

IMPACT OF COVID 19 PANDEMIC IN EDUCATION SYSTEM

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ABSTRACT

Corona virus disease is a communicable disease caused by a newly detected corona virus. Almost the people of every state in India are threatened due to the speedy spread of dangerous disease namely corona virus which is life challenging. To prevent and eradicate the darkness caused by the COVID-19, the Government of India has taken number of preventive measures including the closure of all Educational institutions followed by one day nationwide Janta-curfew to combat virus and 21 days lockdown to curb the corona virus, etc. Showing the great concern towards students, teachers and other stakeholders many circulars/ notices/ letters were issued by the relevant authoritative governing bodies like MHRD, UGC, CBSE, etc. On the other hand, the lockdown period has caused some severe issues also such as breakdown in regular lectures, postponement of exams, etc. which might cause the shortage of time during the next upcoming academic year. In this chapter highlights the measures taken by the government during covid 19 pandemic on education system and also describes the positive and negative impacts, technologies used in education sector.

Keywords: COVID 19, UGC, Government of India, anta-curfew

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected educational systems worldwide, leading to the near-total closures of schools, universities and colleges. WHO first declared Covid 19, a world health emergency in JAN 2020. Since the virus was first diagnosed in wuhan, China, it has been detected in over 190 countries. Most governments around the world have temporarily closed educational institutions in an attempt to reduce the spread of COVID-19. After observing the corona virus pandemic situation the WHO advised to maintain social distancing as the first prevention step. So, every country started the action of lockdown to separate the contaminated people. The education sect including schools, colleges and universities became closed. Classes suspended and all examinations of schools, colleges and universities including entrance tests were postponed indefinitely. Thus, the lockdown destroyed the schedules of every student. Though it is an exceptional situation in the history of education, COVID opportunities to come out of the rigorous classroom teaching model to a new era of digital model.

The lockdown has compelled many educational institutions to cancel their classes, examinations, internships etc. and to choose the online modes. Initially, the educators and the

students were quite confused and didn't understand how to cope up with the situation of this sudden crisis that compelled closure of the educational activities. But latter on all realized that the lockdown has taught so many lessons to manage with the emergence of such pandemics. Thus, COVID created many challenges and opportunities for the educational institutes to strengthen their infrastructure. The lockdown has given them a ray of hope for teachers and students to continue their educational activities through online. The teachers assigned work to students via internet, delivered lectures video conferencing using different Apps like Zoom, Google meet, Facebook, Youtube, and Skype etc. In the present study analyse the impact of covid 19 pandemic on education system in India.

INITIATIVES OF GOVERNMENT ON EDUCATION DURING COVI 19 PANDEMIC:

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, 2020 throughout India. CBSE released revised guidelines for examination centres to conduct examinations by maintaining a distance

of at least 1 meter between the students taking the exam with a class not having more than 24 students. If the rooms of the examination centres 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 observed 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. 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 WhatsApp, Zoom, Google meet, Telegram, Youtube live, Facebook live etc. for online teaching learning system. ICT initiative of MHRD (e-Broucher- [initiatives \) is a unique platform which combines all digital resources for online education.](https://mhrd.gov.in/ict-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

The digital initiatives of MHRD for secondary as well as higher education during COVID-19 are listed as below:

1. Diksha portal 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 classes 1 to 12 created by CBSE, NCERT in multiple languages. The contents can also be viewed through QR codes on textbooks. The app can be downloaded from IOS and Google Play Store. **Website:** <https://diksha.gov.in> or <https://seshagun.gov.in/shagun>.

2. e-Pathshala 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. **Website:**

<http://epathshala.nic.in> or <http://epathshala.gov.in>.

3. National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER) 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. **Website:** <http://nroer.gov.in/welcome>

4. Swayam 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 12583 Pravat Kumar Jena, Impact of pandemic covid-19 on education in India the conventional education. Credit transfers are possible for SWAYAM courses (max. 20%).

Website:

<https://swayam.gov.in/> .

5.Swayam Prabha 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. **Website:**

<https://swayamprabha.gov.in/> .

6. e-PG Pathshala is for postgraduate students. Postgraduate students 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 these facilities without having internet for the whole day. **Website:**

<https://epgp.inflibnet.ac.in>

POSITIVE CHANGES IN EDUCATION DUE TO COVID 19

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 seamless 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.

- **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.

- **Rise in use of Learning Management Systems:** Use of learning management 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 .

- **Enhance 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.

- **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.

- **Rise in online meetings-** The pandemic has created a massive rise in teleconferencing, virtual meetings, webinars and e-conferencing opportunities.

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

- **Improved the use of electronic media for sharing information:** Learning materials are shared among the students easily and the related queries are resolved through e-mail, SMS, phone calls and using different social Medias like WhatsApp or Facebook.

- **World wide exposure:** Educators and learners are getting opportunities to interact with peers from around the world. Learners adapted to an international community.

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

- **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.

