IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON EDUCATION IN INDIA

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Abstract

The virus that is called as Coronavirus now days, has started in Wuhan (China) and it has spread to develop and developing countries very fast. The coronavirus has created greatest impact on the developed countries like America, Italy and France. Due to the coronavirus the countries has to implement the Lockdown. The lockdown phase has created major Impact on the education system, the traditional education that we generally use that is now completely shut down. This study aims to assess the impact of lockdown on education system in India. The study also include various Initiatives taken by Govt. of India for education system during this pandemic.

Keywords: Covid-19, Lockdown, Online education, WHO

Introduction

The coronavirus had a global impact on education system of India. The education system of India need to take radical changes in the education sector until the corona virus is eradicated. WHO also stated that coronavirus is like AIDS and is less likely to be deported. The epidemic of coronavirus has changed the education system around the world. The lockdown in India had created devastating effect on more than million student's education in India.

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Due to the rapid spread of the corona virus in Asia, Europe, Middle East, and the United States, these countries have taken swift and decisive action to reduce the development of the disease as a whole. In the last two weeks, there have been several announcements to suspend the attendance of students in schools and universities as well as cancellation of exams. These decisions, aimed at overcoming the crisis, have led to temporary 'home schooling' for millions of students, especially in countries, i.e., China, South Korea, Italy, Iran and India because they are most affected countries. The "home schooling" is very tough for the students as well as for the faculty members but still they set new examples for the educational Innovation. To reduce the spread of coronavirus amongst the students from different parts of the world, including India, on-line education is started through interactive applications. Now days, 5G technology becomes more prevalent in countries like China, USA, Japan and India because it can lead to learning and teaching anywhere, anytime, teaching and learning is moving towards the adoption of certain types of digital learning concepts.   New methods of learning will replace traditional individual classroom learning, from live broadcasts to "educational influencers" and experiences of virtual reality. Now online teaching will become a habit.

In emerging countries like India where education is primarily provided by the government, on-line can become a prevalent and consequential trend for future education. This epidemic is also an opportunity for students to make decisions in this uncertain world, to make informed decisions, to solve problems in a constructive way, and most importantly to adapt to situations where skills need to be learned. To ensure that these skills will be elementary for all students, flexibility must be developed in our educational systems. Online education system has also created lot of confusion in India and students are unable to follow their regular academic routines. To overcome these problems most of the institutions have taken initiative to facilitate telecommunication, Skype call, Zoom application, Google Class room and Microsoft Teams to reduce the distance in education. It is training students and

teachers to use virtual classrooms and technology to facilitate the exchange of information. Undoubtedly, this is a very important time for students. Therefore, the objective of the study is studying Impact of covid-19 on education and different initiatives taken by government.

Objectives

- To study the Impact of Covid-19 on education system in India.

- To analyse various Initiatives taken by Govt. of India for education system during this pandemic.

Methodology

The research is based on national and International reports of various agency on Covid-19. As it is not feasible to collect data from outside due to lockdown, so data is collected from different authentic websites, journals and e-contents relating to impact of Covid-19 on educational system of India.

Impact of Covid-19 on Education System

Pandemic Covid-19 has severely affected the educational system of India as well as the globe but some of the most impacted areas of education system of India are as pointed below.

Impact on Professional & Academic: Covid-19 has created positive and negative impact on research in India. If we take the negative side, it has made impossible for researchers to travel for gathering the information and working at national and international levels. Research work that need to be done in association with other agencies has become complicated now. Some scientific laboratory testing/research work could not be conducted. But Covid-19 has also created some positive impact as well, i.e., academicians got much time to improve their theoretical research work. Academicians got acquainted with technological methods and improved their research. Webinars and e-conferences became normal methods for sharing expertise among students

and academicians around the globe with similar issues. They could get much time to concentrate on professional development by doing research and to improve knowledge by sharing ideas through webinars and e-conferences. This has enhanced their technical skill and could get the scope for publishing articles in journals, publishing books in this free time.

Minimize educational activities: Outbreak of covid-19 has compelled lockdown in every sector including education sector in India. The institutions get closed with closure of colleges and schools (Pravat, 2020). So, the various activities like admission, examinations, entrance tests, competitive examinations conducted by various boards/schools/colleges/ universities are postponed. Many entrance tests for higher study got cancelled which created a great challenge in the life of a student of higher education. The outbreak of coronavirus has created a challenge for teaching because teaching is online and no interaction will take place between student and teacher. Covid-19 has accelerated adoption of digital technologies to deliver education. It encouraged all teachers and students to become more technology savvy. The colleges and Schools have started conducting orientation programmes, induction meetings and counselling classes with the help of different e-conferencing tools like Google Meet, Skype, Microsoft team, Google classroom etc. to provide support services to the students. This initiative has taken to create an effective virtual environment of teaching learning and to create motivation among students for online activities.

