



## **COVID-19 impact: Challenges of online and offline education**

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### **Abstract**

After the economy under the influence of Covid-19, if any system with social concerns has been affected is the education world. The children and youth who get education are the national heritage and it eliminates social problems and stereotypes. In the race to change the education to reality, new problems are being raised.

**Keywords:** COVID-19 impact, offline education, IGNOU

### **Introduction**

Covid-19 came in India in the month of March 2020, the worldwide disease caused a sudden change in the social fabric and social concerns as a whole. Along with the change, such a change was also visible in judicial, administrative and educational institutions. Thus online education was introduced as an option to continue with the academic activities.

Even before the era of Corona, there was a system of distance learning in the Indian education system, in which institutions like Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) New Delhi (1985) and National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) New Delhi (1989) have played an important role but there has been not much experience of online education. That is why society and educational institutions were neither prepared for such challenges nor was there any kind of preparation based on the forecast of such a disaster.

Online education requires basic infrastructure like digital infrastructure, it is severely lacking in rural areas of our country, lack of digital devices like broadband, android phone, laptop, camera mobile, proper availability of internet etc as well as continuous power supply is also a key element.

According to the report 2020 of the Internet and Mobile Association of India published in the Times of India and the Nilson survey, there are 227 lakh people has active internet and mobile use in the village, which is 10% more than the urban number, the urban number is 205 lakh people. This data is of November 2019. For the first time in India, more rural people were found using the Internet than urban people, but the fact is that the urban population in India is more than twice the number of rural people.

Nowadays, new methods of education and techniques are being used in schools such as computer software, touchpad, black board, projector, e-content, online study material and online classes etc. by using facilities like teaching children and making them understandable. On the other hand, such unaided schools which do not have infrastructure facility, is such a system of education being developed once again, which is further promoting the gap in the existing education. With the increasing use of new techniques of education like online classes and online study material etc., the modern hi-tech facility gives birth to the entire equipped student class

and the other without equipped student class giving birth to a new society?

Covid-19 will forever be known as the virus that completely shut down the world. It has changed our lives in different ways that we never thought before. One of the most significant impacts of this pandemic has been in the field of education where it has led to the largest destruction of global education systems in history. When schools and colleges around the world closed due to Covid-19 lockdowns, students and educator alike were left wondering what the future holds.

Remote or virtual learning has now replaced traditional classrooms; however, the switch from pen and paper to online education comes at a high cost. Technology like computers and high-speed Internet needed to attend remote learning sessions is not readily available to students from low income families. This has led to a lot of educational inequality in this new virtual learning system.

Even though many governments around the world provided laptops and internet services to students in need, these efforts have not been enough to avoid the educational inequality experienced by students. Children who depend on schools for their daily meals are also at risk of going hungry due to school closures.

As we all know when pandemic hit all Schools and colleges closed and on we all switched to remote learning, but it was easy for schools in city colleges to do because there's already internet but what about rural areas, where people don't have access to high speed internet in homes. In such places of the all they have to do is close the school, remote learning was not an option for them because there is no availability of Technology.

### **Educational inequality**

Schools and colleges are also places where students get to socialize with their classmates and take part in extracurricular activities like sports and arts. However due to the closure of educational institutions such gatherings and fun activities have all disappeared. Not having physical social interactions have affected the mental well-being of students, many of whom report feeling isolated and lonely since they cannot meet their classmates and friends. In addition to giving education students also take part in lot of extracurricular activities in school, they are part of the cricket team and take part in dance competitions. This kind

of extracurricular activities that are essential for a child well-being is currently Limited due to pandemic because we're doing everything virtually, so you cannot take part in cricket virtually so students miss their friends and when they are stuck at home the switch to remote learning happened abruptly, which left students as well as teachers and school officials scrambling to adapt to virtual learning systems fast. Teacher had to figure out tasks like how to create presentation for remote classrooms, perform labs, and teach arts and crafts virtually, etc., without having received adequate training to do so. Many educators also find it harder to maintain student engagement in remote sessions compared to in-person classes. Students also find it hard to ask questions and get the necessary help they need from teachers in virtual classrooms. The report indicates that more high school students are failing in exams since the switch to remote education took place.

### **Difficulty experienced by teachers and students in the virtual learning system**

Teachers did not receive adequate training to how to take online classes how to teach them to create presentation how to perform the labs for example chemistry labs how do you do this online in such a situation when students cannot perform their own. So teachers have to figure out all this things suddenly because very fast and they were not prepared. Lot of Teacher said that they are not able to figure out whether students are able to understand lessons or not because in real classroom teachers can see the students and teachers can understand the body language of students but in online classes many students have their camera off so teachers are not able to know that students are engaged or not.

