Impact of COVID pandemic on school education of Barasat-II block, West Bengal, India: a case study

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Abstract- **COVID-19 Pandemic has unbiasedly affected almost every systems, including school education, throughout the globe. Both positive and negative impacts of COVID-19 have been recorded and discussed along the days. The lockdown destroyed the schedules of every student and academician. Present work attempts to study the overall impact of COVID-19 on various component of school educations in Barasat-II Block of West Bengal, India. The authors have tried to identify the basic requirements of rural school students and made questionnaires based on that to find out whether schools as well as Governments were able to make those available for students. The study also aimed at evaluating the level of mental stress faced by students during lockdown, and the difficulties faced due to online schooling in the area under study.**

*Keywords***: School education, Corona viruses, Socio-economic, Global hazard, COVID-19, Remote learning**

INTRODUCTION

Coronavirus is a ribonucleic acid virus and cause of respiratory tract infection (Schulte-Schrepping et al. 2020). The decision of lockdown affected the educational sector in various state of India badly affected by lockdown induced by COVID 19. Education is the basis of the development and growth of a nation. School education makes the fundamental system for upbringing a countries' socio economic status, hence provides the pillar of development of a country. Several challenges can affect the education system, of which national policies, government stability economic disaster and wide spread pandemic disease are the main. A significant percentages world's student's population was reported to be affected during COVID-19 lockdown (UNESCO, 2020).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A literature review is an overview of the previously published works on a topic. Present study look over the numerous types of resources like reference books, research articles, thesis, relevant journals / periodicals, and the relevant web sites for considering the review from the past studies.

Sarkar & Das, (2020) said that due to corona virus all educational organisations have been closed that have been also stimulated education in online mode to the students in all over the India. The most thoughtful negative result of the school due to closure has been observed on primary education. This research inspects how school closures due to COVID 19 in both private and Government primary schools in all over the West Bengal result in patchy teaching-learning prospects in both formal and non-formal teaching- learning education throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ahmed, M (2020) said in this situation, Online Classes have become the norm because of the COVID-19 pandemic. New challenges and opportunities have indeed emerged for educators, parents, and students, but we have also entered areas of many uncertainties. At one level, online classes will connect students, and on another, create limitations. This has made us reflect on the inequality not only in bandwidth, gadgets, and devices but also in the fact that most parents do not have the time or ability to support their children in this venture. Equity and access are bigger problems with online education. In this paper an attempt has been made to find out, is online education in alternative to conventional situation.

Maity & Sahu, (2021) the study confirms that entire the pandemic situation village government schools students and the girl students are the worst condition in comparison to the boys who are from private and government city based schools respectively. The school infrastructures; eagerness of the school students and also teachers to conduct online classes; accessibility and availability of high-speed internet and financial ability of parents to afford the excessive internet charges are make significant dimensions in online learning classes of students.

Mondal & Sahoo, (2021) said contagions by such an unknown virus and the epidemic transformed into pandemic situation. The built-up situation that impacted various sectors of lives and livings that must be measured in spatial viewpoints. The objective of the research is to measure impact of COVID-19 pandemic on several sectors. Thus, it is

planned to examine seven vital sectors, namely, the education, employment, economy, health, environment, travel and tourism sector-wise COVID -19 impact assessment in West Bengal state of India.

Dhillion, M. (2021). This study wants to assess the effect of lockdown on educational system in India. The lockdown period has created huge impact on the educational system, shut down the traditional system and also shifted another system of medium. Also the study include different action taken by Govt. of India for better running the educational system during this pandemic situation.

Kalia, P. (2023)'s experimental study purposes to find the different type of challenges faced by school stakeholders it including students, teachers, guardian and organisation due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

METHODOLOGY

A questionnaire is developed to collect student teachers and guardian feedback. Three types of questionnaire are prepared. One for teacher to understand resource management and monitoring during this crisis and also to understand obstructions, feasibility and comfort in imparting education online. Second for students to understand access, satisfaction and issues faced by students and the third for guardians to understand their comfort and issues pertaining to online learning and also taken any kind of support from school like food, health issues, mental support etc. Another important question arise to guardian does any job loss during COVID pandemic and does their community have any alternate ways to generate income. The questions are both open- ended and close –ended. Survey, Interview, Participating approach were used for data collection and percentage analysis technique is used for data analysis.