Negative impact of COVID-19 on education

Education sector has suffered a lot due to the outbreak of COVID-19. It has created many negative impacts on education and some of them are as pointed below:

- ❖ **Educational activity hampered:** Classes have been suspended and exams at different levels postponed. Different boards have already postponed the annual examinations and entrance tests. Admission process got delayed. Due to continuity in lockdown, student suffered a loss of nearly 3 months of the full academic year of 2020-21 which is going to further deteriorate the situation of continuity in education and the students would face much difficulty in resuming schooling again after a huge gap.
- ❖ **Impact on employment:** Most of the recruitment got postponed due to COVID-19 Placements for students may also be affected with companies delaying the on board of students. Unemployment rate is expected to be increased due to this pandemic. In India, there is no recruitment in Govt. sector and fresh graduates fear withdrawal of their job offers from private sectors because of the current situation. The Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy's estimates on unemployment shot up from 8.4% in mid-March to 23% in early April and the urban unemployment rate to 30.9% (Educationasia.in). When the unemployment increases then the education gradually decreases as people struggle for food rather than education.
- ❖ **Unprepared teachers/students for online education-** Not all teachers/students are good at it or at least not all of them were ready for this sudden transition from face to face learning to online learning. Most of the teachers are just conducting lectures on video platforms such as Zoom, Google meet etc. which may not be real online learning without any dedicated online learning platform.
- ❖ **Reduced global employment opportunity-** Some may lose their jobs from other countries and the pass out students may not get their job

outside India due to restrictions caused by COVID-19. Many Indians might have returned home after losing their jobs overseas due to COVID-19. Hence, the fresh students who are likely to enter the job market shortly may face difficulty in getting suitable employment. Many students who have already got jobs through campus interviews may not be able to join their jobs due to lockdown. The Indians who have been doing their jobs abroad may lose their jobs. Recent graduates in India are of also fearing for withdrawal of job offers from corporate sectors because of movement restriction in the current pandemic situation.

- ❖ **Increased responsibility of parents to educate their wards:** Some educated parents are able to guide but some may not have the adequate level of education needed to teach children in the house.
- ❖ **Loss of nutrition due to school closure:** Mid day meals is a school meal programme of the Government of India which is designed to provide better the nutritional food to school-age children nationwide. The closure of schools has serious implications on the daily nutrition of students as the mid-day meal schemes have temporarily been shut. Various studies have pointed out that mid-day meals are also an important contributing factor for increased enrolment in the schools.
- ❖ **Access to digital world:** As many students have limited or no internet access and many students may not be able to afford computer, laptop or supporting mobile phones in their homes, online teaching-learning may create a digital divide among students. The lockdown has hit the poor students very hard in India as most of them are unable to explore online learning according to various reports. Thus the online teaching-learning method during pandemic COVID-19 may enhance the gap between rich/poor and urban/rural.
- ❖ **Access to global education:** The pandemic has significantly disrupted the higher education sector. A large number of Indian students who are enrolled in many Universities abroad, especially in worst affected countries are now leaving those countries and if the

situation persists, in the long run, a there will be a significant decline in the demand for international higher education.

- ❖ **Payment of Schools, Colleges fee got delayed:** During this lockdown most of the parents will be facing the unemployment situation so they may not be able to pay the fee for that particular time periods which may affect the private institutes.

INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES IN EDUCATION SECTOR

With the merging of new technologies, the old-style education system will evolve in the coming decades. Existing technology can help teachers reallocate 20 to 40% of their time to activities that support student learning. To have a close opinion of how technologies are a helping hand in the education sector, here is a list of trends that are mastering their game.

- ❖ **Augmented Reality (AR):** Augmented reality into education is beneficial to both students as well as educators. Educators can engage with students in an interactive 3D model to grab attention and motivate them. Educational apps with AR features help students study and practice with full digital content. For example, **Elements 4D** is a great app to explore the haptic way of learning chemistry without engaging in expensive experts. Another well-known app is Aug That, creating classroom engagement and making education fun for students, educators, and parents.
- ❖ **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** AI in education is an intelligent adaptive learning engine that requires more personalized learning tailored to the specific needs of the user. It includes learning with AI strategies, illustrations, and interactive stories with which the students can relate. It is the recreation of the human intelligence procedure through machines. It copies human activities and rational thoughts to solve real-world issues. For example, **Dreambox** is an app that focuses on mathematics for students. It adapts to every child's ability and allows them to learn at a pace that suits their needs.

- ❖ **Virtual Reality (VR):** Virtual reality is somehow related to AR when it comes to offering smart interactive experiences. But unlike AR, it affects the environment. If done right, VR can come up with groundbreaking results and help raise engagement and knowledge retention of students and teachers. During this crisis time, VR offers an opportunity to video call with real-time experience between a student and a teacher. VR enables you to bridge the gap between the student and the educator. With VR, distance learning tools like **Google Classroom, Edpuzzle, Blackboard, etc.**, can make student and the educator connected together in the same room via digital presentation. Educators can go into the VR world and guide learners through their experiences.

