

Impact of COVID-19 on Education System in India

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ABSTRACT

The impact of pandemic COVID-19 is observed in every sector around the world. The education sectors of India as well as world are badly affected by this. It has enforced the world wide lock down creating very bad effect on the students' life. Around 32 crore learners stopped to move schools/colleges, all educational activities halted in India. The outbreak of COVID-19 has advised us that change is inevitable. It has worked as a catalyst for the educational institutions to grow and opt for platforms and techniques, which have not been used before. The pandemic shocked the education system of India, and the Indian Government switched on to virtual, online teaching and learning. This paper highlights some measures taken by Govt. of India to provide seamless education in the country.

Keywords: Education System, Virtual Learning, e-learning

INTRODUCTION

The present pandemic is not only affecting the health of the citizens of the country but also witnessing the blocking of daily activities; moreover, it fully transformed the education system of our country. According to the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), there are 993 universities, 39931 colleges, and 10725 Stand Alone Institutions, which actively impart knowledge to the students. By the end of March 2020, the epidemic had spread to over 185 countries and resulted in the closure of over 90 percent of all schools, colleges and universities impacting close to 1.38 billion students. The quick spread of the epidemic, the closure of higher education institutions and the transition to online teaching was so swift that it hardly gave any time to plan and to reflect

on the potential risks or the potential opportunities that such a sudden change could bring. The pandemic shocked the education system of India, and the Indian Government switched on to virtual, online teaching and learning. Given such a situation it is important to look at the impact and reflect on, what has transpired and what is likely to happen as we move forward in the field of global education.

Factors Affecting the Evolution of the Education System

Like traditional learning, e-learning has no geographical and physical boundaries and has a variety of learning platforms, if one student is not able to attend the lectures these platforms provide opportunities for better learning and the student can learn according to his or

her comfort zone. This pandemic affected the whole Indian educational sector and this has opened a new way of teaching and learning.

The terrifying and rigorous blow of COVID-19 has quivered the educational system globally, and it has totally shifted India's educational system. The educational sectors emerged with the different free digital education and e-learning packages, such as zoom, Google Meet....The results of the few studies shows that 25% of these programmes have devastating replies from the students. These innovative tools have been an interactive and motivating substitute as evaluated to classroom teaching and learning. These tools facilitate learning across diverse geographies in India. Moreover, it will offer an opening for teachers to come up with customized learning elucidations for every student. The disruptive technology has affected the present learning sector. Every student gets an opportunity to get to know digital learning, moreover, these new trends in teaching and learning have transformed the traditional blackboard, chalk, and classroom atmosphere. In the case of a country like India, we still have to go, before digital learning is witnessed as the conventional education, because those stay in urban areas has the provision to go for e-learning, the students who stay in the rural do not have the necessary digital devices, moreover, they are not financially fit to benefit the resources needed for digital learning.

We are aware that the Indian government is facing a barriers to build and develop the digital infrastructure to provide education to all students' communities. Another important factor is that the teachers need to move according to the signs of the time, they need to be digitally and technically trained to walk with modern technology. One of the remarkable problems faced by the teachers as well as the students is Internet connectivity and the power failure. The students also get distracted by various mobile apps and tools.

A Strong Relationship with Technology

The pandemic that has shuttered economies around the world has also battered education systems in developing and developed countries. Some 1.5 billion students - close to 90% of all primary, secondary and tertiary learners in the world - are no longer able to physically go to school. The impact has been dramatic and transformative as educators scramble to put in place workable short-term solutions for remote teaching and learning, particularly in emerging markets, where students and schools face additional challenges related to financing and available infrastructure.

While each level of education faces its unique challenges, it is the higher education segment that may end up, by necessity, triggering a learning revolution. Universities are distinctive in that their students are both old enough to handle the rigours of online work and technologically savvy enough to navigate new platforms. The real challenge lies for the institutions in which they have enrolled. Can traditional, campus-based universities adapt by choosing the right technologies and approaches for educating and engaging their students? The successes and failures that unfold should give us all a better grasp of what is possible.

Right now, video-conferencing apps like Zoom and Webex are throwing universities a lifeline. However, lecturers are still struggling to maintain the same depth of engagement with students they could have in a classroom setting. They need to find solutions - and fast - to avoid a dip in the quality of education they are providing. Online education platforms such as Coursera, an IFC client with a global presence, can play a useful role by tapping their expertise in online programme design, choice of tech platform, and digital marketing to develop the best content either with or for the traditional players.

The adoption of online solutions in recent months has been unprecedented. In the short term, educators are

applying a ‘first aid’ solution by switching entirely from in-person to remote instruction, a move that has been forced upon them by sudden mandatory campus closures. But they are quickly realizing that remote learning is just a baby step experiment in the long journey to offering online education that has been conceived as such, which includes effective student engagement tools and teacher training. Some of the partnerships sparked between universities, online education companies and tech providers may continue beyond the pandemic. COVID-19 has struck our education system like a lightning bolt and shaken it to its core. Just as the First Industrial Revolution forged today’s system of education, we can expect a different kind of educational model to emerge from COVID-19.