FINDINGS

Impact of COVID-19 on education:

Due to the sudden outbreak of COVID-19, the face-to-face and/or conventional education system worldwide has been stopped and has inclined to blend online learning and find alternatives. From nursery kids to school-going children up to the students and scholars of the higher education system are learning via online mode. Even certain examinations are conducted online. In this backdrop, the complete shutdown of all the educational institutions for an uncertain period was observed educational institutions for an uncertain period was observed when situations in West Bengal were analyzed. This condition was seen in most of the other parts of the state and in the whole country. The educational system is trying to develop a new strategic approach or model of blended learning of diverse disciplines to cope up with the situation in the diverse disciplines to cope up with the situation in the post-COVID-19 era. COVID-19 has completely affected the education system (Kumaran et al. 2020). The present study concentrates on information and communication technology(ICT) usage, e-focus and e-enhancement, supported online modes, supplemental study materials, buffet materials and methods that can be encouraged by conventional institutions' future delivery mechanisms.
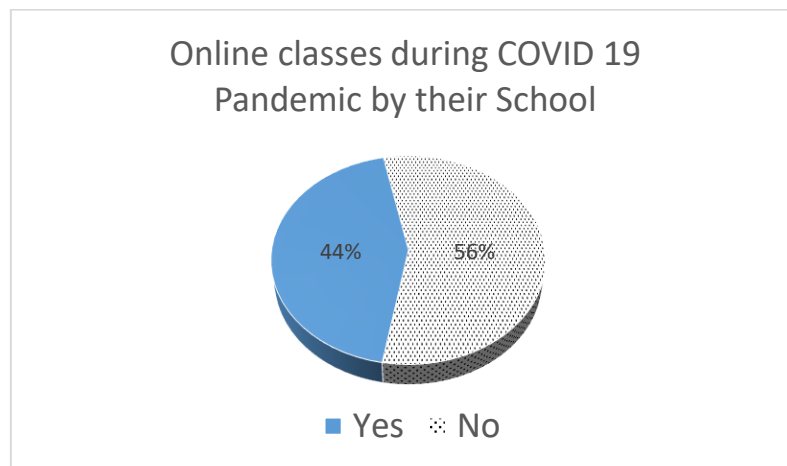

Fig-1

Despite the current popularity of blended learning in developed countries, it is less used in educational institutions in India. Blended learning has become an utmost priority throughout the country. The traditional face-to-face learning of conventional institutions is becoming a challenge. Therefore, new models or approaches are needed in the education system for their practice-based and non-practical discourses. Thereafter, a newly planned, pedagogically valuable, ICT-supported blended mode, which can be accepted by schools across the country and probably across the world, is an urgent need. Practical-based subjects are challenging, and schools are spreading education in a way that has shifted the paradigm from a conventional teacher centric to a non-conventional learner-centric system, with the application of Internet communication.
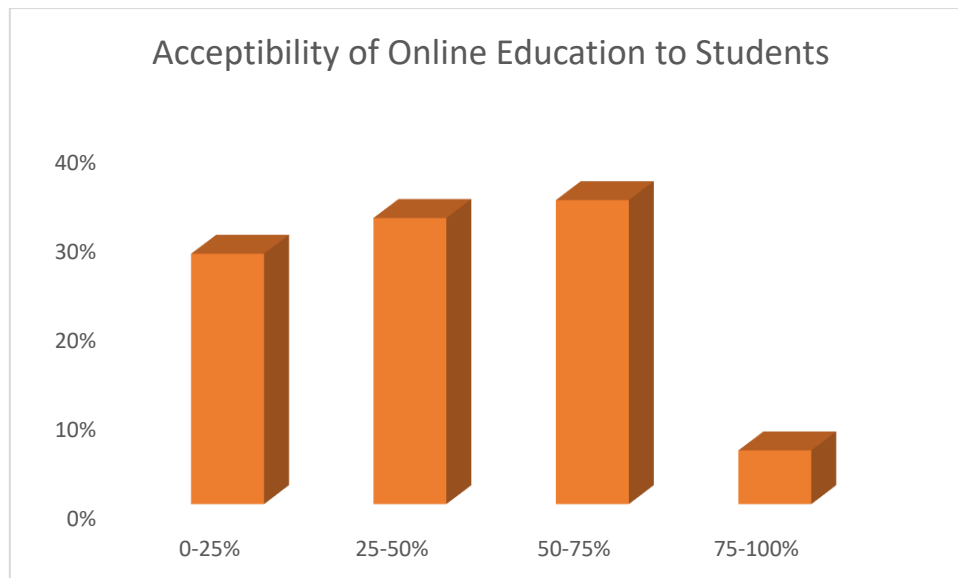
Fig-2