- ❖ **Machine Learning (ML):** A subset of Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning assists in collecting information/data and uses algorithms to create calculations to data-driven decisions. The main benefit of ML in education is to replace the filling the blanks with MCQs. And, this development is in use by various new educational tools. For example, **OpenED** is an online catalog for homework/educational assignments, games, and videos. It allows educators to divide resources among online students. This, further, helps students to do their tasks and make evaluations on their devices.

Response to crisis

UNESCO made ten recommendations for engaging in online learning:

1. **Examine the readiness and choose the most relevant tools:** Decide on the use high-technology and low-technology solutions based on the reliability of local power supplies, internet connectivity, and digital skills of teachers and students. This could range through integrated digital learning platforms, video lessons, MOOCs, to broadcasting through radios and TVs.
2. **Ensure inclusion of the distance learning programmes:** Implement measures to

ensure that students including those with disabilities or from low-income backgrounds have access to distance learning programmes, if only a limited number of them have access to digital devices. Consider temporarily decentralising such devices from computer labs to families and support them with internet connectivity.

3. **Protect data privacy and data security:** Assess data security when uploading data or educational resources to web spaces, as well as when sharing them with other organisations or individuals. Ensure that the use of applications and platforms does not violate students' data privacy.
4. **Prioritize solutions to address psychosocial challenges before teaching:** Mobilize available tools to connect schools, parents, teachers, and students with each other. Create communities to ensure regular human interactions, enable social caring measures, and address possible psychosocial challenges that students may face when they are isolated.
5. **Plan the study schedule of the distance learning programmes:** Organise discussions with stakeholders to examine the possible duration of school closures and decide whether the distance learning programme should focus on teaching new knowledge or enhance students' knowledge of prior lessons. Plan the schedule depending on the situation of the affected zones, level of studies, needs of students needs, and availability of parents. Choose the appropriate learning methodologies based on the status of school closures and home-based quarantines. Avoid learning methodologies that require face-to-face communication.
6. **Provide support to teachers and parents on the use of digital tools:** Organise brief training or orientation sessions for teachers and parents as well, if monitoring and

facilitation are needed. Help teachers to prepare the basic settings such as solutions to the use of internet data if they are required to provide live streaming of lessons.

7. **Blend appropriate approaches and limit the number of applications and platforms:** Blend tools or media that are available for most students, both for synchronous communication and lessons, and for asynchronous learning. Avoid overloading students and parents by asking them to download and test too many applications or platforms.
8. **Develop distance learning rules and monitor students' learning process:** Define the rules with parents and students on distance learning. Design formative questions, tests, or exercises to monitor closely students' learning process. Try to use tools to support submission of students' feedback and avoid overloading parents by requesting them to scan and send students' feedback
9. **Define the duration of distance learning units based on students' self-regulation skills:** Keep a coherent timing according to the level of the students' self-regulation and metacognitive abilities especially for livestreaming classes. Preferably, the unit for primary school students should not be more than 20 minutes, and no longer than 40 minutes for secondary school students.
10. **Create communities and enhance connection:** Create communities of teachers, parents, and school managers to address sense of loneliness or helplessness, facilitate sharing of experience and discussion on coping strategies when facing learning difficulties.

CONCLUSION

A problem of COVID-19 started from Wuhan city of China affected around 200 countries in the world including India. Because of COVID-19 there was lockdown imposed in almost each affected country to prevent their residents as the situation needs social distancing to stop the spread of the

virus among residents. In India, the various Institutional bodies and Governments have taken timely decisions to prevent their stakeholders from the spread of pandemic disease COVID-19. Schools and Colleges closed down by the relevant governing bodies and Government till the time situation comes under control. There is a huge threat of spreading the disease caused by the Corona virus among the stakeholders, students, teachers and others as they come in direct contact with many known and unknown people. It is also seen that the disease can be easily spread just by coming in contact with a carrier of such disease. While traveling, visiting malls/restaurants, playgrounds, attending lectures in schools or colleges, buying products, and more, the Students, Teachers and other stakeholders can easily be caught by the virus. This is the main reason that our Government has asked for observing Quarantine and to adhere to the rules stated to prevent the society/ country from being affected by such dreadful disease. The early actions of closing down all the Educational Institutions was indeed a good decision for the welfare of their people, but it is also noted that the examinations which are postponed may affect the student's final performance as there is now a long gap between the lessons taught to them in the class and their final exams. They may not score that good because of the long delay. Also, we may suffer a shortage of time in the next upcoming academic year.

Even if the COVID-19 crisis stretches longer, there is an urgent need to take efforts on maximum utilisation of online platforms so that students not only complete their degree in this academic year but also to get ready for the future digital oriented environment. The concept of “work from home” has greater relevance in such pandemic situation to

reduce spread of COVID-19. India should develop creative strategies to ensure that all children must have sustainable access to learning during pandemic COVID-19. The Indian policies must include various individuals from diverse backgrounds including remote regions, marginalised and minority groups for effective delivery of education. As online practice is benefitting the students immensely, it should be continued after the lockdown.

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