### **Challenges in conducting examination**

Another tricky problem when it comes to implementing online learning is the question of how to hold exam in a way that ensure that students will not be able to cheat. Some higher education Institutions like International universities are using online proctoring system to monitor the students activities while taking exam but since this method is expensive as well as intrusive most schools and colleges prefer not to use them. In many cases, exams are being postponed or cancelled, leading to a lot of uncertainty, adding to the stress of students who are already having a tough time adjusting to the new way of learning. College admissions and study abroad programs have also been affected by the cancellation of exam.

### **Online education for educators**

Online education can also be designed to accommodate a variety of learning styles among students. As educators, it is likely that we will have to put in additional efforts to incorporate online learning programs into the curriculum in the most suitable manner.

The covid-19 pandemic has made life of all of us into deep trouble and caused irreversible damage to many business all across the globe besides the toll on life and living the year 2020 was destroyed by output and employment losses unexpected in the history, globally as well as in India. India's GDP fell by 7.3% in fiscal year 21 and World Bank estimates Global output to fall by 5.2 % during the same period.

While the severity of the effect where is from sector to sector, there are few sectors that have been affected the hardest. In India some industries, particularly those that require a high level of contact, have been severely harmed, while others, such as agriculture and allied activities, information technology, highway infrastructure, railway freight and domestic trade, have shown remarkable flexibility in the face of the pandemic.

Aviation, travel and tourism, and hospitality were among the most affected industries in India. The hospitality among the most affected industries expected loss stood at Rs. 90000crore for the fiscal year 2021 while Aviation and travel and tourism sectors expected losses stood at Rs. 47000crore and Rs. 5000 crore, respectively, during the same period. These sectors may not be able to regain their momentum until things return of normalcy.

Even if things begin to normalize one industry may not be able to recoup from its losses for an extended length of time, resulting in a long-term impact on the country's labor productivity and job market. We are talking about the impact on the country's "education sector", which has received the least attention in the face of the pandemic so far.

The true extent of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on education is yet to be measured but all indications show that it will be severe, since many children are unable to attend school and many are facing the constraints of online learning.

In March 2020, schools and colleges in almost all parts of the world were forced to close their doors due to the spread of covid-19 virus. The academic calendar has been severely disrupted with actual classroom learning being replaced by online learning. Despite this Rapid transition to e-Learning, millions of children, especially in Africa and South Asia, have been left without adequate access to education. The situation in India turned out to be dismal. As many schools and educational institutions moved to online platforms for continuation of learning, the "digital divide" remained a challenge for the country

However, even for those who can really afford online learning facilities the move was not as seamless as it appears to be online education has entailed a delayed learning process lack of personal attention and teacher relationship and a lack of motivation among students apart from this many people usually do not possess a healthy learning environment at home a peaceful study area is a luxury of meaning for instance in 2017-19 25% of Indians were living in a single room houses learn if two or 24 adults a single room in India online education has come to the cost of marginal productivity loss which would eventually be revealed with time while living at customers traffic impact on the country human capital development.

According to data from the 2017 National Sample Survey (NSS) report nearly 6% of rural households and 25% of urban households had access to a computer. Lack of internet facilities was also a cause of concern with only 17% of rural households and 42% of urban households having access to it. Definitely data-enabled cell phones have increased access in the last four years but many of the most disadvantaged people are still suffering, especially in rural areas. According to survey is conducted by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), the Azim Premji foundation ASER, and Oxfam, between 27% to 60% of students were unable to participate in online classes due

to a variety of factors including a lack of devices, share devices and the inability to purchase data packs. Accompanied with the mismanagement of public schools in India, the above mentioned issues render online learning not feasible and non-viable choice for the major chunk of the country's population. With such challenges of distance learning, many children may drop out living little scope for the return unless affirmative and immediate actions are taken. Most likely the increased economic insecurity, lack of social protection and reduced household income will push such children from poorer households to contribute to the family income, living their education aside. Without leaving little scope for the return and less affirmative and immediate actions are taken most likely the increased economic insecurity lack of social protection and reduced household income will push such children from poor households to contribute to the family income living their education aside.

