IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON WOMEN EDUCATION: A PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract: Covid-19 pandemic has resulted into an abrupt transformation in human need along the diversified areas of the Globe. The whole population seems to have one and only necessity that is getting rid of this infection caused by a virus that is yet to be understood by the researchers. COVID-19 epidemic beyond the health status of the global society and economy has been experiencing a major challenge. The peak of the epidemic, more than one and a half thousand students, or about 90% of the world's pre-primary to higher education students are being hindered. All eyes are now on digital technology to provide continuity of education; the existing digital system has gradually clarified the gender divide and pushed towards further marginalization of girls. Numerous nations have chosen temporarily to close schools, universities and colleges in an attempt to contain the spread of COVID-19. The future looks ambiguous, unimaginable, and challenging for all education fraternity. As the development of a country depends upon the education system of it. There are more problems which encountered with online education. Educating and learning in an e-learning condition happens Web based learning, or virtual classes offered over the web, is stood out from conventional courses taken in a physical school building. Hence the present paper attempt to analyze critically on the basis of secondary data sources whether online learning has been able to achieve Education for All in this pandemic crisis.

Index Terms - Education, Gendering Pandemic, COVID-19 Crisis, Right to Education, Initiatives of Govt. of India.

I. INTRODUCTION

The outbreak of COVID-19 has been declared as pandemic not only in India but all over the world. COVID-19 has impacted all most every sector in the country including the education sector, which is a critical determinant of a nation's development. The present reality is confronting pandemic as the Corona infection is clearing its way around the world and its sway is just starting to be obvious. The pandemics has gotten numerous passing, thousands have been isolated and has prompted a difficult circumstance of worldwide wellbeing crisis. To check the spread of this infection, lockdown has been actualized rigidly. Numerous nations have chosen temporarily to close schools, universities and colleges in an attempt to contain the spread of COVID-19. The future looks ambiguous, unimaginable, and challenging for all education fraternity. As the development of a country depends upon the education system of it. Due to COVID-19, all the levels of education including pre-primary to higher education has suffered a lot. It is notify that the secondary stage (Maddhyamik) of education is one of the crucial stage of one's life and in this period students need social contact to develop their personality but unfortunately they can't.

The global lockdown has had such a devastating effect on the lives of students that about 32 crores students have stopped moving to schools / colleges and all educational activities in India have been shut down. The prevalence of COVID-19 has suggested to us that change is inevitable. It serves as a catalyst for the development and alternatives of educational platforms and strategies. The education system is struggling to survive the crisis with a different approach and is facing challenges through digitization. As per UNESCO report, there are two mostly affected educational levels in India, about 14 crores of primary and 13 crores of secondary students are affected.

II. UNEQUAL ACCESS TO DIGITAL WORLD AND GLOBAL EDUCATION

Most of the government to control the expansion of the virus in the world do not have to be forced to temporarily close the school. The peak of the epidemic, more than one and a half thousand students, or about 90% of the world's pre-primary to higher education students are being hindered. There is an idea that everyone can continue their online education. All eyes are now on digital technology to provide continuity of education, the existing digital system has gradually clarified the gender divide and pushed towards further marginalization of girls. Millions of girls around the world are not online and therefore cannot continue their education in the digital space. Many girls cannot afford expensive data online and those who are trying to survive are being deprived of their families in various ways. This is exactly what happens - even if a house is connected, girls can't even use the internet because their brothers are busy with housework while using the internet. However, such online learning can create a digital divide among students because many have or do not have access to the Internet, and many students may not be able to carry a desktop computer or laptop in their home. This lockdown has severely

affected poor students in India and about 86% of them are reportedly unable to explore online learning. It can thus widen the divide between rich / poor and urban / rural.

Online instruction is on target to become standard by 2025. Scientists have made a lot of accentuation on its advantages however very little is examined on the impediments of e-learning innovation. Likewise, there are more problems which encountered with online education. Educating and learning in an e-learning condition happens Web based learning, or virtual classes offered over the web, is stood out from conventional courses taken in a physical school building. Therefore, it forced schools or universities to suspend physical classrooms and shift to online classes. Though online classes are not capable of substituting classroom lectures but our teachers are trying their best to provide education to the students. The body language of the teacher is the part and parcel of the physical classroom which is missing in the online classroom. The emergency takes shape the predicament policymakers are looking between shutting schools and keeping them open. Educating is moving on the web, on an untested and exceptional scale.

