



Practices To Overcome The Effects Of Pandemic Situation On Education

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Abstract

All areas of development are affected due to the pandemic, but if we talk about the education sector, it has been seriously affected. The biggest example of which is Covid-19. The country had to bear the brunt of the lockdown during Covid 19. Due to the lockdown, many changes came in the lives of students, during the pandemic about 32 crore students missed school, college and they got away from educational activities. Considering the future of the students and the importance of education, online education was started, which is a good option to maintain continuity in education, it is not that we were not aware of online education before the pandemic, even before that students and educational institutions used to resort to this medium for teaching and learning, but then it was optional that through which medium the students and educational institutions want to study and teach, but the pandemic made this option necessary for every student and educational institution and at the time of lockdown it emerged as a light in the darkness for the education sector, which showed the way to the educational institutions that in which direction they have to go. Therefore, it has become necessary to create an e-learning platform by strengthening the online teaching learning mechanism through WhatsApp, Zoom Meet, Google Meet, YouTube Live, Facebook Live etc. through laptop, desktop, tablet or smartphone via the Internet. Online education has emerged as a strong base to deal with the obstacles in the field of education during the pandemic.

Keywords: Pandemic, lockdown, online education, digitalisation, social distancing etc.

Introduction

The disruptive impact of the pandemic on the world was beyond imagination and thought in every way, it was unimaginable and education was no exception. Throughout history, outbreaks of various deadly viruses and diseases have caused destruction and chaos in societies. The lethal spread of diseases and their emergence and re-emergence are happening at a very unpredictable rate. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) report, the world has witnessed the emergence of numerous disease outbreaks and pandemics caused by more than 20 infectious agents in the last decade.¹ And these outbreaks include the recent SARS-CoV-2 (the causative agent of the coronavirus disease COVID-19), which led to the WHO declaring COVID-19 a public health emergency of international concern on January 30.²

Due to the increase in confirmed cases of individuals infected and suffering from this virus around the world, the World Health Organization (WHO) classified the coronavirus as a pandemic on March 11, 2020. Countries were forced to take serious preventive actions against the spread of this deadly virus. The World Health Organization (WHO) advised frequent hand washing, avoiding meeting in public places, avoiding touching your face, maintaining physical distance, and avoiding mass gatherings in any place.³

The lockdown and quarantine due to COVID-19 put a stop to all social activities that were part of the normal routine. Educational institutions around the world responded to the pandemic by moving online to digital interfaces. The major structural change at that time was to sit at home in front of a laptop screen and pay attention to classes. The education sector is omnipresent and omnipresent, in every society and every government irrespective of their type and different economic systems and has a unique impact on providing skills and knowledge to the population and the individual, everyone is indebted to education as it is directly linked with improving the standard of living, being a source of livelihood, good health and many other parts of life. Therefore, countries have tried to improve the standards and quality of education provided to all citizens.

The central and state governments took many preventive measures to prevent the spread of the epidemic on education. The government promoted online education in the field of education during the epidemic. The attention of people of all classes was drawn to online education. Online education is such a new education system in which teachers and children do not need to sit in the classroom, but can sit in their homes and receive their education through laptop, desktop, tablet or smartphone devices through the internet. The best thing in this system is that you can take classes of any teacher sitting anywhere. Due to the closure of schools and colleges, the Ministry of Human Resource Development has made several arrangements including online educational channels through Direct to Home. Students are using online teaching learning systems through WhatsApp, Zoom Meet, Webex Meet, Google Meet, YouTube Live, Facebook Live, etc. during the pandemic. The central and state governments have started efforts to increase children's access to learning platforms for secondary and higher education during the pandemic.⁴

During this period, 5 times increase in the reach of students was observed on the national level online education platform 'Swayam' portal. This portal was accessed by more than two and a half lakh people. About 26 lakh students are enrolled in the 574 courses available on the 'Swayam' portal. Apart from this, the government-run 'Swayam Prabha' TV channel broadcasts educational content. This channel is a DTH channel which is a free channel to watch across the country. This channel covers school education, higher education and professional courses. This channel provides information about commerce, performing arts, social sciences, technology, law, medicine, agriculture etc. Under the 'Diksha' portal by the Central Government, education from class 1 to graduate and post graduate is conducted through this portal, along with this, study material related to teacher training is also available in it.

During the world's biggest pandemic COVID-19, NCERT has launched the 'e-Pathshala' learning app. In this learning app, books from class 1 to 12 have been uploaded in many languages including Hindi, Urdu and English. Through this app, access of students, teachers and parents to all educational materials including textbooks, audio, video, magazines is being promoted. Under the National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER) project by MHRD, a better online platform has been created for the students and teachers of the country during the lockdown.⁵

MHRD has started 'e-PG Pathshala' for postgraduate students. Through this app, postgraduate students will be able to study books during the lockdown. The most important thing about this platform is that it can be accessed throughout the day without internet. The Government of India has made every effort to provide uninterrupted support services to the students during the lockdown in COVID-19. The COVID-19 pandemic has given the Indian education system a golden opportunity to move out of the traditional system and enter a new era. The need for a new education policy was felt in the Indian education system during the lockdown.

