that Covid-19 had brought change to the status of learning in the 21st century. The instruction mode has been changed at both Schools and Colleges from face to face instructions to online instructions. Modern technology cannot be confined to the classroom and it is more important than ever to empower our teachers to continuously guide and nurture students during this difficult time.

- Discuss the internet with your children so that they know how it works, what they need to be aware of, and what appropriate behavior looks like on the platforms they use such as video calls.
- India should develop creative strategies to ensure that all children must have sustainable access to learning during pandemic COVID-19. The Indian policies must include various individuals from diverse backgrounds including remote regions, marginalized and minority groups for effective delivery.
- Immediate measures are required to lessen the effects of the pandemic on job offers, internship programs, and research projects.
- Parents should check on children from digital platforms. As Digital platforms provide an opportunity for children to keep learning, but increased access online brings heightened risks for children's safety, protection and privacy.
- Many online learning platforms offer multiple programmes on the same subjects with different levels of certifications, methodology and assessment parameters. So, the quality of programmes may differ across

different online learning platforms. Therefore, establishment of quality assurance mechanisms and quality benchmark for online learning programmes must be developed and offered by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in India keeping in view of rapid growth of the online learning platforms

- Across the globe, Indian traditional knowledge is well known for its scientific innovations, values and benefits to develop sustainable technologies and medicines and this knowledge systems in different fields should be integrated with a present-day mainstream higher education system.

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