



Research Paper

Impact of Covid-19 on Education System in Rural India: Challenge and Opportunity

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ABSTRACT

This paper is an attempt to examine the impact of newly disease covid-19. Corona virus disease (covid-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered corona virus covid-19. It has taken the form of pandemic all over the world, and has affected education systems. Covid-19 led world's most of schools and colleges to the closure; most government decided to temporarily close educational institution. We can't ignore that technology plays a crucial role in the educational system. The government of every state in Indian tried its way to give alternative of closure of institution. There are a lot of techniques which are being used by these institutions to provide education through online mood. There are various interruption in the execution of online education system in rural India. Shifting traditional classroom to digital classroom explored inequality among the children of urban areas and rural areas. Difference of resource availability in government schools, colleges and private institution easily can be seen and Covid-19 explored this bitter truth of Indian education system. We shall analyze impact of Covid-19 especially on students in rural India.

KEY WORDS: Covid-19, Education, Rural, Traditional, Technology, Institution etc.

Received 16 August, 2021; Revised: 29 August, 2021; Accepted 31 August, 2021 © The author(s) 2021. Published with open access at www.questjournals.org

I. INTRODUCTION

We are living amidst what is potentially one of the greatest threats in our lifetime to global education, a gigantic educational crisis. We were already experiencing a global leaning crisis, as many students were in school, but were not learning the fundamental skills needed for life. The World Bank's "Learning Poverty" indicator – the % of children who cannot read and understand at age 10 – stood at 53% of children in low- and middle-income countries – before the outbreak started. This pandemic has the potential to worsen these outcomes even more if we do not act fast. We should expect, that in this situation (covid-19) students through in Indian school closure have affected 320 million students (UNESCO,2020) only 37.6 million children are continuing education through different institutional, and government initiatives for education through different institutional and government initiatives for education like Swayam, Zoom, Google meet, Diksha, Radio portal, both positive and negative impacts of covid-19 on education.

Work stopped during lockdown in village due to the shutdown of work in urban area, people came back to their native place, setting aside a month for those working on daily wedges. Be tough there was not even food in their homes, at such times for such parents, arrangement of smart phone for children, and recharge. If you have a phone, it is not so easy to prioritize education in such circumstances. Even if they recharge, everyone know that there is no fixed time for power supply in the village. The parents of some children have assumed that if they do not study for 1 year, nothing will happen and those who have two or more children their problem is increased because the phone is only one and if anyone think to go their friend's home for study there, fear of both the police and covid-19 crushed out them.

Challenges:

E- Learning now became an important part of student's life; students in rural India faced many challenges; one of them is limited availability of digital devices. People in rural area are not too much wealthy rather than urban. There are limited source of earnings; farming and animal husbandry are the only resources to maintain life. Manufacturers, industries etc are established in urban areas. That's why most of people in rural

areas don't have so much money to have smart phone; even some families are there which don't have any phone. And other issues which came to known is that if there is one smart phone is a family and there are two or three students in that family; it becomes irritating to decide which one is going to use smart phone to attend the online classes. That is another challenge people faced in rural India.

Lack of Knowledge: Literacy rate in rural India is not too high. People are educated but when it come the matter of operating smart devices, it is totally untouchable for most of them. It is very tough for those students who are just child and studying at primary and secondary level and their parents don't have knowledge of operating smart device. Parents bought smart phone for their children but they are unaware about the device. This is again a problem faced by rural India. Less than 15% of rural Indian household have internet access as compare to 42% urban Indian household and just 85% of female could use the internet. The poorest household cannot afford a smart phones or a computer.

Network Issues: We have network towers, broadband etc. in India. But when we talk about rural India it is seen that still there are some areas where there is no network. If it is available still there is lack of proper frequency to operate our cell phones in most of part of rural India. Internet speed is like big elephant in most of villages in India. Students try to connect with the teacher but due to bad network connectivity, it disconnect. We have seen several examples of students who had to go to mountainous area to attend class daily. Such stories have been published in various daily news papers. TV channels also have covered several such incidents where a student had to go miles to attend the school/college class. This happens due to bad network connectivity.

Problem of Power Cut: Indian has increased its power generation capacity. We are self dependent country in power sector. But power cut is still a problem in rural areas. Twenty four hours power supply in urban areas is a common thing to people but in villages, it is still a dream. Most of villages face the problem of power cut. Villages hardly get twenty four hours power supply; it might be occasionally. Imagine, a student is attending online class all of sudden power cut off. Maximum families in villages do not have alternative of power. Only few families are there which have alternative of power in the form of inverter, generator etc. Therefore we can say that power cut or less power supply also hurdle the E-Learning process.

Problem of Primary Students: It might be usual to use smart phone or computer/laptops for the children of secondary and higher secondary education but it is still a tough task for primary students. Primary school children who are too younger to use digital device need someone who assist them. Sometime they don't get what is happening in E-Learning process. They get irritated due to connected to the device for a long time. One person is mandatory to assist the students while taking online class. It is also a challenge for the family. Parents, who felt free after sending their children to school, are getting troubles. They are unable to do their work properly because of children whom they have to assist whole day.