The renowned E-Paper (English edition) *"The Economic Times"* published an article- 'Five in ten women facing motivational challenges in work-from-home scenario: Survey' on 20th July, 2020 written by Brinda Sarkar (Editor, The Economic Times). According to this survey, during the domestic household situation, four out of every 10 people face high levels of anxiety and stress, which is a broader career environment for women in India. Remote working and its impact on a total of two and a half hundred women and women professionals across New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Pune and Kolkata. Given an opportunity for men to share the load in the current worldwide home, however, managers (mostly men) have been sensitive to this approach as a result of creating high stress levels for women. Women's "dual burden syndrome" has been mentioned. With the workload from their office, all the chores around the house have created double stress, the effect of which has caused great anxiety towards their mental side.

III. PATRIARCHAL SYSTEM AND WOMEN EDUCATION

Additionally, it is mentioned that more than 50% of the Work from Home scene has faced motivational challenges. Various failures have led to fears that a large portion of women's careers could be lost in their careers and the gender diversity declared journey to leave behind decades could lead to such a fear. The idea of online classes in itself is coming from a privileged and patriarchal system. This shift to digital learning is an integral part of the inequalities and discrimination that exist outside the online mode. Unequal access to technology and education and employment have led to consequences for women. As classes move to online mode, girls in a country like India may lose classes on the condition that boys have access to the Internet and personal devices. This could widen the existing gap in education for both boys and girls. A number of people are losing their jobs or are now paid less than their normal wages, resulting in double the cost and the purchase of a digital device, extra electricity bills and internet pack recharges. In June, for example, a 14-year-old SC girl in Kerala committed suicide by not being able to attend online classes due to lack of technology. Her father was a daily laborer and could not afford to buy her an Android phone. The mobile phone is an example that has been brought into the mainstream media, again becoming unfamiliar and obsolete to many. In homes where both boys and girls study, siblings prefer to enter classes online via mobile phones. The urgent need for the state is to build a gender-positive outlook for equitable access to education and technology.

The situation for girls is so dire that they wake up early in the day to clean the house, wash, cook and take care of the elderly and then take part in online classes where the issue is not the same for boys or men in the family. Even if they take part in family work for a while, their work is not considered more than a helping hand and they are able to enjoy leisure time. These examples are not limited to school-going girls. This extra work stress across classes, castes, ages, education and occupations.

IV. GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN THE PANDEMIC

Gender-based violence influences and shapes the women's experience of work and education, both in private as well as in public spaces. Lockdowns to prevent the spread of Covid-19 have been closely monitored to find out how many women at home are facing a crisis - whether it is an epidemic, a natural disaster or an economic downturn. Gender-based violence has escalated into a global emergency. Preliminary results from China prove that domestic violence has increased dramatically. For example, a police station in Hubei Province, China, recorded three times as many domestic violence reports during the COVID-19 segregation in February 2020.

"Gender policy and the role of equipping women in the field of care put them at the forefront in times of crisis, increasing the risk of their exclusion without developing a response," said Terry McGowan, chairman of the Hill brown Division of Population. Around the world, women do one-third of the unpaid work, including housework, helping family members with disease prevention, and caring for sick relatives.

In the first three weeks of the nationwide lockdown, the female counselor National Commission for Women (NCW) pointed to the number of domestic violence cases, who described the domestic violence from March 23 to April 1, and the NCW, alleging that the incident took place on July 22-24 (587 complaints related to domestic violence against women). Lower, somewhat sadly, the states of Bihar, Haryana and Punjab were identified. This domestic violence epidemic recovery test method should be examined and the police are taking required actions. In Uttar Pradesh and Kerala, police launched the Helpline Number for domestic violence victims and NCW launched WhatsApp Number for report. Beside, NGOs and helplines determine the location of landlords involved in domestic violence and contact the online location for 24 hours to help.