The above graph shows that online classes was popular to most of the students and high attendance was recorded during online classes in most of the high schools (government and private). But sometimes they faced some problem to attend online class properly, like network problem, environmental problem, difficulties regarding mobile app and teacher sometimes inability to teach. The graph shows this kind of data-
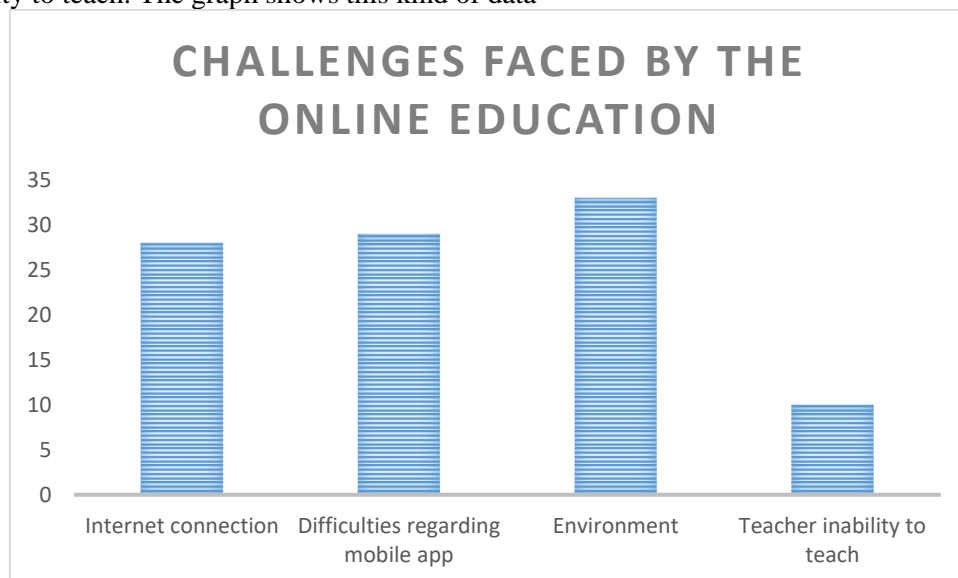

