



Research Paper

Online Learning and Its Uses during the Period of Pandemic (COVID-19): An Interlink

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The new corona virus, now known as Covid-19, was first encountered in November 2019, in Wuhan City, China. The virus can cause pneumonia-like symptoms. Those who have fallen ill are reported to suffer coughs, fever and breathing difficulties. In severe cases there can be organ failure. As this is viral pneumonia, antibiotics are of no use. The antiviral drugs we have against flu will not work. The name Covid-19 was announced on 11 February by the World Health Organization. The director general, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, said: "We had to find a name that did not refer to a geographical location, an animal, an individual or group of people, and which is also pronounceable and related to the disease. Due to non invention of vaccine regarding COVID-19, first time the WHO suggested to lockdown the whole country of the world as per their spread of disease. A lockdown is an emergency protocol that usually prevents people or information from leaving an area. The protocol can usually only be initiated by someone in a position of authority. Lockdowns can also be used to protect people inside a facility from a threat or other external event. During the period lockdown all the educational, business and other institutions are locked as well as peoples are compelled to stay at home for certain period. In the beginning of 2021 in India second phase of COVID-19 has been started. In this phase lockdown is not given fully in India. Instead of it partial lockdown has permitted by the state governments as well as vaccination programme is going on in full swing. In these periods, the online learning and uses has become a helpful tool for the people. Because from home a teacher is able to teach the students through digital class such as Google classroom, whatsapp, email, preparing lecture with 'YOUTUBE', Mobile, TV recharge, money transfer, bill payment etc.

Key Words: Online learning, Lockdown, COVID-19, WHO, Google classroom, Vaccination etc.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Necessity of the study

Online learning not only trains the workers of the future, it can also provide a career path for someone employed, who needs to learn new skills. Employers should recommend online courses that will help with career advancement and, if possible, offer tuition re-imbusement.

Some say that wisdom comes with age while others insist that it comes from learning. Nowadays, thanks to the internet, learning is open to all. Hence, people in the countries where traditional learning is facing various obstacles can take advantage of online courses. So far, e-learning has been effective to the people that understood its value. It offers the chance to have great results for lower costs and sometimes for no costs at all. Despite these, online learning has many other advantages. Education may have several purposes, and online courses help to fulfil it. Some even say that e-learning can revolutionize education as it provides new opportunities for traditional learning. Taking online classes has a lot of advantages and below is some of the most important.

The Corona virus (COVID19) is preventing students and staff from meeting face-to-face, learning institutions is developing alternative educational delivery methods to move the classroom online. The following learning institutions are developing instructional continuity plans. Well-planned online learning experiences are meaningfully different from courses offered online in response to a crisis or disaster. Colleges and universities working to maintain instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic should understand those differences when evaluating this emergency remote teaching.

1.2 Objectives of the study

- To study importance of the online learning
- To study interlink between online learning and lockdown
- To study Covid-19 and its consequences

1.3 Hypothesis

- Online learning is useful in lockdown
- Positive impacts of online learning lockdown
- Covid-19 creates negative impacts on economy

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Distance education is a way of learning where the students or working professionals can learn the courses remotely through online access and interact with faculty via online classroom. It helps students to interact with their mentors or tutors directly through chat, e-mail or phone call. According to a report released by All India Survey on Higher Education 2014-2015 by Ministry of Human Resource Development the total enrollment of students for Distance education constitute of 11.7 percent out of which 46percent are female students. Availability of broadband and hi-speed internet along with low cost computers to tier 2 and tier 3 cities has made learning seamless without any glitches. Nowadays technology has become integral part of classroom based teachings. Today in many schools, colleges and universities in India instead of blackboard projector screens are used for teachings. Hand writings of teachers are replaced by power point presentation. Student experience a different kind of set up in today's technology based classroom.

Many colleges and universities in India are integrating online Learning Management System or LMS platform into their web portal. Students can remotely login to access course material and also attend live classes with teachers. Pre-recorded lectures, videos can be uploaded on the LMS platform making it easy for students to go through it multiple times.

According to a report released by Counterpoint Research, India has become the second biggest smart phone market in the world after China with more than 220 million active users. This presents a huge opportunity for delivering e-learning content through mobile apps. Today educational mobile apps are available on popular platforms like Android and iOS. There are apps available for grammar, physics, chemistry, mathematics and so on. With the prices of tablets and smart phone coming down people from villages and remote areas can also make use of this apps to learn and update their skills.

There are also certain websites like Khan Academy and various YouTube channels that offer video lectures by eminent scholars and teachers in various subjects.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Data: To provide final shape of the present study researcher has used secondary data.