The COVID-19 pandemic is causing untold human suffering and economic devastation around the world. Some domestic violence shelters are closed; others are full. Government should make the prevention and redress of violence against women a key part of their national response plans for COVID-19. Imprisonment, refugee women and girls are expected to increase the risk of intimate partner violence. Even the socio-economic situation of refugee women and girls may worsen when the risk of sexual exploitation of members of other communities as well as humanitarian workers increases.

V. RIGHT TO EDUCATION DURING COVID -19: A PERSPECTIVE

Right to education is not a privilege but a right guaranteed by the State to every individual. It is a right also enshrined in the Article 21 A of the Constitution of India. It is also applicable to everyone without any discrimination to provide free and compulsory education of all children. The age of the children is considered six to fourteen years for primary and compulsory education. Right to Education is a Fundamental Right in Article 21A of the Constitution of India. The UNESCO has highlighted that the education is divided into three levels, i.e. primary, secondary and higher. Primary education should be free and universal. It has a greater meaning when we say universal as it must reach to every child, poor rich, etc. and it is a duty of state to ensure. Moreover, the technical education and vocational education is considered as secondary education. And last but not the least the higher education that means to reach and accessible to each child and must be free. During COVID -19 Pandemic, Right to Education is still a Fundamental right and has not suspended. Right to Education Act 2009 and Article 21 and Article 29 (1) of Indian Constitution is to provide equality of education opportunities to all citizens irrespective of caste, class, gender and religion. Due to the outbreak of COVID-19 across the world countries announced lockdown to curve the chain of its transmission. Consequently 90 percent of students across the world are affected due to closure of educational institutions. Online learning is an alternative so that learning journey cannot be totally stopped. But this concept is not representative of equality in terms of availability of resources and access, resulting in digital divide between rural and urban and rich and poor. Moreover it is become a burden for the marginalized section while fighting for their basic needs, online learning and its prerequisite is beyond their reach. In my opinion, the rights of men and women mean their overall rights. The right to education, health, protection, law and social rights. An independent state is obliged to give everything to both men and women. Girls should also think that if their father, husband, brother, son are in danger, they will not be healthy either. That discomfort collectively pushes many families to the brink of collapse. Remember that men and women complement each other, both are half sky apart from each other.

The outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic has caused many impacts which are both positive and disproportionate in some ways against humanity and fundamental human rights. The disproportionate impacts include increase in racism and xenophobia against indigenous people and ethnic minorities. Unfortunately, the coronavirus has been a pandemic of racism where some kind of people believe that they are better than other people who look differently and this undermines international human right laws. Aside from the health challenges and deaths associated with the COVID-19, women are the ones suffering the racial abuses, harassment and violent events in public spaces than any other race. The united nations through the General Assembly have emphasized that there is no space for any form of racism, xenophobia and discrimination in response to the pandemic.

VI. PEDAGOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS AND INITIATIVES OF GOVT. OF INDIA

The urgency and the complexity thrown up by Covid-19 sprang up a multitude of challenges for the teaching community. The sample for the study comprised of teachers (both general and special educators) selected using non-probability sampling techniques. A specially designed questionnaire was circulated among these participants to gain their responses regarding the modern initiatives or approaches followed by them for taking classes, for providing education to the learners with or without special needs. The electronic questionnaire (in the form of Google forms) was specifically designed for the present study. The questions spanned across four major domains: 1) challenges faced by the educators during the pandemic, 2) approaches followed by them to overcome the challenges, 3) analysis of learner behavior and performance, 4) instructional designs adopted for the teaching learning process. The findings obtained were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. The quantitative data was expressed in the form of percentage data while the responses provided to the open ended questions were analyzed using qualitative methods. The findings highlight the existing challenges faced by the educators, the innovative measures or approaches adopted by the educators to overcome the challenges faced and to provide appropriate teaching learning experiences to the learners. The findings also reveal an increase in learner performances and learning due to usage of interactive videos, quizzes, other techniques. The study sheds light on how educators have successfully converted the COVID-19 crisis into an opportunity and a window is opened on the new ways for promoting effective learner engagement in online learning processes along with personal and professional development as a result of using the mentioned approaches.