Lockdown has opened the doors for digital revolution in the field of education. Lockdown played an important role in the expansion of Digital India by the Central Government. Now with the expansion of digital learning, the distance between scholars, teachers and students living in remote areas has also reduced. This will provide employment opportunities on a large scale in the country due to the increasing demand for digital content. Covid-19 has further strengthened the concept of 'Global Village'. During the lockdown in the global pandemic, the whole world was imprisoned in their homes. To ensure that the studies of the students are not disrupted during the lockdown, efforts were made to ensure access of students and parents to e-learning platforms, digital libraries and education channels for online education across the country. Online education can be obtained in a better and convenient way by sitting at home and connecting with the teacher through apps like Zoom Meet, Google Meet etc. Online education system is cheaper and simpler than school education system. It reduces transportation and other expenses of going to and coming back from school and coaching. Also, it reduces other expenses of the school. Due to online education, children's time has been saved because

a lot of time had to be spent from going to school bus to coming back home. Most of the time of the children was spent in the school bus. Children also got an opportunity to spend more time with their family.

While taking online classes, the child is always under the supervision of his/her mother or father. Parents are able to save time and money through online education. The weather does not affect the education of children through online classes. India is a geographically diverse country where there is extreme cold, heat or rainy season. This affects the education of children but the online education system has completely eliminated the effect of weather. With this new system, children can get their education from anywhere through smartphones, computer laptops and tablets. Through online education, children are also gaining knowledge of technical information which is the need of the current digital age.

Children are getting educational knowledge through online medium with more content through videos, which is making it easier for children to prepare and understand. In offline education, children used to hesitate to express. Online education has reduced this to a great extent. In the online education system, the teacher tries to do his best because in this teaching system, along with the student and the teacher, the parents also keep an eye. They can see whether the child is getting good education from the teaching work or not. In online education, it is not necessary that you stay at home. You can get it by watching it anywhere. In this, you can also review the lecture immediately. Thus, the importance of online education system increases even more in dire situations like natural disaster or emergency. Its example has come before us in the form of Corona epidemic. Everyone is trying to avoid its effect. At present, most schools are adopting the process of online study keeping in view the interest of students. In fact, the process of online study has emerged as a better and safer option for school education. In this way, online education is a simple and stress-free learning process. In this, it is very important that you have the passion to learn. Nowadays people are doing office work from home through online. This education system is better for those parents who cannot send their children to study outside. In the online education system, a person not only gets secondary and higher education but can also do various types of marketing courses from home.⁶

Due to the pandemic, all educational institutions abandoned the traditional method of imparting education and resorted to online method, for which both teachers and students learned technology and now they have no hesitation about technology, because they know how to use it in education. It is true that even before the pandemic, students and teachers used technology in education, but there were many students and teachers who did not know how to use this technology because they had never used it before, but the necessity of online education during the pandemic made them aware of many teaching techniques, which is a positive impact.

Collaborative work has increased due to the pandemic, teachers are working together to teach each other, they are teaching each other how to use technology in teaching. The spirit of collaboration has increased in the department due to the pandemic. During the pandemic, teachers and students learned the use of technology in education, which increased technological literacy.

Conclusion

The online education system has helped students, teachers and educational institutions a lot during the pandemic. The exchange of education was not interrupted even in this difficult time. At present, technology has progressed so much that we can get online education from home and from any corner of the world through the Internet, but economic, social, digital and educational inequalities exist in India, in which there is a need to bridge the gap of these inequalities to adopt the online education system. For the laborers who have migrated from cities to their native place, the central and state governments need to make a roadmap for employment and education for their children. The central government should change the infrastructure of the states for internet connectivity and related facilities. Preparations will have to be made to fight the crisis of this epidemic by giving booster doses to the youth and the elderly and vaccinating small children. India is not fully prepared to make education accessible to all corners of the country through digital platforms. It is the need of the hour for educational institutions to strengthen their knowledge and information technology infrastructure so that they are prepared to face situations like COVID-19. There is an urgent need to make efforts for maximum use of online education, so that students can not only complete their degrees in this academic year but also prepare for the future digitally oriented environment. The concept of work from home has greater relevance in such a pandemic situation to reduce the spread of the epidemic. India must develop creative strategies to ensure this. Online platforms should be ensured with advanced protective measures, especially for virtual learning tools. The devices should have the latest software and updated antivirus

programs, otherwise someone can hack digital devices. Online education is not affordable for everyone, including the poor and disadvantaged groups of society. Government and non-government educational institutions should ensure that students from disadvantaged groups and low-income families are provided with affordable and accessible high-speed internet connectivity along with electronic devices. Government and educational institutions should make plans to continue educational activities while maintaining social distancing. To encourage online learning, government and educational institutions should adopt a policy to provide free internet and free digital electronic devices to all learners, resulting in people staying safe during lockdown and pandemic.

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