What are the possible alternatives for interrupted education during COVID-19

- Exploring the possibility of digital learning, high and low technology solutions etc. on the basis of power supply, digital skills of teachers and students, and internet connectivity.
- Inclusion in distance learning programs, especially for students coming from low-income groups or presence of disability, etc.
- Providing support for digitalization to teachers as well as students.

Use of Online Platform

There is no more face to face class because the EI have been closed at this pandemic. The usual face to face class has been replaced by online classes so that students can continue their studies. In many countries, the EI is taking the class through TV channels, Google Classroom, and many other platforms. The lessons/lectures have been prepared by the teachers/professors of the respected schools/colleges/universities, but it is not the same for all EI. Bangladesh Television (BTV) is broadcasting lessons for primary and high school students. In England, the Department of Education is

offering free online courses for primary and secondary school students. They are also providing laptops to students who can’t afford it. Also, they are offering 4G routers to the students to be connected to the internet. The BBC planned to launch educational resources online and on TV (“Coronavirus Lockdown: Laptops Offered for Online School Lessons at Home”) According to BBC, Zoom is being used highly to work from home in current situation (“Zoom Is in Everyone’s Living Room - How Safe Is It”) It is a communication software that is being used largely not only for meetings and conferences but also for the online class in this pandemic Covid-19. However, in many settings online education is still out of reality for various challenges in relation to resources insufficiency and lack of readiness.

Challenges in Executing Study Plans

Comparing face-to-face learning with online learning brings forth significant deficiencies in the online mode such as lack of human connect, absence of opportunities of collaborative learning, teacher supervision and the most glaring being lack of opportunities for hands-on learning in complex subjects such as science and mathematics. Besides, amid the rush of hosting online classes the best teaching practices such as addressing learners Multiples Intelligences (MI), VARK Learning Styles and providing a differentiated learning experience have been relegated to the backburner. So how does the head of a school address the challenges of quality learning in online mode and is it possible to harness technology to provide a rich, immersive and holistic learning experience to the students.

The primary challenges we faced at the start of our remote teaching programme included:

- Finding an appropriate class duration
- teachers, students, and parents in the use of digital tools

- incorporating formative assessments in virtual classroom practice
- implementing active learning strategies
- ensuring students' online safety and privacy
- Budget barriers
- Ubiquitous Internet connection
- Technical problems
- Practicals classes held in laboratory
- Teaching Mathematics
- Research is severely obstructed

Redefining the Role of the Educator

In the present scenario, the concept of an educator as the knowledge holder who transmits the knowledge to his or her students is no longer fit to fulfill the thrust for the students. As a result of the fast-growing technologies, we have been witnessing that the students' communities are becoming smarter than the teachers in operating the current technologies. The academicians need to have essential skills to move according to the time passes. The teachers cannot give any kind of excuses to the community, moreover, they need to adopt the latest digital educational methods.

Possible Solutions

The outbreak of the virus and lockdowns at the national level could be used as a best test for the education technology interventions for distance learning. Unfortunately, few systems arrived at this point fully prepared. China is one country where education continues regardless of school closures, taking place through internet and distance learning. Other countries or school systems are less prepared. Access to technology in most households may vary, and access to high bandwidth internet, or to smartphones is related to income even in middle income countries. Therefore, programs that can quickly target those in most need are crucial.

Education interventions during a crisis can support prevention and recovery of public health while mitigating the impact on students and learning. Where health facilities may be scarce, schools can be turned into makeshift holding centers during a crisis. This all needs to be factored into planning, particularly during the coping and recovery phases. It's also worth noting that education has the potential to contribute to the protection of children and youth; it helps them cope or maintain some normalcy during a crisis, and recover more quickly, hopefully with some useful new skills (i.e. acquiring distance learning skills and deeper digital mastery where applicable). Furthermore, in some low-capacity environments, notably across swaths of Sub-Saharan Africa, schools are often the only permanent government structure in rural villages and can serve as makeshift crisis response centers. Teachers, often among the most educated in these hard-to-reach areas, can be trained to serve as contact tracers and communication campaign advocates.

CONCLUSION

The spread of pandemic has shown that it has affected globally and brought challenges to the educational system. It has made all educational institutions adapt to online teaching moreover the countries like India it is the golden entries internet connection to all over. The Indian education system would not have imagined about the mode of digital learning, still not sure how long this e-learning will continue. Online instructions are an alternative for classroom lectures for a series of reasons. The pandemic has extensively disrupted all levels of the education sectors of India, even though many students who have left the different countries and back to India, if the situation continues, in the long run, a dismiss in the demand for International higher education is expected.

India should have advanced technologies and infrastructure for the online-instructions. The innovative use of technologies and skill development needed to

include the curriculum. This is the way the students can be up to date with the latest technologies. The teaching communities also required to transform their old method of teaching to inventive teaching. They should be competent enough to face their students.

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