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Influence of Covid-19 on Rural Education in India

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Abstract

In the current situation Corona is a well known word to each and everyone. The Corona virus has been spread almost all the countries. Even in India large number of class, caste, gender and region are impacted by the COVID-19. Central government and State governments of India declared lockdown to avoid the spread of virus throughout the India. Due to these pandemic socio-economic conditions of all the sectors including education sector is radically disrupted. It has been made the government, non-government sectors and public to deal with their situations and issues effectively. During this period the schools, colleges and universities closed to break up the spread chain of Corona. The education sector also took remedial measures to prevent any disruption to the academic year. The authorities of sector implemented online learning from home. Learning inequality among school children is increased due to the shifting of traditional class room into digital classroom. Education through online in Rural India is negatively affected compared to urban. Author winded up the study with highlighting the major problems faced by the schools, teachers, parents and children. Some possible suggestions are mentioned to overcome from these difficulties to get the equality between rural and urban education.

Keywords: Covid-19 pandemic, corona virus, rural education, online education, digital platform.

1. Introduction

A group of viruses related to Ribonucleic acid that cause respiratory illness to human beings called corona virus [1]. Corona virus originated in Wuhan, the city of China in last December and it started spread virus all over world. Hundreds of thousands have been infected and died. This was called as a pandemic by the World Health Organisation. Corona virus can cause the illness for the respiratory system of both animals and human beings. It is caused significantly more than search for Mars and it is called as Covid-19. When infected people breathe, talk or sneeze it will blow the virus to spread through the air [2]. Pandemic brought unhappy era, which was described as feeling of incapable and lacking of control. Impact of virus brought long term psychological problems. Anxiety increased due to the uncertainty of the situations. With anxiety, people are trying to get back from the situations by controlling their emotions. Covid-19 brought changes in the life system of human beings. It changed work

behaviour experiences of family and also personal wellbeing [3]. The World Health Organization reports more than 190 countries facing this pandemic. Pandemic brought dissolved in the systems of the whole world. It affected economic conditions of India including the education sector [4]. Impact of covid-19 lockdown brought major changes in education sector. Teachers, parents and students are facing different kind of challenges in completion of academic year plans.

1.1 Pre-COVID Education in India

India is a largest democratic country having largest population in the world. Independent India provided right to education to all citizens. Right to Education act 2009 says that right to education is the fundamental rights of all children. RTE declared compulsory education to all children till the age of 14 years. Indian constitution provided free and compulsory education under article 21A [5]. Through the holistic use of technology, it is possible for India to determine the deep-rooted

difference between superiority and equity in the education field. Still some of the rural areas facing hardship in educational field compare to urban area due to different variance like lack of educational infrastructure, modern technology, imbalance in ratio of students, teachers and superstitious beliefs etc. Along with these problems, pandemic Covid-19 spread worldwide [6] and created much disparity in the existing academic year plans. It had set up a challenging period to India's successful execution of basic education universally.

2. Affects of Covid-19 on education sector

Lockdown had been declared to whole India completely. All the socio-economic movements were blocked to protect the human being and to prevent the spread of Corona virus. More than a month all the sectors kept closed including education and there is no certainty about reopening of educational sectors. Now re-opening of closed schools and balancing health due to the Covid-19 is a backbreaking task to the country. It is the hyper critical time to the education sector because it is the admission period for nursery. Various examination boards and Universities of India were postponed or cancelled the examinations as a protection measure for the covid-19. Pandemic and lockdown were affected the entrance exams for admissions of different research and educational institutions of India. Many government and non-government sectors, competitive examination boards were over stressed due to the lockdown. Indian students, parents those were planned to go abroad for higher studies were in panic due to the corona virus and lockdown. The people already studying in abroad are do not prefer foreign education by the fear of Pandemic. Many parents are suffering financially and changing the plan of admitting their kids in the educational institutions having affordable fees as per the situation. Economic losses of educational institutions, students and young professionals face different problems in placement, training, interviews and jobs. Many faculties and employees of private educational institutions had hurdle of loss of jobs, no salary, increment and other allowances. Educational institutions are facing the problems of fewer admissions, lack of internships, placements of students, training etc. Less fee collection creates difficulty to run and manage the institutions. Many institutions were closed due to the slow-down of the Economic conditions. All over India admission procedures of the educational institution were delayed due to the lockdown.

