

A Study on the Impact of the Covid-19 on Indian Educational System

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused huge disruption around the world. It originated in China and spread around the world and known as COVID-19, this health crisis has spread throughout the country, negatively impacting economic growth. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant disturbances in people's usual everyday lives. Several countries are implementing various strategies to stem the spread of COVID-19. The Indian government has proclaimed a state of emergency throughout the country in order to encourage social distance. Because of the epidemic, all schools, colleges, and institutions have been ordered to close their doors.

In India education of around 360 million students was hampered by the pandemic. As a result, there is a ripple effect across the whole educational system. When it comes to developing policies that affect the education system, policymakers are confronted with many difficulties. The transition from offline to online education is taking place. Students, instructors, and parents are all experiencing difficulties due to this transition in educational practice. It bound us adopt the new way of learning called digital learning but the problem associated such alternative is that it is not accessible to all. The time has come to think outside the box and come up with new ways to teach and test kids. The COVID-19 pandemic has given us a chance to get ready for digital learning. This study aims to discuss the repercussions of the COVID-19 on the educational system and try to suggest some measures for astounding growth and development of education system of the country.

Keywords: COVID-19, pandemic, offline to online classes, educational system

Introduction

On March 11, 2020 the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared COVID-19 a pandemic. This pandemic outbreak originated in Wuhan, China and has now spread to a number of other nations. The epidemic is also causing chaos in India. On March 22, 2020, India Prime Minister announced the first Janta Curfew in an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the country. After then, India's prime minister issued a 21-day lockdown to combat the COVID-19 outbreak. The Indian government prolonged the lockdown on 14 April 2020 to 3 May 2020. Covid 19 is infectious disease caused by the virus name SARS-COV-2. It has a devastating impact on the life of millions of the people causing a serious illness and if not properly cured or treated it may result into death. The general symptoms of this virus are - cough, fever, body ache, fatigue, nausea and vomiting. The virus has great impact on the body of the individual affected and if not detected or treated properly may lead to respiratory failure, kidney failure, nervous system failure etc. As it is contagious, it spread from one person to another and the only way of the prevention is the adoption of the norm of social distancing and strictly adhering to the guidelines issued in public interest. The symptom of covid 19 became visible in the infected person with 2 to 14 days of getting infected by the virus. However, the recovery from this virus is depend on the severity of the illness and immunity of the infected patient. If it was mild then taking medication and home remedies may proves beneficial but if the case is critical hospitalisation, assisted ventilation and all heath supportive measures are almost required. Since the outbreak of the new coronavirus pandemic, the economies of the nations where the virus is prevalent have experienced considerable declines. Countries are taking a variety of tactics to minimise the gathering, including lockdowns, workplace non-attendance, school closures, and suspensions of transportation facilities. In order to slow the spread of the COVID-19 epidemic, many countries have temporarily shut down their educational institutions. More than 90 of the world's students will be impacted by decisions to close. The impact of this virus has witnessed in almost all the spheres of life. The market which was earlier crowded by the people get vacant and closed. The economy has suffering with the slowdown and over all this the education sector has got a setback. To prevent the student from getting contaminated the lockdown was imposed and the gate of the schools and colleges remain closed for the months. Education which is a major predictor of the country's economic prospects. All schools, colleges, and universities have been ordered shut down by the government. The epidemic of COVID-19 has thrown the educational system into a loop because learning at all the level whether it would be primary, secondary or higher level had gone through extreme adversities. Though this pandemic has drastic impact on every sector but for the sake of this research, we will examine the impact of covid 19 and lockdown on educational institutions, faculty, students, and their families, in general nationwide.