3.2 Sample: As a sample, researcher has used observation as well as analytical method.

IV. ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY

Today online learning, also called as e-learning, is a new form of education. It is a distance learning education system where the revolutionary Internet technology is used to facilitate teacher to educate the interested students. They manage student-teacher interactions and deliver course materials online. The students don't need to travel for their education; only logging on to their system gives them enough reasons to study. It sounds great and that's why most of the students who can't opt for regular courses choose online college education. Online degree courses are designed with the sole aim of providing good education to the candidates. The method of providing education online is a well structured and highly professional system which is delivered through the new age devices. In this technology age everything is easily accessible via the internet. The online college uses different mediums such as message boards, email, chat rooms, desktop video and audio, computer conferencing, or multimedia technologies. With that, the students also get text content and live lectures, which are designed keeping the course curriculum in mind. Online learning is an interesting way of education and to make it more appealing to the students; the educationists try to bring new methods from time to time. Delivery methods for online courses may vary from college to college and of course depending on the type of degree programs. But one thing is definitely common in all the online degree programs - The online colleges employ a form of Internet technology for delivering instructional course materials. Methods adopted by the institutions can be synchronous or asynchronous. One which is more easily adaptable is the asynchronous method; the reason is the flexibility it offers. In synchronous delivery method, there is a need of real time interaction between the learners and teachers, which is not at all required in asynchronous method. In asynchronous method, the students are free to take their course work at their convenience, without any need to come for real time lectures. Depending on your need, you can choose the type of online degree program. Remember one thing

- You have to choose a reliable university with proper affiliation. There are many fake education institutions world over who are working with the sole purpose of making people through wrong means. Beware of such online colleges! If you really want to take up a good online college course, research thoroughly! You will surely get the online degree program of your choice. The 21-day lockdown across the State and educational institutions remaining closed to combat the spread of the COVID-19; students have remained confined to homes. However, one can make the best of use of this lockdown by engaging in online learning. There are several Information and Communications Technology initiatives of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, University Grants Commission and its Inter-University Centres-Information and Library Network and Consortium for Educational Communication in the form of digital platforms. These can be accessed by the students, researchers and teachers of the universities and colleges for broadening their horizons. While the online learning on some website comes at a cost, these following initiatives are for free. The long lockdown for the COVID-19 pandemic has closed schools, colleges and other educational institutions and ushered in the citywide classroom: tens of thousands of students in cities and towns are glued to computers and Smartphone screens as teachers take to online apps for lectures, tutorials and assessments. **Business Today** reached out to two eminent economists with decades of experience in dealing with the Indian economy, Pronab Sen. and C Rangarajan, to find out how the lockdown would impact the economy and to what extent. Here is how the lockdown would impact the economy. Economists Pronab Sen, said that, "At the moment, it is a supply-side problem. Both production and distribution of non-essentials have come to a halt. This affects at least 55percent of the economy for three weeks or about Rs 2 lakh crore. It may even be larger due to previous partial lockdowns by various state governments. "Now, after the lockdown is lifted, there will quite possibly be an increase in sales which will be met through existing inventories. This does not, however, add to the GDP (as these goods and services had already been produced and accounted for). It may take a few more months for the final production and sales to resume. "In the interim, between now and full production resuming, a large number of people would have been unemployed and not earned any income. As a result, in the second round, demand-side will become a serious constraint." Another economist of India named Rangarajan said that, "The impact of lockdown will be felt through several channels, weakening of domestic demand, disruption in supply chain and disruption in financial market. All of this would result in declining production and retrenchment of employees." Professor Sen. said that, "In financial year 20, we would be lucky if the growth rate is **3.5 percent** for full fiscal year. It would be a very different scenario for fiscal year 21. In the first half, we would be lucky if the growth rate is zero. In the second half, the growth could revive by as much as 7percent, taking the average growth for the year to 3.5percent". Again Rangarajan is more optimistic and said that "The growth rate in financial year 20 may **decline by 0.5 percent** and the growth rate will be negative for the financial year 2021.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY PRESCRIPTIONS

From the above discussions we have come understand that online learning and its uses is growing day by day all over the world at present. Online learning has created safe time and money both as well. Many institutions such as school, colleges, Universities and other public and private institutions during the period of pandemic-Covid-19 period. In this period, though school, colleges and universities are compelled to stop their regular normal classes but through using modern technologies such as Google classroom, whatsapp, video conferencing through Zoom us apps, video calling, YouTube teachers are providing reading materials to the students. Many private finance companies are doing their financial transactions through online. Though banks are open with limited staffs for banking transactions, yet most of the people are transferring their money to the beneficiaries through mobile banking and internet banking apps. It is also noted that the lockdown has created negative impacts both demand side and supply sides economy. According to some economists, in India if the growth rate is 3.5 percent in the financial year 2020, then it will be lucky for a country and it will turn 7 percent growth rate in the financial year 2021 taking 3.5 percent average growth rate. Otherwise it will turn 0.5 percent to -0.5 percent for the financial year 2020-2021.