However, it is to note that not all the factors that may contribute to low level of human development are created by the pandemic most of them were pre-existing and have been exposed or amplified by it. The quick summary of Indian education after independence would suggest that the education system for the most part is driven by sorting rather than human development and this sudden shift to online mode have rendered the system even less effective in terms of skill development and human capital formation. So people with access to online learning may possess an edge over those without any access to it, but this "batch of pandemic" may not possess the required skill sets and efficiency up to their qualification and may remain less competed against their senior batches.

Pratichi, (2002) <sup>[1]</sup> There are still many children in India who cannot go to school or drop out of school. A study done on this problem shows that some children does not come school at harvest time. So you will not find even a single child of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. When their parents work outside, they have to perform some household responsibilities and girls from these communities rarely come to school because they have to perform household work. The above report shows how gender discrimination and caste discrimination encroach the education opportunities.

Singh. Veerpal (2005) <sup>[2]</sup> has told in his research article "Pariksha Tanav-Karan aur Niwaran" that students take exam as big or small challenge, stress is also in the same proportion. Environmental, psychological and social reasons of students plays important role in determining examination stress.

Mishra K.S. (2006) <sup>[3]</sup> the best use of the time you get is called time management. The basic principle of time management is that you manage yourself then time management is automatically done. Exam stress can be controlled and academic achievement can be increased by better time management.

Manisha Gill (2011) <sup>[4]</sup> has written in her article "Examination Stress" that stress is common. Stress bothers students a lot especially during board examinations, it is not that this stress occurs only during the examination but even after the examination, the students remain troubled by examination stress, it is necessary to avoid it. Examination is an integral part of the education system, through this, the students not only get to know about the academic achievement but also the efficiency of the teacher and the

quality of education. Now a days students associate examination with their future and under immense pressure from teachers and parents, the level of anxiety among the students increases.

Srinivas. K. Srikanth, (2012) <sup>[6]</sup> Student union and society can provide such information, which may not give you books. Debates, discussion, seminar, event are very good ways to develop any person. A detailed study has been done on the characteristics of the group of students. In this research, it was found that the student group contributes significantly in increasing the socio-economic political skills of the students.

According to a research paper published in India.com, Students are gradually returning to normal in classes every day during the Corona period. With this new mode of online classes, almost all schools and colleges in the country are in some way or the other connected to their students in the lockdown by doing virtual interactions with their children. Due to these activities, the teachers remained consistent in the teaching work. Due to weak internet network and new technique for teachers without proper training about how to conduct online classes have been the main reasons not showing interest by the students.

**Table 1:** The budget cut has dented the government's intention to keep up the country's education system and digital infrastructure by Rs. 6088crores which is less than the previous budget.

Education Budget		
2019-20	Actual	89437
2020-21	Estimate	99312
2020-21	Revised estimate	85089
2021-22	Budget estimate	93224

Contrary to expectations and despite the announcement of the ambitious new National Education Policy, the allocation in terms of education in the budget has actually decreased. It is trying to make education like the second category, while more provisions will have to be made on the education system in the budget, whereas in comparison to the previous budget, about 6.1 has been reduced in the current budget, which is not correct in any way.

**Conclusion**

The global educational community has been largely successful in its switch to virtual learning, despite the sudden way that it had to be implemented. It is highly doubtful that remote learning will replace in-person education any time soon, but we can expect to see more virtual education systems in a post covid world than the existed before. Offline classes are still to be considered as the best way to achieve knowledge; online learning proves to be a great alternative. Students have the chance to study in their own time and especially almost for free. One can study many fields and to boost the level of motivation. Online learning is so effective because students can finish their study quickly, and there is more time left for hobbies or for doing part time job. A student can attend different courses, leaving them the freedom to choose the time of study. At Schools, students make friends, they learn to be patient, get rid of disappointment, and compete among themselves. They physically interact and play outdoor and indoor games which enhance their personality. So online

learning should be seen as complement and extension of offline learning. Human interaction and relationship and personal contact with teacher which develop in group cannot be replaced even by the best online learning program. In the third decade of the 21st century, digitalization technology and online education have been considered as the main way of learning. There can be no more wrong assumption than this that online education is the solution to all problems, we should consider the current situation of young students sympathetically. Online education should not be the main medium of learning, real education should be direct communication between teachers and students in the classes, online medium can play a supporting role in this. We have to protect students from poor background to avoid disparity of laptops or tablets and try to make available for all. The education budget should also be increased significantly. Covid-19 has disrupted the education ecosystem; we can look at this moment as an opportunity for change. If public and private sector organization work together with the Government of India to adopt new ways of teaching and learning and ensure that all students have access to the related tools and infrastructure India will empower future generations for better livelihood and fulfilling lives.

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