

IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON EDUCATION SECTOR IN INDIA

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Abstract

Education plays a significant role in the improving the standard of life of every individual. As educational level of a people increase it increases the employment opportunity the Human Resource Development and also increases the Gross per capita income of the economy. On Mid of March 2020 the Covid-19 outbreak shook the world. The deadliest disease of the history and the people worldwide locked themselves inside their house with fear of spread of this disease. Health is very important and the students from school or college they build low immune system and they all are large group. The WHO and Health authorities suggested the lockdown all over the world. All the education institutions were closed and the Teachers and students were restricted to go to the education institutions. As the traditional way of learning with face-to-face and chalk and board method was converted into the Online learning using the latest technologies like with Mobile phone and laptops. This paper provides an insight into the problems and challenges faced by the education institution during the Covid-19 pandemic period and the impact of Covid-19 on Education Sector.

Keywords: Covid-19 Pandemic, Secondary Education and Higher Education.

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic threaten the world and compelled people to maintain social distancing to reduce the spread of the virus. All the education institutions all over the world was closed. On February 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) proposed an official name of the virus as COVID-19, an acronym for Coronavirus disease 2019. It was first identified in Wuhan, China on December 31, 2019. First death by COVID-19 was the 61 year old man in Wuhan, China on January 11, 2020. WHO declared COVID-19 as a pandemic on March 11, 2020. The first case of the COVID-19 pandemic in India was reported on 30 January 2020 in the state of Kerala and the affected had a travel history from Wuhan, China (Wikipedia). Government imposed the travel restriction to the people to reduce the spread of the disease to other people, in March 2020. According to UNESCO, about 11 billion school students were affected by the lockdown process, in which 191 countries had nationwide closure and five had regional locks, affecting about 91.3% of the global public students. This situation pushed the students and teachers to connect them with online learning method through Smart phone and Laptops to keep the students engaged with the school activities.

OBJECTIVES

The present paper focused on the following objectives:

- To give insight into the steps taken during pandemic by the government to Education sector.
- To know the impact of COVID-19 on schools and Colleges and on Teachers and parents.

METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on the secondary data collected from various articles, journals, reports, and authentic websites, provided by various national and international agencies during COVID-19 on

impacts of COVID-19 on Education sector.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES TOWARDS ONLINE PORTALS

Central and State government taken so many initiatives to education sector which was very helpful to the students and teachers. Without any loss of school activities among school students and college students they connected themselves with the education institutions.

FACE-TO-FACE LEARNING SHIFT TO ONLINE LEARNING

The pandemic scenario shifted the face-to-face learning to online learning due to the closure of all the educational institutions all over the world. This situation turned as the challenge for both the students and teachers and they connected each other with the various online platforms. The Ministry of Human Resource Development has taken good initiatives and provided online educational platforms and channels directly to home through Television and Radios. The students all over the world connected themselves with their teachers for learning through WhatsApp, Google meet, Zoom app and the likes. Some of the digital platforms for Secondary and Higher Education:

SECONDARY EDUCATION E-LEARNING TOOLS

e- Pathshala This is an e-learning app by NCERT for classes 1 to 12 in multiple languages. The app houses books, videos, audio, etc. aimed at students, educators and parents in multiple languages including Hindi, Urdu and English. In this web portal NCERT has deployed 1886 audios, 2000 videos, 696 e-books and 504 Flip Books for classes 1 to 12 in different languages. Mobile App is available. Website: <http://epathshala.nic.in> or <http://epathshala.gov.in>.

Diksha It contains e-learning content for students, teachers, and parents aligned to the curriculum, including video lessons, worksheets, textbooks and assessments. Under the guidance of its national boards of education (CBSE) and NCERT, the content has been created by more than 250 teachers who teach in multiple languages. The app is available to use offline. It has more than 80,000 e-books for 1 to 12 created by CBSE, NCERT in multiple languages. The contents can also be downloaded from IOS and Google Play Store. Website: <https://diksha.gov.in> or <https://seshagun.gov.in/shagun>.

National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER) This portal provides a host of resources for students and teachers in multiple languages including books, interactive modules and videos including a host of STEM-based games. Content is mapped to the curriculum for classes 1 to 12, including aligned resources for teachers. It has total of 14527 files including 401 collection, 2779 documents, 1345 interactive, 1664 audio, 2586 images and 6153 videos on different languages. Website: <http://nroer.gov.in/welcome>.

