

## **Impact of COVID 19 on Education System in India: Roadblocks and Opportunities**

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### **Abstract:**

COVID-19 episode has caused a descending winding within the world economy and caused a tremendous affect on the higher education framework. The sudden closure of campuses as a social distancing measure to avoid community transmission has moved face-to-face classes to online learning frameworks. This has thrown the focus on utilising eLearning tools and platforms for effective student engagement which may have limitations of accessibility and affordability for many students The widespread has uncovered the inadequacies of the current education framework and the requirement of preparing the teachers in advanced innovation to adjust to the quickly changing instruction climate of the world. Within the post-pandemic circumstance, the implementation of eLearning and virtual instruction may develop into an essential portion of the education system. The educational institutions and universities have to prepare for the post-pandemic education and research strategies to guarantee the attainment of student learning outcomes and quality education standards.

***Keywords: COVID-19, education system, eLearning, virtual education, teaching-learning***

### **Introduction:**

The effect of the pandemic is being felt on all the aspects of the economy & it is expected that GDP growth fall by 2.5% in the calendar year. This resulted an impact on education sector globally & disrupted the academic calendar of schools and higher education institutions due to the suspension of classes over an undefined period. This unplanned closure has badly impacted the scheduled plans for completing courses for the 2019/20 academic year



Students and teachers who were thinking that 2020 is going to be a normal year for the education system they were wrong! They were greeted with china origin virus covid19 in 2020. This virus changed the whole perception of the entire educational fraternity in short span.

It is estimated that over 600 million learners are impacted globally due to Covid19 pandemic that results, uncertainty over completing the educational syllabus as the future of the brightest minds at stake. Recently UGC (University Grants commission) issued COVID19 specific guidelines which are resulting immediate closure of 1000 universities & government affiliated 40000 colleges will be closed with immediate effect. The impact of COVID19 on Indian academic system is so severe that it brings the clouds of uncertainty for more than 3.75 Crores of Students & 14 Lakhs faculty employed by the several government & non government institutions.

In 2020 academic year is estimated that over 50 Lakhs students are appearing for after school entrance examinations based on their streams & institutions are facing the heat to conduct entrance exams & semester exams.

In the corporate world, there is a term called as BCP (Business continuity plan) the key concept of BCP is that whenever any business disruptions occurs corporate to be ready with alternate and robust plan to ensure business keeps on moving without any impact similarly it is high time for the education system to adopt new and innovative ways to keep on education system moving without any disruption as lots of aspiring students future and faculties job is at stake.

### **Objectives:**

The present research paper focused on the following objectives:

1. To edify various steps taken by Govt. of India for education sector during this pandemic.
2. To highlight various positive impact of COVID-19 on education.
3. To determine the negative impacts of COVID-19 and to present some effective measures to be taken for continuing education during the pandemic situation.

### **Methodology:**

The information and statistics presented in current study are collected from various articles and reports prepared by national and international agencies on COVID-19 pandemic. Information are



collected from various authentic websites. Some journals and e-contents relating to impact of COVID-19 on educational system are referred.

### **Initiatives of Govt. of India on Education during Covid-19**

- 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://seshaqun.gov.in/shaqun>
- 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>.
- 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>

### **Higher Education**

- 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 the conventional education. Credit transfers are possible for SWAYAM courses (max. 20%). Website: <https://swayam.gov.in/>

- 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/>
- e-PG Pathshala is for postgraduate students. Postgraduate students can access this platform for ebooks, 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/>

## **Crux of the problem**

### **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 as 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.

### **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.

Fig 1: Crux of the Problem



Source: Developed by the Researcher

Education institutions are exploring new ways for completing courses in a virtualized environment. In India most of the educational institutions are not equipped with virtual technology based concepts and that become difficult for them to conduct online classes in less time frame. In haste most of the educational institutions started utilizing virtual meeting



platforms such as GotoMeeting, Skype, Zoom, Google Hangout, Microsoft Teams & Others meeting platforms and started conducting virtual classes in IT MNC style approach.