India is already suffering from inequity in education sector due to the number of reasons. Lockdown by covid-19 is brought short-term problem and long-term problems to young learners and socio-economic conditions [6]. Millions of students have affected by the covid-19. This pandemic brought gender contrast on education. Economic hardship brought more dropout decisions of girl child especially living in rural area and poor family. Loss of job makes the parents to keep the children out of school. No income or less salary insisted parents to make leave their children from the school. This will be higher in rural area when compared to Urban. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation estimates more than 23 million of children are left school college and Universities [7].

3. Alternate to cope up the academic plan

To overcome from these problems there is a need of immediate solutions. Overall development of the student quality of education is inevitable. Now use of modern techniques, welfare programmes are necessary to enrich the knowledge of the students. Use of various tools and techniques, modern technologies are playing a major role in educating students and building their future. Schools are under restriction of learning in person to control the infections in local community. Government introduced new system in education sector to avoid gap due to Covid-19 in the academic year plan. Union government introduced PM Vidya programme to unify the education. Teaching has shifted from classroom teaching to digital platform. Students are taught through online teaching method, government portal, direct to home channels and others. The intention of programme is enabling air education to provide equitable education. Some State governments also taken the precautionary measures and introduced Abhaya - a self-learning application, Mera mobile mera Vidyalaya mobile application, digitalization of all text books and all. Activities like writing stories, poems, drawings, Mathematical formulae and Science experiments and many more has been telecasted through television, uploaded to WhatsApp groups and in other channels too.

4. Complications upraised by online classes

Digital classroom became a challenging platform to many students in India. Maximum students and maximum educational institutions of rural India have the problem in adopting digital infrastructure

including electricity problem, device problems and internet connectivity. Nearly 24% of people have smart phone, 11% people have computer and 24% houses have internet facility. 99% of Indian homes are having poor quality of power supply. Computer and internet facility possessed by only 8% of households i.e., between the ages of 5-24 years of age. In the present situation internet is very significant but another side its harming the student's mindset. This may lead students to the cyber hacking, violent activities etc which can evoke the students to corrupt by impacting on young minds [8].

5. Suggestions to improve the digital platform

Government should provide scholarships or avail the facilities to all the students to get textbooks, stationeries, mobile, laptop, data package and regular supply of electricity immediately and effectively to follow up the digital teaching and learning method. To avoid the nutrition problem of the children, government should find new way to deliver the nutritious food items in school closing period. Though the National Educational policy 2020 introduced universal education, the government should supervise the provision of equal education to all children of India [9].

The Public and private partnership will provide excellence and quality of education. Economic support from government and private sectors will help to rebuild quality of education. Provision of infrastructure for the digitalization of teaching learning techniques and preceding it in a scheduled and systematic manner may bring classroom atmosphere. Conducting motivational and welfare programmes will be beneficial to the children in improving the student's employability, efficiency, health, and wellbeing.

Conclusions

Covid-19 is a major complication in the context of the government of India's commitment to educating every child on the basis of that; it is a fundamental right of every child. This Pandemic brought socio-economic problem and role of schools become crucial. The government launched an online class to address this problem. Online class experiments brought new perception and new warning stories about what works in education field. Online education fixed as an alternative to reduce the inequity. Online education opportunity is to be more selective in the working schedule.

Digital teaching system has major problem in reaching door of the poor, absconded, physical disabled, weak students. Majority population are facing the problem than the benefit. Because of major rural area, poverty and lack of accessibility this project is not the accessible to the majority of the students. All parents of rural area were unable to solve the problems of smart phone, network issues and electricity problems. Most of the school- colleges are facing the lack of privileges required for this system. The use of mobile for the online classes will facilitate students to mislead and also cause physical and mental side effects. So, online class teaching should not be considered as a substitute to the traditional classroom teaching. It is necessary to provide a good education in offline and online classes to each and every student taking all the precautions.

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