HIGHER EDUCATION E-LEARNING TOOLS

Swayam It is the national online education platform hosting 1900 courses covering both schools (classes 9 to 12) and higher education (under graduate, post graduate programs) in all subjects including engineering, humanities and social sciences, law and management courses. The unique feature is that, it is integrated with the conventional education. Credit transfers are possible for SWAYAM courses (max. 20%). Website: <https://swaaym.gov.in/>

Swayam Prabha It has 32 DTH TV channels transmitting educational contents on 24 x 7 basis. These channels are available for viewing all across the country using DD free Dish Set Top Box and Antenna. The channel schedule and other details are available in in the portal. The Channel cover both school education (classes 9 to 12) and higher education (Undergraduate, postgraduate, engineering out-of-school children, vocational courses and teachers training) in arts, sciences, and humanities subjects, engineering, technology, law, medicine, agriculture. Website: <https://swayamprabha.gov.in/>

e-PG Pathshala This is for postgraduate students. The postgraduate student can access this platform for e-books, online courses and study materials during this lockdown period. The importance of this platform is that students can access this facilities without having internet for whole day. Website: <https://epgp.inflibnet.ac.in/>

PROBLEMS IN ONLINE METHOD OF LEARNING IN THE LONG-RUN

The digital medium can't replicate the interpersonal interactions that schools facilitate by bringing together young children from different background and cultures. In essence, they act as a melting pot of ideas and perspective that serves to broaden the learner's perspective. Interacting with their peer between classes also help students develop their social skills essential to their holistic growth and development. Another aspect is that of equitable access. India is infamous for its wealth gap; a 2020 Oxfam report highlighted how the country's richest 10% own almost three-fourth (74%) of its wealth. This means that, of the 320 million learners calling India home, a significant percentage does not have the same access to digital facilities as their more privileged peers do. This disparity is further complicated by the digital divide between urban and rural India, leading to issues with consistency and quality of learning. Even developed countries such as the US have faced challenges with ensuring quality education to learners during pandemic; India might fare even worse if online learning continues due to the inequalities, bottlenecks, and challenges that already there in the education system.

IMPACT ON SCHOOLS DURING PANDEMIC

Going to school is the best public policy tool available to raise skills and social awareness, from an economics point of view the primary point of being in school is that it increases a child's ability. Even relatively short period of missed schools will have consequences for skill growth. The closure of the school affected the structure of learning and schooling. Firstly it affected the teaching and assessment methodologies. Online teaching methods are adopted by the few private schools that are handful in taking online classes. In those schools children are taking classes online. On the other side low income private and government schools have complete closure not having the access to e-learning solution. It is disrupting the learning of students. Parents are facing various issues because of change in the teaching methodologies.

IMPACT ON COLLEGES DURING PANDEMIC

The shutdown of universities has also affected the student's learning in universities. In order to ensure the continuity in institutes and universities, one immediate measure is essential. To conduct the class smoothly, online teaching methodology is adopted. Learning management software and open-source digital learning solutions are adopted by the universities to run online classes. Higher education is a critical determinant of the economics future of the country and higher education sector has significantly affected by the pandemic as well. Many students from India enroll in universities abroad. Due to the global closure of the institutes and universities, it is expected that will reduce the demand for the international higher education. It also affected the employment opportunities of the student who finished their degrees.

IMPACT ON STUDENT DROPOUT AND POSTPONED EXAMINATIONS

The sever pandemic forced many students to discontinue the schools to support their family to meet the necessities. This has affected the low-income families who unable afford schooling for their children. According to Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, unemployment in India jumped from 8.4% in March 2020 to over 24% in May 2020. Dr. Pravat Kumar Jena explains that when the unemployment rate rises, education rates decrease as people struggles to find food for their families instead of pursuing

an education. The postponing of examination also mostly affected the college student for finding jobs. During pandemic the nurse shortages was faced due to this postponed examinations.

IMPACT ON ASSESSMENTS DURING PANDEMIC

As postponing of examinations also affected the assessment process. Internal assessments are perhaps thought to be less important and many have been simply cancelled. But their point to give information about child's progress for families and teachers. The loss of this information delays the recognition of both high potential and learning difficulties and can have harmful long-term consequence for the child.

IMPACT ON TEACHERS AND PARENTS

Many teachers were unprepared for the transition to online learning and did not have the technical tools, support or knowledge to be able to successfully teach their students. This led to inefficient lessons and additional duties that teachers were unprepared for. Some teachers also took on side jobs during the pandemic in order to make ends meet. This pandemic was challenge to the parents of the school and college students. In order to maintain the attendance or not missing out too much, children are forced to continue their education at home and generally have not been sent out from home to play. The major inputs in child's learning is provided by the families as these are treated as a central to education. Parents were facing issue in understanding the new technology of teaching. Some parents are not very techno friendly. Thus, they are not able to guide their ward to take classes online. Connectivity of internet is also a big challenge in front of all teachers, students and parents.

CONCLUSION

The COVID-19 pandemic made all the educational institute to adopt the teaching and learning online. Government should take initiatives for the future like network infrastructure to rural and urban areas, and should establish zero-rating educational resources on the internet, prepare digital teaching and learning resources. Utilizing free online learning resources, use mobile learning, use radio and television teaching and grow-up ICT infrastructures. The blended learning which combine both online and offline teaching should be encourages in all the school and colleges and other educational institutions in future.

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