Fig-3

To run the online classes properly and hazardlessly the government of West Bengal took an initiative to distribute tablets to the students of 12th class. Present study indicates that the students were benefitted by these approach of state government.
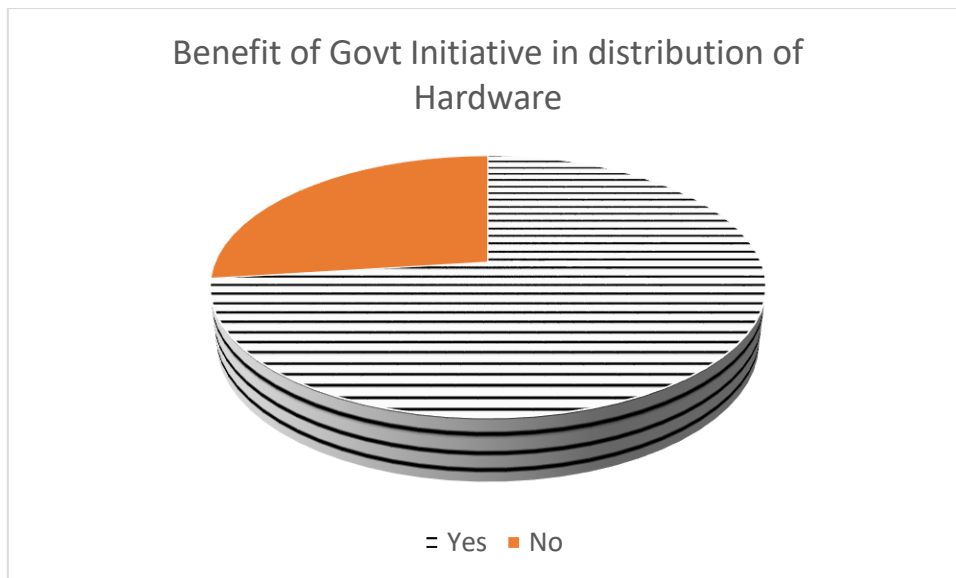
Fig-4

The fraternity associated with the education sector conduct, present and participate in online webinars on the diverse topics related to their discipline or current scenarios or awareness, orientation programmes, training programmes and faculty development programmes. Almost all these programmes are fruitful in their purpose and create awareness and strengthen their strategies to fight against this virus. However, the over-dependency on electronic media or mobile phones for that purpose is generating some extra burden and anxiety in their daily life and livelihood. Students, especially those below 18 years of age, are becoming addictive and vulnerable due to the overuse of electronic gadgets for their educational purposes. Sometimes, these gadgets can no longer meet their actual purpose, and a co-sequencing arrogant behavior is observed.

However, stakeholders face various challenges during this online teaching–learning process. Teachers and learners face difficulties. Nevertheless, they are quite satisfied with the situation in certain cases.

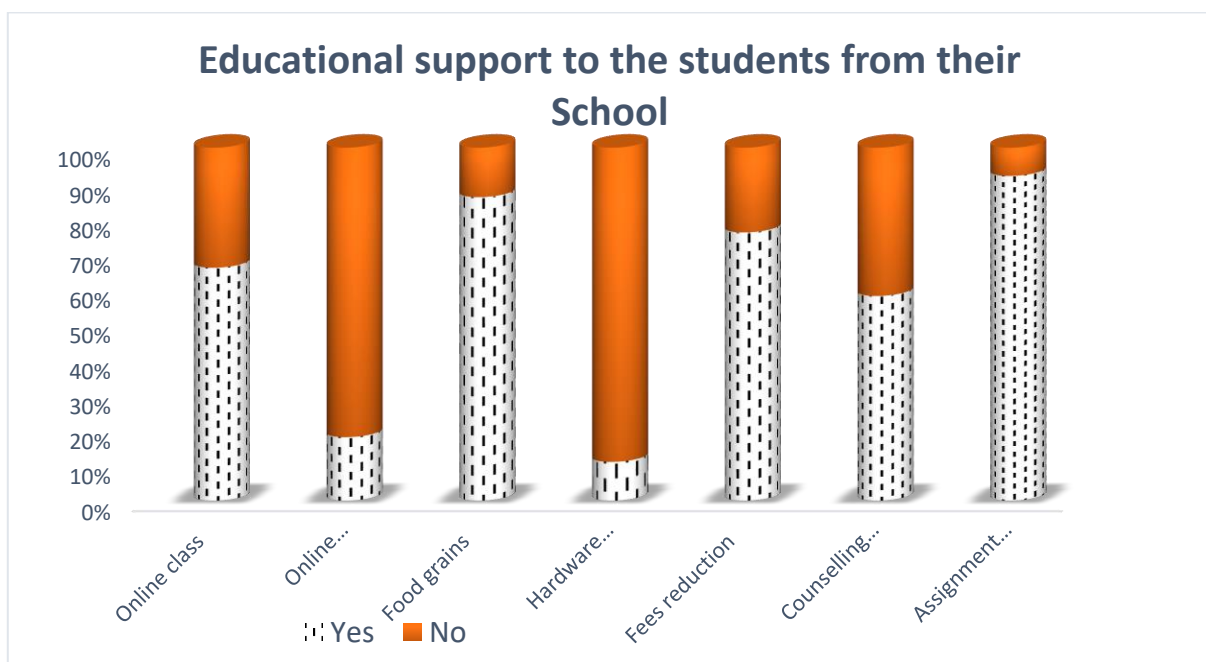**Supports to students in their learning and personality Building Process:**