5.1 Policy prescriptions

- To prevent the Covid-19 and reduce lockdown period, people of the country should obey the government's rules and regulations which are instructed by both central and state governments.
- Awareness and consciousness should be increased among the common people.
- Mentality of politics during the period of lockdown should be avoided by the political party members.
- By observing situation of their locality, the local self governments should permit essential productive industries as well as agro based industries through maintain the social distance as well as physical distancing.
- Strict discipline should be maintained by the each and every district administration of the country.

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To an economy passing through demand depression and high unemployment, the lockdown would add supply-side stress, accelerating the slowdown further and jeopardising the economic wellbeing of millions

It does not require an economist to tell that a complete social and economic lockdown of India for 21 days would severely impact the **supply side** of the economy, that is, production and distribution of goods and services, except for the essential items that are exempt.

In an economy already reeling under a demand depression, rising unemployment, and lowering of industrial output and profits, all of which happening together for several quarters now, a supply-side constraint would deliver a big blow, jeopardising growth prospects and social and economic wellbeing of a large number of people.

The quarterly GDP growth has consistently fallen since Q4 of FY18. If there is a deviation in Q4 of FY19, as shown in the graph below, it is because the National Statistical Office (NSO) revised its data on February 28, 2020, drastically cutting down growth rates in the first three quarters of FY19 (from 8% to 7.1% for Q1; from 7% to 6.2% in Q2 and 6.6% to 5.6% in Q3).

What could be the magnitude of the impact of a complete social and economic shutdown may not be easy to estimate, but it is likely to be far more severe than either the 2016 demonetisation or the 2017 GST rollout.

Nobody now disputes that those two events delivered economic shocks from which the economy had not yet recovered when the coronavirus pandemic struck.

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Little foresight or preparations for country-wide lockdown

The similarity with the 2016's demonetisation or 2017's GST does not end at their economic impact.

The blow to people and businesses could have been considerably softened but for lack of foresight, planning and strategies. That would have saved a mad scramble by the government too.

For example, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced Rs 1.76 lakh crore relief package on March 26 afternoon, a good 42 hours after the 21-day lockdown was announced. It would largely benefit the unorganised sector workers, especially daily wage workers, and urban and rural poor. The relief would include cash transfers and PDS (Public Distribution System) supply.

This was followed by the Delhi Chief Minister Arvid Kejriwal's assurance to street vendors, petty traders, and shopkeepers that curfew passes would be provided to them online to prevent their harassment at the hands of cops.

All these steps could have been taken before the lockdown was announced, particularly since the March 24 announcement succeeded a 'Janta curfew' of March 22 and a "complete lockdown" of 548 districts a day earlier.

The aftershock of sudden lockdown is visible.

For one, people rushed into provision stores, making a mockery of 'social distancing' which is the primary goal of it. Secondly, a day after the lockdown, online suppliers of grocery, medicine and food, like Amazon, Flipkart, Bigbasket, SuprDaily and many others, suspended their services across the country, citing "confusion" or "restrictions imposed by local authorities" on their movements. Others, like Grofers and FreshToHome, complained of official obstructions.

Two days earlier, another online supplier Milkbasket had stopped delivery services in seven Indian cities saying that it was not being allowed to deliver milk and vegetables, "resulting in us dumping 15,000 litres of milk and throwing over 10,000 kg of fruits and vegetables".

The harassment didn't restrict to them alone. Cops were seen beating anyone and everyone moving on the streets in many cities across the country, the video evidence of which is circulating on social media. There are instances of cops attacking provision stores in markets too, even when the essential services are allowed during the lockdown.

It was only after several senior state and central government officials stepped in that the prospect of supply of essential services improved. But with trains and trucks also banned, how long their supplies would last is anybody's guess.

The shutdown of planes, trains, and bus services had caused people to rush into airports, railway stations and bus stands, again making a mockery of social distancing. It had another consequence. Inter-state migrants were seen walking hundreds of kilometers with women and kids in tow to their homes because there was no transport and no work.

There was no food or money to buy food for many daily wagers. In Delhi, for example, thousands of daily wagers crowd shelter homes set up by the Delhi government to provide them food, again making a mockery of social distancing. **Business Today** estimated that about 300 million informal workers could be vulnerable and seeking help.

Also Read: *Coronavirus lockdown: India's electricity consumption falls to lowest in 5 months*

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