To prevent the spread of the epidemic COVID-19, the government of India has taken a number of preventive measures. Union government has announced lock-down from March 16, 2020 of all educational institutions. Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has suspended all examinations of Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools and issued revised guidelines for this across India on March 18, 2020. Maintaining the guidelines, Test centers are maintained testing at least 1 meter distance between students and class test should be given with no more than 24 students. If the rooms of the examination centers were small, it should be divided into different rooms according students. Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has also postponed the interview for the Civil Service Exam 2019.Similarly most state governments postponed exams due to outbreak of COVID-19.

During the lockdown, students are using popular social media like WhatsApp, Zoom, Google Mill, Google Duo, Telegram, YouTube Live, and Facebook Live etc. for online teaching and learning methods. The MHRD ICT initiative is a unique platform that integrates all digital resources for online learning. MHRD's digital initiatives for secondary as well as higher education during COVID-19 are:

- *For Secondary Education*

  a) **Diksha portal** (the initiation portal contains e-learning materials for students.
  Attached to the curriculum of teachers, and parents, including video lessons, worksheets, textbooks and more evaluation.

  b) **e-Pathshala** (e-Pathshala is an e-learning app for NCERT in 1 to 12 classes in multiple languages. The application homework, video, audio, etc. is an initiative to bring together students, educators and parents in multiple languages including Urdu, English and Hindi.)

  c) **National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER) portal** (to provide a lot of resources for this portal. As well as students and teachers in multiple languages books, interactive modules and videos with host initiatives are taken in the field of stem-based games etc.)

- *For Higher Education*

  a) **Swayam** (It is a national online learning platform that hosts 1900 courses in schools from 9th to 12th grade and offers new directions in all subjects, including higher education (undergraduate and postgraduate program), engineering, humanities and social sciences, law and management. Its unique feature is that it integrates conventional education, which is currently the prevailing education in India under the influence of the epidemic COVID-19.)

  b) **Swayam Prabha** (It has 32 DTH TV channels for transmitting educational content on a 24 x 7 basis. These channels have been made available for viewing across the country using DD Free Dish Set Top Box and Antenna. The schedule and other details of the channels are arbitrarily made available through this portal.)

  c) **e-PG Pathshala** (e-PG schools are designed for postgraduate students only. Postgraduate students can access this platform for various e-books, online courses and study materials at this time during the lockdown period. This is one of the most important part of this platform. Students will be able to access these facilities offline without using the internet all day.)

VII. CONCLUSION

COVID-19 has had a huge impact on the education sector in India. Although it has created different challenges, different opportunities have also evolved. Government of India and various education stakeholders have explored this possibility takes various steps (e.g. Open and Distance Learning (ODL)). Digital technology to address the current crisis. It is not possible for India to reach out to every corner of the nation through digital platforms. Students who are not privileged like others will be harmed by the benefits of digital platforms. But the university and the Indian government are relentlessly trying to come up with a solution to this problem. Priority should be given to using digital technology to create a convenient location.

The COVID-19 situation is directly and indirectly affecting Dalits as well as persons with disabilities. People with disabilities include a wide range of human diversity based on caste, gender, religion, geography, vulnerability and other characteristics. Because of many people with disabilities are infected with an infection such as MRSA (Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus), their corona virus infection can become more serious. Lack of accessibility can lead to dire situations as there is no accessibility to quarantine centers. Also in the case of students, the question that arises is where is the inclusion of persons with disabilities in online education? How many people with disabilities in total or is it possible to take online classes? Are websites equipped to deal with visual impairment? How much do they have to struggle to feed the families of the disabled? When they have no representation in Parliament, how will the government think of them? It points to an invisible big problem. For every political party there is a religious minority cell, a caste house, a female cell but there is no disability rights cell. Social distancing is an advantage for the marginalized but worse for the disabled. In COVID-19 situation reduction of minorities, discrimination, arbitrary denial or adverse negative impact of refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants and stateless people, internally displaced persons and ethnic and religious minorities, and the people on the basis of a low caste, become victims by stigma as well as discrimination.

NOTES

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