Fig-5

Present survey indicates that online classes were effectively conducted by most of the schools during the pandemic. Proper assignments were also provided to the students by high majority of primary, upper primary and higher secondary schools, both private and government. A high percentage of students of the area under study have received food grains as part of their nutrition from their schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. A reasonable support was also provided

by the institutions to overcome mental stresses caused to the students during pandemic. Most of the schools, both semi-government and private, took initiative to reduce their fees and a very high percentage of students were benefitted by this reduction of school fees during COVID-19 pandemic. Present study also depicts that only few students were benefitted by the hardware distribution program initiated by State Government as the said program was taken up only for the Higher Secondary students. Online examination system was not properly undertaken by the schools as the data obtained from present study suggests, and a considerably low percentage of students took part in the online examinations scheduled by their institutions.
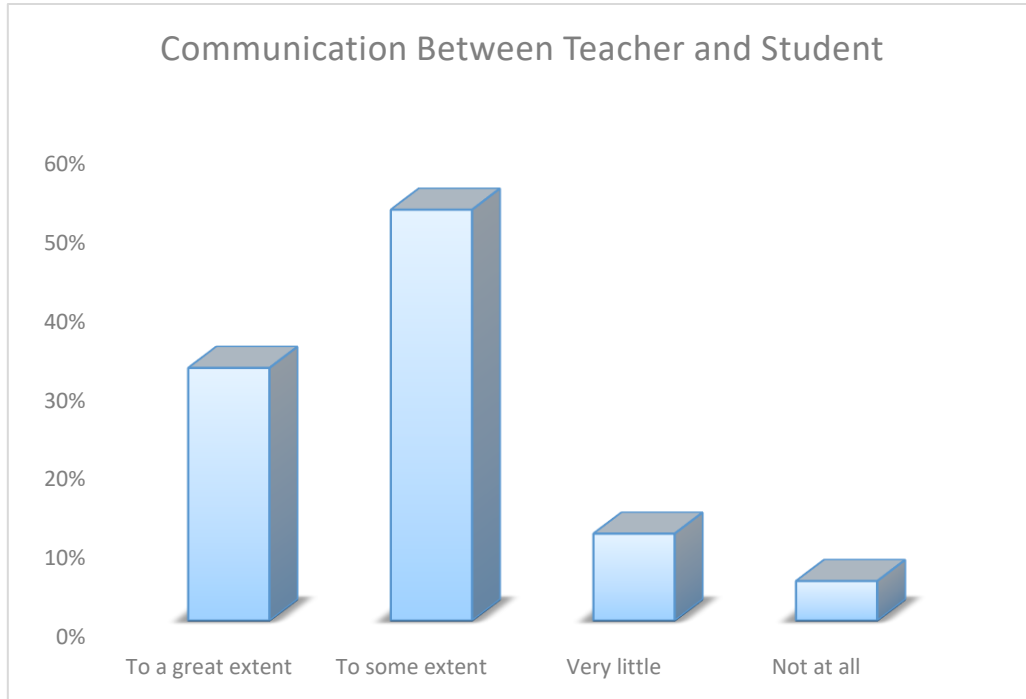

Fig-6

A good communication between teacher and students helps to improve the interactive ability of students and thus promotes an advanced teaching-learning process in the schools. The graph shows that a considerably high percentage of students were happy with their teachers communicating to them during online classes.

