

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES BROUGHT BY COVID-19 ON INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

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DOI No. – 08.2020-25662434

Abstract

Every sector of the country has been affected by COVID-19. The education sector, which is a critical determinant of the future economy of a country, has been badly affected by the situation. The widespread flow of COVID-19 forced the Government to declare lockdown in the country. This lockdown closed all the activities in schools, universities, and colleges for an unspecified period. Around 32 Crore learners got affected and unable to move school/college. All educational activities were affected by this outbreak. The outbreak of COVID-19 suddenly changed the education system in the country and all institutions started providing e-learning to students. This method of teaching has got many advantages for teachers and learners but also has some drawbacks for those who can't manage technical learning. This paper discusses these benefits and limitations and also includes some steps taken by the Indian Government to promote e-learning during this Covid-19 situation.

Keywords: Covid-19, Lockdown, E-learning, Government, Learners, Education.

INTRODUCTION

Covid-19 is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. This virus spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an affected person coughs or sneezes. It was first identified in December 2019 in Wuhan, Hubei, China. Indian reported the first confirmed case of the coronavirus infection on 30 January 2020 in the Kerala state. The affected person had a travel history from Wuhan, China. After this, the number of cases increasing day by day. Measures to prevent infection include frequent hand washing, social distancing, and quarantine, etc. On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 as a pandemic. After this, the first step taken by the Government was to impose lockdown in the country. The government suspended all workings to stop the gathering of people. All sectors of the country were closed for an undefined period. The education sector has been affected badly by COVID-19. All schools, colleges, and universities were closed by the government. All exams are postponed by the universities. Educational institutions adopted e-Learning methods to provide education facilities to students. This paper discusses the positive and negative effects of COVID-19 on education. To prevent the spread of COVID-19 students started learning and reading at home through interactive applications. E-learning plays a significant role in the field of education. Learning Technology reduces the gap between students and teachers which was created by COVID-19. The government of India orders the lockdown on 24th March. A large number of students are unable to attach with this e-learning technique because they don't have a laptop Android phones and other things that help in e-learning. This paper discusses the positive and negative impact of COVID-19 on the education system in India.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS PAPER

1. To highlight the challenges brought by COVID-19 on the education sector in India.
2. To discuss the positive effects of COVID-19 on the Indian education system.
3. Contribution of Government for continuing the education system.

METHODOLOGY

All data for this paper is collected from various websites, journals, and e-content relating to COVID-19. All information has been collected through internet mode because it is impossible to go outside to collect data.

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON EDUCATION

Covid-19 affected the education system in both ways i.e. positive and negative. Along with the negative effects, there are some positive effects of COVID-19 on the education system.

NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON EDUCATION SYSTEM

Education activities stopped

Due to lockdown, all educational activities stopped for an undefined period. All schools, colleges, and universities are temporarily closed. Exams of all educational institutions have been postponed. Even in the unlocking phase, educational institutions don't receive any relaxation. This lockdown situation creates a gap between learners and education. Despite using e-learning methods of learning a large number of students are unable to continue their education because they don't have the material used in e-Learning like laptops, mobile phones, internet connection, etc.

Technical awareness

After lockdown, educational institutions started using the e-learning method to provided education. This method of teaching is beneficial only for those students who have got proper knowledge of technology. Without technical awareness, students are unable to use this method of learning. A large number of people belonging to rural areas do not have proper knowledge about technology. There is a lack of proper internet connection in these areas, which is necessary for online learning.

Health issues

The use of mobile phones, laptops for e-learning has got a negative impact on the health of learners. When learners use mobile phones, laptops for a long time it will be harmful to their eyes and create the chances of stress. Excess use of phone laptops also creates back and neck problems due to sitting for a long time in the same position.

Decreased Employment opportunities

This pandemic decreases employment opportunities in India. With the decrease in employment opportunities, education will decrease because people struggle for food and not for education. In the current situation, people are worried about their necessities rather than for education.

Sudden change in the education system

After lockdown, all educational institutions adopt the e-learning system. Students and teachers are not prepared for this sudden change. Neither student nor teachers are ready for this sudden

change. They are facing several problems due to this change in the system.

School fees payment

Due to lockdown, many parents have faced the problem of unemployment. This unemployment created problem of money and they could not pay the school fees of their children. Parents find it very difficult to manage all expenditures in this situation where all sources of income have stopped.

Lack of extra co-curricular activities

In an online study system, students got only education facilities. All other extra fun-loving activities stopped in this pandemic situation. Without these extracurricular activities, the education system will become boring for learners.

The problem of assessment

All examination system has been stopped due to locked on. Without a proper assessment system, it will be difficult to continue a proper education system. To assess the performance of students, there should be a proper method that is used for assessment of the performance of children.

The problem of research and development

In the lockdown period, it is not possible to go outside for research work so during this pandemic. All work-related to research and development has been postponed for an undefined period.

Increased burden of parents

All learners use the e-learning system for education in this lockdown period. Students use this method of education from home. At home, students are not following any rules and regulations as in school. All burden of study of learners shifts to parents. Parents are worried about their children's study and their future.

THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON EDUCATION

Shift towards digital digitalization

In lockdown situation all institutions use digital systems for e-Learning this will increase the digitalization in the country. All learners are using the e-learning system for the study that will increase technical awareness in the country.

Time management

Students can use their time efficiently in the online study system. The time of going to schools and outside can be utilized in other activities which can increase their output. Students can use this time for improving themselves.

Easy sharing

In the e-Learning system there are large numbers of methods of sharing information. Users can share this information through SMS, phones, emails, etc. Students can get their study materials in the online system without any delay.

Increased use of soft copy

In the system of education students used soft copies material for study because it is difficult to get hard copy study material during the lockdown. The decrease in paper working has a positive impact on the environment.