Impact of COVID-19 on education system

In India around 250 million students were affected due to prolonged lockdown which was imposed with the intent to prevent its spread among the mass. The state government began closing schools and institutions across the country to stop the spread of the new coronavirus. To avoid the crowds, it was announced somewhere in the second week of March. The government initially declared the suspension of schools for the month, but the period of closure was steadily prolonged, and it is unclear when the schools would return. Among all these uncertainties a big transformation which was highlighted in the education system is transition from school learning to digital learning. But the several problems arise like: a rise in dropout rate, reduction in learning outcome and creation of a line of digital divide. Several important activities take place during this time period, including competitive exams and entrance tests for various universities, board exams and semester exams at universities, nursery school admission and the admission process at universities. There is no quick solution to stop the spread of COVID-19. The closing of schools and universities in India would not only have short-term impact on the education of future generations, but it will also have significant implications for the country's economic development and for the society as a whole. The post-pandemic scenario is also becoming a matter of concern as after such longer closure of school it was found that students seem to be disinterested, the disruption in their academic year has also unbalanced their routine life. The less attention toward their studies has started to impact the academic performance. Hence, for recovering the educational system and for redeveloping the interest of students in their studies a well-planned approach is required.

Impact on COVID-19 in schools

The best way to improve one's abilities is to go to school. It is a place where youngsters may have fun while developing their social awareness and interpersonal abilities. The primary purpose of attending school or enrolling in a school programme is to help a youngster develop his or her abilities. Even after only a few years of formal education, students have improved their knowledge and abilities. On the other hand, skipping or failing to show up for class might have a negative impact on one's ability to learn. According to the report published it was found that enrolment in the upper secondary education is estimated around 25.57 Cr in 2021-22 which was 19.36 lakh more than the student enrolled in 2020-21. But the problem has been seen in the enrolment in the school pre-primary section fall by 11.5 lakh and the several number of the school has been closed because of the resource constraints. The closure of the schools has had a significant impact on the structure of education and learning in the area. In the first place, it had an impact on how students were taught and assessed. The few private colleges that allow students to take online classes have adapted online teaching methods. Children at those schools are taking online classes. For low-income private and public schools, e-learning is completely unavailable due to financial constraints. Students' education is being jeopardised because of it. Changes in educational methods are causing a variety of problems for parents as well. During the time of the pandemic the students get promoted to the senior classes on the basis of their past performance or some online tests conducted not for testing their knowledge but just for promoting them to the senior classes for the sake of preventing the loss of the academic year. But this type of promotion becomes the cause of serious concern because they are not promoted on the basis of their skill, learning and achievements.

Impact of COVID-19 on Higher Education

The closure of universities has also had an impact on students' education. One immediate solution is required to ensure continuation in educational institutions and universities. Online teaching methods are used to keep things running smoothly in the classroom. The universities are using learning management systems and open-source digital learning solutions to run online courses. Adoption of digital learning provides a support to the stressed student because they can get the chance of doubt clearance and get good counselling on career and other exam-related issues with the help of virtual applications like Skype, Google Meet, Zoom app, Webex and many more.

As a vital factor in the country's economic future, higher education has been greatly affected by the pandemic. Many Indian students have gone to other countries for attaining higher education.

International higher education is predicted to decline as a result of the closure of institutions and universities around the world.

Pandemic has put the major challenges for the researchers because they find it difficult to pursue their research work, unable to attend the various workshops for getting acquainted with modern research tools and unable to attend the various national and international seminars and conferences which were very much essential for attractive growth in academic areas. In such a situation online webinars were the only alternative for getting knowledge and exposures.

Almost everyone is worried about the impact of the pandemic on job rates. Graduates who recently completed their education are concerned about losing their employment offers from corporations because of the current economic climate.

Due to the lockdown in India, teaching methods have also changed at educational institutions and universities. The old chalk-talk methodology has been replaced with new technology. In this context, e-learning solutions are making it feasible to teach and learn, but the lack of participation is a major issue. Students' lack of participation and the digital gap are among the issues that policymakers are attempting to address. A long-term, multi-pronged approach is required to deal with the problem in Indian education.