Lesser employment opportunities: Many entrance tests and job recruitments process got cancelled which created negative impact with a great challenge in the life of a student. The Indians who have been doing their jobs abroad became upset of their job withdrawal also. In India, there is no recruitment in Govt. sector and fresh graduates are in pressure of fearing withdrawal of job offers from corporate sectors because of the pandemic situation. Many students may lose their jobs from India and overseas. The pass out students may not get their job outside India due to various restrictions caused by

Covid-19. All these facts imply towards increase of unemployment rate due to this pandemic. With increase of unemployment situation, the interest for education may gradually decrease as people struggle for food rather than education (Pravat, 2020).

Seriously affected the educational assessment system: Most of the external examinations have been postponed and almost all the internal assessments have been cancelled. The cancellation of assessments has negative impact on students' learning. Many institutions have been managing the internal assessments through online mode using different digital tools but the postponement of the external assessments, has a direct impact on the educational and occupational future of students' life. This uncertainty has created anxiety among students as they are stuck in the same grade/class without promotion. Similarly, many students who had appeared final/board examinations would suffer a lot as by the time they get their certificates, it might be too late for them to apply for the forthcoming academic year in other countries due to lockdown.

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

Increase in use of Learning Systems: Use of learning systems by educational institutions became a great demand. It opened a great opportunity for the companies those have been developing and strengthening learning management systems for use educational institutions (Misra, 2020).

Move towards Blended Learning: COVID-19 has accelerated adoption of digital technologies to deliver education. Educational institutions moved towards blended mode of learning. It encouraged all teachers and students to become more technology savvy. New ways of delivery and assessments of

learning opened immense opportunities for a major transformation in the area of curriculum development and pedagogy. It also gives access to large pools of learners at a time.

Improvement in collaborative work- There is a new opportunity where collaborative teaching and learning can take on new forms. Collaborations can also happen among faculty/teachers across the world to benefit from each other (Misra, 2020).

Encouraged 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.

Enhanced Digital Literacy: The pandemic situation induced people to learn and use digital technology and resulted in increasing the digital literacy.

Demand for Open and Distance Learning (ODL): During the pandemic situation most of the students preferred ODL mode as it encourages self-learning providing opportunities to learn from diverse resources and customized learning as per their needs.

Better time management: Students are able to manage their time more efficiently in online education during pandemics.

Initiatives of Govt. of India on education system during Covid-19

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 (CBSE) postponed all examinations of secondary and higher secondary schools on March 18, 2020Throughout India. CBSE released revised guidelines for examination centers to conduct examinations by maintaining a distance of at least 1 meter (2gaj Ki doori) 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 (Wikipedia). Similarly the most of the state Governments and other educational boards postponed examinations due to outbreak of COVID-19. Govt. of India has also done 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. The lockdown 6.0 was declared on June 29, which is effective from 1st July to 31st July 2020 with some less restriction in other sectors except education. 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 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 (Pravat, 2020). So, the digital India vision of the government is emerging 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 What Sapp, Zoom, Google meet, Telegram, YouTube live, Facebook live etc. for online teaching learning system. ICT initiative of MHRD (eBroucher- https://mhrd.gov.in/ict-initiatives) is a unique platform which combines all digital resources for online education. The digital initiatives of MHRD for secondary as well as higher education during

COVID-19 are listed as below:

Secondary education

Diksha: It is a portal containing 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 classes 1 to 12 created by CBSE, NCERT in multiple languages. The contents can also be viewed through QR codes on textbooks.

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 1-12, including aligned resources for teachers. It has a total of 14527 files including 401 collections, 2779 documents, 1345 interactive, 1664 audios, 2586 images and 6153 videos on different languages

E-Pathshala: It 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 Apps is available.

Higher Education

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 the portal. The channels cover both school education (classes 9 to 12) and higher education (undergraduate,

postgraduate, engineering Out-of-school children, vocational courses and teacher training) in arts, science, commerce, performing arts, social sciences and humanities subjects, engineering, technology, law, medicine, agriculture.

Swayam: This is the national online education platform hosting 1900 courses covering both school (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.

PG Pathshala: It is for postgraduate students. Postgraduate students can access this platform for eBooks, online courses and study materials during this lockdown period. The importance of this platform is that students can access these facilities without having internet for the whole day.

Conclusion

This study has outlined various impacts of Covid-19 on education system in India. The recent pandemic created an opportunity for change in pedagogical approaches and introduction of virtual education in all levels of education. As we do not know how long the pandemic situation will continue, a gradual move towards the online/virtual education is the demand of the current crisis. UGC and MHRD have lunched many virtual platforms with online depositories, e-books and other online teaching/learning materials. Combination of the traditional technologies (radio, TV, landline phones) with mobile/web technologies to a single platform with all depositories would enhance better accessibility and flexibility to education. This would involve upgrading the service platform to enable it to meet the required volume of educational demands of students. All service providers need to be mobilized to provide proper access to the educational service platforms to the disadvantaged groups of population also. Virtual education is the most preferred mode of education at this time of crisis due to the outbreak of Covid-19. The post Covid-19 education seems to be an education with widely accepted online/virtual education which may perhaps be a parallel system of

education.

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