Virtual learning

E-learning increases the virtual learning system. Teachers can use a virtual system of teaching effectively to provide better education to students. In the case of e-learning, teachers can use attractive ways to provide education with the help of multimedia.

Quality of learning

Teachers can increase the quality of learning by using various online study methods. They can use Google me to maps to provide education to students. Use of images videos audio and other electronic material is he is the efficiency of learning.

Great opportunity for electronic companies

In this situation increase, the working of electronic companies has been increased in an online study system. They can use the capacity in creating new ways of e-Learning and become technologically advanced.

Increased Interaction between teachers and Parents

Interaction between parents and teachers increased in the online learning system. When students are studying from home, parents can check their daily performance and interact with teachers easily as compare to the offline study system. Teachers can discuss problems relating to students with parents at any time in the online system.

Recorded Lectures

Unlike classroom teaching, in online learning students can access content an unlimited number of times. In online learning, you can attend the recorded lectures whenever you want.

Steps Taken by the Indian Government for Education during Covid-19

To prevent the spread of COVID-19 Indian government has taken many steps. The government declared country-wide lockdown of all educational institutions on 16 March 2020. Examination of all schools, colleges and Universities has been postponed. The government has instructed the educational institution to hold all their classes online to stop this lockdown situation has shifted the face-to-face learning system to the online learning system. The MHRD (Ministry of Human Resource Development) has made several arrangements for e-Learning including online portals and educational channels for e-Learning. Students are using popular learning tools including WhatsApp, Zoom, Google meet, telegram, YouTube live, Facebook live, etc. for the online teaching-learning system. Some digital platforms formed by Government for E-learning:-

E-Pathshala

E-Pathshala has been developed by NCERT for showcasing and to provide all educational materials including textbooks, audio, video, print, non-print material through website and mobile apps. This app is for classes 1 to 12 in multiple languages. Mobile apps are available for this platform.

National Digital Library of India

The National Digital library of India is a project under the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India. The objective is to collect and collate metadata and provide full-text index from several national and international digital libraries.

Vidwan

Vidwan is an e-learning portal specifically designed for research students, experts, educational institutions. Vidwan database is developed and maintained by the Information and Library Network Centre with financial support from the National Mission on Education through ICT.

Diksha

MHRD Ministry of Human Resource Development in association with National Council for Teacher Education (CTE) has launched an initiative in the domain of digital learning, named, DIKSHA. This initiative aims to help students and teachers to continue their studies as usual. With more than 80000 e-books solely created for students, CBSE, NCERT and States aim to provide educational facilities to students that missed due to this pandemic. Diksha App is available at Google play store and ios store.

Swayam Prabha

Swayam Prabha is an initiative of the Ministry of Human Resource Development to provide 32 High-Quality Educational Channels through DTH across the length and breadth of the country on a 24*7 basis. This initiative is for those learners who are unable to learn through the internet. These DTH channels can be viewed across India by using DD free Dish set-top box. The channels cover study material for both school education and higher education.

National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER)

NROER is developed by CIET, NCERT. NROER hosts a large number of educational resources in many subjects and different Indian languages for primary, Secondary and Senior Secondary classes. Resources are available in different modes. Students can access a repository of 14527 files comprising around 3000 documents, 1600+ audios, 2586 images and 6100+ videos in different languages. Students can test their learning through pre-set assignments.

National Academic Depository (NAD)

NAD is born out of an initiative to provide an online storehouse of all academic awards. National Academic Depository is a 24*7 online storehouse of all academic awards like certificates, diplomas, degrees, mark sheets etc.

E-PG Pathshala

This platform is for postgraduate students. Students can use this platform for online courses and other study material. You can access this platform without having internet for the whole day.

E-Gyankosh

E-Gyankosh is a platform used to store and share the digital learning resources which are developed by the Open and Distance Learning institution of India.

SWAYAM

Swayam is a programme initiated by the Government of Indian to provide learning resources to students from 9 to post-graduation. This portal is developed by the Ministry of Human Resource Development and NPTEL, IIT Madras. All courses can be accessed free of cost.

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR E-LEARNING DURING COVID-19

Follow a daily routine work

In this situation where all routine works are disturbed teachers and students should make a routine of their work. All educational activities should be done with a proper time table. Teachers should help their students in managing their time effectively.

Choose the right method of E-learning

Teachers should choose the right method for providing education to students. Only those methods of teaching should be used that are managed by all students. If teachers will choose a tough or difficult method than it will create a problem for students.

Use Bigger Screen

In E-learning use i-pads, tablets, laptops instead of smartphones, as the smaller screens will create problems for your eyes. It is advisable for users using spectacles to wear them during the e-learning session.

Right posture

During e-learning at home maintain a right posture by keeping the back straight. It can help to lower the chances of back pain during prolonged sessions of e-learning.

Supervision

Parents should supervise all activities of their children. They should follow age-appropriate monitoring levels and use parental control apps for online sessions.

Proper assessment system

Teachers should make a proper assessment system for measuring the performance of students. Routine tests can be used for measuring the performance of students.

Block out Distractions

In an online study system social media, TV, internet, video streaming, games, YouTube can distract you. You should block all these distractions during study time.

Parents should help kids to deal with Stress

Students might be stress out due to this sudden change in the education system. They feel stressed due to the new challenges they are facing about unexpected school closure and study from home.

CONCLUSION

The education system for any country is very important as the system provides the way for the nation-building forces and economic activities. Along with other systems which have been affected by the pandemic, the educational system has also suffered a lot. The online learning

system cannot be a suitable alternative for the traditional system but in the present situation, teachers and students have adapted to the system despite various handicaps. Further study may be undertaken to explore the impact of COVID-19 on education system.

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