Impact of Society: Due to corona, closure of Anganwadi centers, primary schools, the minors including malnourished children have suffered most nearly 35% of families did not get take home ration, 38% families received less amount of ration and only 20% villages, malnourished children were provided with supplemental nutrition and take home ration packets government have many scheme but implementation of way lower rate % 'government failed to provide failed to provide food to the children after the closure of Anganwadi and primary schools'

Home ration distribution services were partially affected in 50% of the villages due to delay in receiving allotment unavailability of stocks; closure of Anganwadi centers to prevent corona spreads etc. School are more than learning centers for poor children. They provide social protection nutrition, health and emotional support to the most disadvantaged and this applies in all countries, from low to high income. Almost ninety million Indian children did not receive their mid-day meal during school closure. These meals served as an important safety measure, as economists estimate that 75% of poor families income is spent on food.

The pandemic and lockdown has impacted lakhs of migrant workers as well as others working in the un-organized sector (90% of India's population is engaged in unorganized work). It has impacted the poor adversely across the globe. In such situation very clear emphasis on technology big number of students exclude in this country from continuing school education another problem is infrastructure challenges.

During the lockdown, rise in cases of child abuse increased, which highlights that school also acts as a safe space for many children even today. We could see disruption in continuity of schooling for girls and children of those who migrated back from urban to rural areas after losing livelihoods, post the unexpected shifting of the lockdown approx 29% of India's population are children and 19.29% is in age group of 6-14 years. This group is legally entitled to education under the right to education act (RTE-2019)

Opportunities:

Speed and Innovation:

The crisis of Covid-19 shows that as soon as there is a strong bond, things can change. This leads to remarkable ideas and innovations. Not being allowed to open their doors, restaurants, for example, are shifting to delivery mode. And school/colleges suddenly do much of the teaching and testing online. This brings the

opportunity to create innovations now that can be maintained after the crisis as well. And it also can help to keep the current speed and innovation mode afterwards.

Reconnect and Help:

It is said that challenging times offer a great opportunity for social bonding and other ways of connecting to and helping people. Of course, not being able to visit friends of family has increased isolation and feelings of loneliness in some cases. In the individualized societies many of us live in, this provides opportunities to reconnect and create more social coherence. Not only during the covid-19 situation, but also afterwards. This opportunity came with a big warning though. We witnessed how far people go to protect themselves and their families which is very convincing as a human being. In fear, some of us hoard food, medicine etc without thinking a second of others. However, while it triggers self-serving egocentric behavior too, the covid-19 crisis does provide us the opportunity to reconnect and show our social side.

Impact on Environment:

Due to the pandemic markets, industries faced shutdown or decrease of activities. Factories remained closed for long time and then worked far below their capacity. Road traffic has reduced radically and air traffic collapsed and the lack of tourism has emptied the streets in over crowded cities. This might be bad news for most people and especially those working in the affected Industries, this is good news for our earth. This pandemic causes a significant reduction in green house gasses and other air, water and land polluting outputs. Although shutdown and lockdown are harmful for economy but it helped environment to purify itself. The crisis warns us to reconsider our lives and reorganize pertaining system in a way that has less impact on our planet.

Awareness and Acceptance:

Circumstance, created by this pandemic has forced us to create awareness for the moderate role we play on the earth and accept that things cannot always go as we want them to. The covid-19 crisis is a global crisis that is unprecedented in modern peace time. We had other pandemic like SARS, but their impact was not so high as of it. We also witnessed man-made crisis like Oil Crisis of 1973 but that had not such wide impact in the world. This pandemic is not man-made (might be debatable) and yet disrupts life across the globe. This pandemic made us understand that no matter how well-planned and organized we are and no matter how much we live in the Anthropocentric, we are not in control. One simple virus has disrupted everything and still continues. In almost every aspect of life we want to be in control. Whether it is health, airline safety or our calendars, we live in the illusion that full control is possible. This pandemic can help us create awareness that this is not the case. It provides an opportunity to take more modest role and acceptance that many things are simply beyond our control.

II. CONCLUSION:

The new crisis has taken us to the big question. How will complex Indian education system respond to the emerging situation? Avoiding the question is of no use as students are keener than ever. The ed-tech firms have witnessed 10-fold rise in registration for trial or free coaching, in the last two months. In the absence of a comprehensive action plan, for the complex Indian school education system, which are divided by multiple boards of unequal standards and the benefits of technology will be acquired by a section of teachers and students that can adapt and afford it. In India, state governments are the largest providers of education. However, they are plagued by several challenges including large student teacher ratios, infrastructure and lack of quality training amongst teachers. Private schools too face a problem with teacher training. These challenges combined with India's huge education market size, where 35% of its 1.3 billion population below 15 years of age, present an immense business potential for ed-tech products to scale-up by plugging gaps.

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