In this time of crisis, India needs an effective education and well-rounded practices to improve the potential of young brains. In order to assure India's overall success, skill development will be used to promote employment, well-being, health, and productivity.

Impact of teaching on online classes on Parents

Children are compelled to continue their education at home in order to ensure that they do not miss out on too much of their education or that they do not fall behind in their studies.

Children's learning is heavily influenced by the families they live with, according to a study by **Bjorklund and Salvanes (2011)**. Parents are having a hard time adjusting to the new teaching methods. Some parents have a hard time adjusting to new technologies. As a result, they are unable to help their child enroll in online programmes. The unavailability of smart phone also became the prominent problem, in most of the families parents does not provide their child personal smartphone and in such case if the parents of the child is not at home student is bound to miss his or her class. Internet connectivity is also a major concern for all educators, students, and parents alike. Because of the weak connectivity, there are a lot of issues.

Assessment

The closing of schools, colleges, and universities does not entirely eliminate the disruption of instruction for students.

Students throughout the world were also affected by the lockdown. Due to the closure of educational institutions, several tests and evaluations have been postponed or cancelled.

This is a new time in education, for both students and instructors. A large number of schools and institutions have converted their traditional classroom system to online classrooms and have also shifted their assessment method from offline to electronic format. In order to conduct evaluations, they are relying on internet resources. However, online assessment systems do not come without their own set of drawbacks. Online assessment tools have a higher rate of measurement errors than do traditional methods. In their study, **Piopiunik et al. (2020)** found that employers use educational credentials such as grade point averages and degree categories to rank applicants for job openings. As a result, the lockdown is also harming the placement of new graduates in the workforce. Disruption in candidates' signals is diminishing the matching efficiency of new graduates, resulting in increased job separation rates and slower wage growth. For individuals as well as society at large, **Fredriksson and Ihlen (2018)** say this is costly.

Challenges in the Indian Education System

- India is the country with the skewed distribution of the income and with the large socioeconomic disparities. Hence, poor find it extremely difficult to buy the smart phone for adopting the online education as the only alternative.
- Problem of digital divide also emerges as the serious challenge because for attending the online class the availability of smart phone with the good internet connection is the prerequisite. While student from rural areas and marginalised section of the society are bound to get excluded from the learning process because of poor internet connectivity.
- Staff in the educational institute are working on the old methodologies they are not well versed with the digital mode of leaning which to some extent become the cause of outdated or technology less learning.
- The majority of the educational institute in India are suffering with the fund crises, they are not getting the appropriate guidance and support from the side of the government as a result they are unable to avail the services of the expert teaching faculties as a result of which the improvement in the quality of learning and the adoption of modern Technologies in education seems to be impossible.

Conclusion

School, college, and university closures impede both student learning and the ability to conduct both internal and external exams of their qualifications. Traditional teaching methods have been supplemented by online teaching. On the one hand, online education gives students the opportunity to learn, but on the other, it comes with a slew of problems.

Institutions of higher learning are scrambling to fill the void left by the shutdown while also addressing the problems that have arisen as a result of it. Schools will require resources when they reopen in order to make up for the time lost to students. There is a slew of issues that need to be addressed in schools, including how to best target students and make the most of available resources. The pupils' self-assessment of their learning should not be overlooked. The meeting should be rescheduled. Fresh measures should be put in place to help new graduates avoid a prolonged term of unemployment in the workforce.

It is the high time to change in the attitude and the outlook of teachers, students as well as their parents. School must try to hire the services of the experts in particular field so that they may contribute significantly in improving the learning outcomes. The educational institute must organise faculty development programs and ensure the proper training of the staff with the digital applications. COVID-19 emerges as a catalyst for digitalisation. But this digitalisation proves to be beneficial only if teacher try to adopt the technology and use it as medium to impart the knowledge, at the same time students should also give their proper attention and dedication to accept online medium as the one of the alternative of learning and government should also provide some supportive measures then only the inclusive, robust and holistic development of education system can be visualised.

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