



Impact of Covid-19 on Higher Education in India

Dr. M. P. Dhere

Assistant Professor in Commerce
M.S.S's Ankushrao Tope College, Jalna.

Introduction:

The outbreak of Covid-19 has forced many countries to enforce lockdowns that brought everything to stop including teaching learning process. It has raised multiple issues right from the health to the wealth. Due to this pandemic the whole education system suffered a lot. This pandemic has made the world to see social distancing in the public places. Covid -19 was first identified in Wuhan, China and gradually it started spreading in other parts of the world. WHO declared it as a pandemic in 2020. In those days to survive the lives was the priority of government, so lockdown was the one and only option was there. This step was taken in order to slowdown and contains the spread of Corona virus in India. The government had imposed severe restrictions on the movement and social gatherings of people in order to control the spread of this dangerous and novel disease. So in this process all the educational institutions right from primary schools to the universities were closed as a part of safety measures. The regular classes were suspended citing threat to the lies of the learners and teachers as well. It also affected the lies of students who were preparing for competitive exams.

One of the major devastating impacts of this pandemic brought in the realm of global education is that it led to sudden shift of education from classroom to mode which affected the teaching learning process in Universities, colleges and schools and thus it has significantly disrupted the higher education sector in India. This drastic shift in education has brought a great change in the pattern of learning with certain positive and negative impacts.

India is the country of villages and most of the people were underprivileged and coming from very poor section of the society. So in such case online teaching has registered great impact on the lives of these people. Today also there are still many educational institutions in India which are not well equipped to the modern technological facilities in the classroom. Previously students were habitual of conventional teaching learning process where face to face interaction. The introduction of new method of learning through the digital mode of learning, learning became very easy to the students as they can sit at home and get access but at the same time some students also had to face problem due to the poor internet connectivity, many students have access to internet and E-learning facilities. Rural people are still deprived of technology. But on the other hand this online education method also brought some positive changes in our education system. So it is very important to understand the positive as well as negative impact of covid-19 on higher education in India. Therefore this paper intends the issues those are related with higher education in India due to covid-19.



Objectives of the Study:

The present research paper focused on the following objectives:

1. To understand the various safety measures taken by Government of India for education sector during this pandemic.
2. To study various positive impact of Covid-19 on higher education in India
3. To study various negative impact of Covid-19 on higher education in India

Research Methodology:

The present study based on extensive study of secondary data collected from various reports prepared by national and international agencies on Covid-19 pandemic. The information is collected from various authentic websites. Some articles, journals and e-contents relating to the impact of Covid-19 on education especially on the higher education.

Initiatives taken by the Government of India for education during pandemic of Covid-19:

During this pandemic to stop the spread of Covid-19 was quite big challenge for the Government of India. So to prevent spread of pandemic Covid-19, the Gov. of India has taken number of preventive measures. The union government declared a countrywide lockdown of all educational institutions on 16 March 2020. CBSE postponed all examinations of secondary and higher secondary schools on March 18, 2020 throughout India. CBSE released revised guidelines for the examination centres to conduct examinations with proper social distancing. Then the UPSC postponed the interview for the services Examinations 2019. Similarly the most of the state Governments and other educational boards postponed examinations due to outbreak of Covid-19. Moreover Government of India kept one day nationwide Janta-curfew on March 22 and lockdown from March 25,2020 onwards in the different parts of the nation. The period of lockdown has been extended time to time. But educational institutions remain closed continuously. Only education on digital mode was going on continuously.

Positive Impact of Covid-19 on Higher Education:

Outbreak of Covid-19 has created many negative impacts on the lives of people. It also affects greatly on the entire education system. But we can't denied it's positive impacts on education system like transformation of education from traditional to modern with new healthy challenges. The following points exhibit the positive impacts of Covid-19 on higher education in India.

1. Sudden Shift from traditional learning to digital mode: As I stated before India is the country of villages and most of the population is living in rural area. So traditional education system plays important role in our education system where classroom teaching with chalk and duster is quite suitable for all. We are living in the modern era...the era of modern technologies and it is need of hour to adopt these technologies for the better future of our new generation. To leave the old one and accept the new is not easy task but the outbreak of Covid-19 gave a big challenge to it and circumstances became in the favour of digital learning. So there is sudden shift from traditional learning to the digital mode. It encouraged all teachers and students to



become more technology savvy. This is good sign for the major transformation from traditional system to new era.

2. Rise in online meetings: Due to lockdown face to face meetings were not possible, so the pandemic create a massive rise in virtual meetings, E-conferences, webinars and teleconferencing opportunities to the teachers as well as students. During this period teachers and students were acquainted with new technical apps of online meetings like Zoom, Google Meet and WebEx Meet etc. This happens in the history newly.

3. Strengthen 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 manage their study with soft copies.

4. Strengthen the digital literacy: Yes, really it's one of the major positive impacts of the Covid-19 on education system. The pandemic situation induced people to learn and use digital technology which resulted in digital literacy.

5. It increased responsibilities and awareness among the parents about the education of their wards: To educate the child, to teach him or her moral values is not only the responsibility of the teacher but parents also. Because of this pandemic students were learning from home so that was a big opportunity to make parents aware about their ward and took the responsibilities of their education. In this mode of learning parents got the chance to see closely what and how their child is learning really.

6. Access to the global education: The pandemic has significantly created greater changes in 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, in the long run, they can take degrees on online mode also.

7. Education became less expensive: As students are learning from their home it saves other expenses like charges of school/college bus, other extra charges of institutions and universities, it saves money. So here we can say that education became less expensive.

Negative Impact of Covid-19 on Higher Education:

Due to sudden outbreak of covid-19 education sector has suffered a lot. During this pandemic we met to the newly emerged education system which is called online learning. Which has some drawbacks also consequently and it created various negative impacts on education. Some of them are pointed below.

1. Untrained teachers and new way of learning creates obstacles in teaching learning process: As sudden transformation took place in entire education system, no one was mentally and physically prepared for it. So many teachers were not trained before for using such new techniques in teaching learning process. Most of the times they got rouble during the teaching learning process.

2. Educational activities 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 lot 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



as students would face much difficulty in resuming schooling again after a huge gap.

3. Technical interruptions: The success of online education is mainly depends on good network access. In rural area there is issue of network so it creates obstacles in teaching learning process.

4. Poverty and unavailability of technical devices: Online education needs good devices like smart phones, computer and laptop etc. which is not affordable to all parents. Students whose parents are poor and unable to provide such devices to them are deprived from education. Online teaching learning needs peaceful atmosphere but students those who are belong to the poor family don't have separate rooms and peaceful atmosphere for learning. So in such situation they can't concentrate properly.

5. Online teaching lacks face to face interaction: Online teaching is totally opposite to the traditional teaching learning. There is no place for face to face interaction. Sometimes students can't communicate with teachers properly and this is the main drawback of this online learning which emerged during pandemic.

6. 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.

7. 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. When the unemployment increases then the education gradually decreases as people struggle for food rather than education.

Conclusion:

The outbreak of Covid-19 brought drastic changes in the entire world. People suffered a lot mentally, physically and economically because of this pandemic. It affects on each and every field and education sector is not excluded from it. For the preventive measures educational institutions remained closed. But the online education/digital learning survive the entire education system; it keeps students in touch with education and because of this system only they got education at their home. But on the other hand many students are deprived from education due the lack of essential facilities like technical devices, good network access and peaceful atmosphere for study etc. In case of teachers, initially they were not prepared for this drastic transformation and new techniques which creates obstacles in teaching learning process. So these are some positive and negative impacts as well.



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