Effect of COVID 19 on school enrolment:

Fig 19 shows that 34% student enrolment decrease after COVID 19 both primary and government schools. The sharp post pandemic decline in school enrolment.
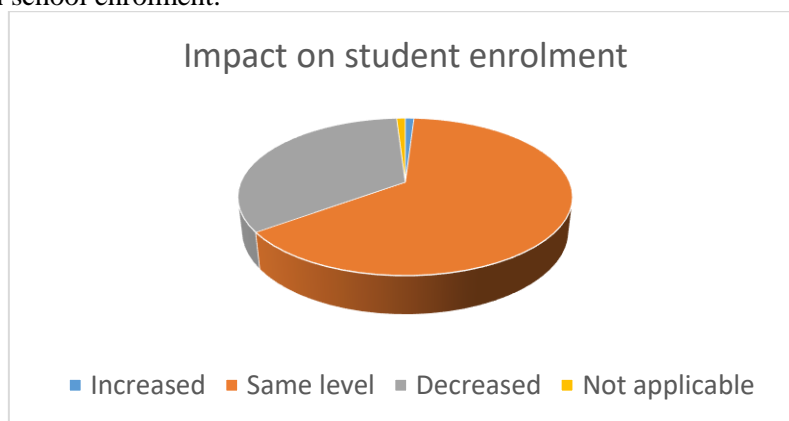

Fig-7

Dropout rates ranged dramatically hike. The closure of educational hubs, school dropout rate became very high in this area.
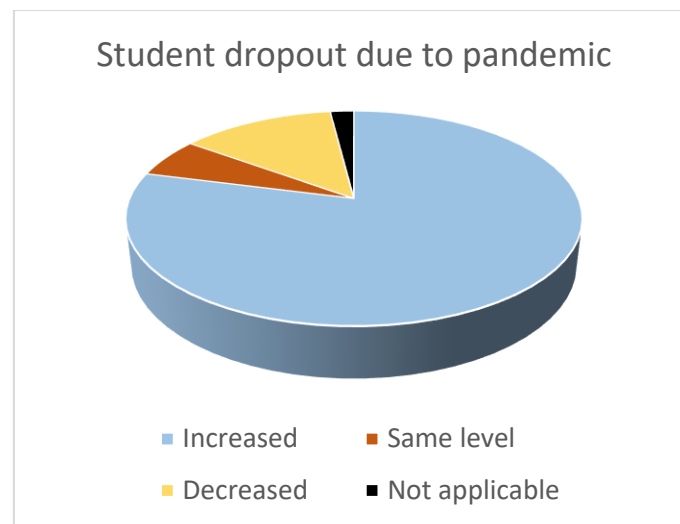
Fig-8

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Due to the outbreak of corona virus, the work from home culture is booming in all-over India. Therefore, to maintain the social distance, the education institutions have opted for different digital platforms to facilitate learning for their students from home. In India as well as West Bengal, examinations of different board and different classes are cancelled as these exams cannot be conducted online. It is not only just the question of imparting continuous and uninterrupted teaching learning process during this lockdown but also the most important challenge for the educators is to focus on the overall elements of a well-developed course. Through the use of technology, we can mitigate and compensate for the impediments posed and inconvenience caused due to COVID 19 pandemic to the education system and learners by extension. This paper has not covered any statistical analysis on COVID 19 and school education, however further in-depth study with statistical research. This study found that in Barasat II block school dropout rate high in that area. But the study found that the selected sectors have been severely affected, and the state needs ample time to rebuild its state of affairs, prosperity and diversity. Therefore, this kind of assessment is necessary for the future conventional education system has collapsed but the online education were introduced most of the students' attained online classes and also providing mid-day meal. The government was introduced many scheme on emergency period like fees relaxation, syllabus reduction, promotion to higher class and also organized counselling for better mental health of students.

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