With the rapid adoption of the Internet and the surge rise in the awareness about e-learning, the online education industry is expected to witness promising growth during the forecast period.

The online education market in India was valued at INR 39 billion in 2019 and it is expected to touch INR 360.3 billion by 2024, expanding at a CAGR of ~43.85% during the 2019-2024 period. This shows that how online e learning platforms are taking the advantage from the current scenario.

- Virtualised Learning is going to be the new norm for the educational setup which can also be a threat for almost 20 lakhs faculty members as the demand is going to decline badly. Since virtualized learning platforms will give access to the high quality of course content that eliminates the requirement of dedicated subject matter expert for the educational institutions. To brace up with this challenging situation faculties needs to adopt & upgrade their skills sets to make themselves market ready.
- In coming years we will certainly be seeing new and innovative ways of conducting exams as this pandemic situation effect will be there for another 2-3 years. We expect huge market is opening up for the new market entry seekers who can offer online proctored surveillance systems for conducting exams.
- It is expected that online e-learning market divided into primary and secondary supplemental education, test preparation, reskilling and certification & higher education , language & this education segment was valued at INR 11.99 Bn in 2019 and expected to achieve INR 123.65 Bn by 2024, expanding at a CAGR of ~46.48% during the 2019-2024 period.
- The online test preparation market is expected to reach INR 94.75 Bn by 2024, expanding at a CAGR of ~50.84% during the 2019-2024 period. This segment is going to be the fastest-growing segment in the online education market, owing to growth in career-focused population, enhanced Internet infrastructure and digital payment methods.

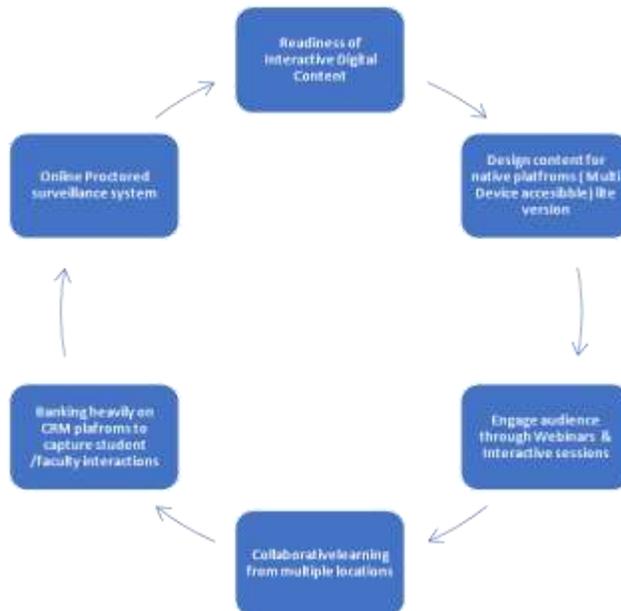


- Due to COVID19 outbreak, it is expected to see sharp decline in Study-Abroad educational plans as most of the premier institutions will be joining the hands with elearning platforms to provide their content online and get certified as the Indian aspirants footfall to international universities is likely to decline.
- Uncertainty over guardians fees paying capacity : The covid19 is wrecking all the industries badly which can result job insecurity amongst the guardians & incompetent to pay such hefty fees as other industries growth looks quite gloomy.

**Conclusion:**

The entire education institutions/schools should prepare, evaluate, review and establish the online programs and long distance education as Covid19 will definitely impact the education and it will never be the same as before. It will be era for the education industry. Also, educational Institutions need to leverage the technology in building an education connected ecosystem by creating 5 major pillars:

Fig 2: Proposed Digital Ecosystem



Source: Developed by the Researcher



It is need of the hour for the educational institutions to strengthen their knowledge and Information Technology infrastructure to be ready for facing COVID-19 like situations.

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.

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