


**A STUDY OF COVID-19 : IMPACTS ON INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM**

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**Abstract**

*Indian education system is still not mature at both the urban and rural area. Government imposed nation wise lockdown on March 25th, 2020 to combat COVID-19, has made severe impact on the education system. India has the world's second largest school system, after China. According to UNESCO, 63 million teachers were affected in 165 countries. A total of 1.3 billion learners around the world were not able to attend schools or universities, and approximately 320 million learners are affected in India alone. It has changed the traditional education system to the educational technologies model in which teaching and assessments are conducted online. Both the positive and negative impacts of COVID-19 on Indian Education system are observed. This paper aims to analyze the Impact of COVID-19 on Indian Education System, focusing on education during online teaching and assessment of students getting online classes in this pandemic from settings at home.*

**Introduction**

Indian government has announced the lockdown and closure of educational institutions as a solution to enforce social distancing within communities. The nationwide lockdown has made a tremendous impact on the education system of the country, especially for students from rural areas. Since the Indian education system is dominated by classroom study, the present scenario has made the functioning of the educational institutions go very difficult. All educational activities like examinations, school and college admissions, entrance tests of various universities and competitive examinations, others, are being held during this period. As the days are passing by with no immediate solution to stop this pandemic, the closure of schools and universities is highly affecting the learning across the country. The structure of the Indian education system i.e. learning methodology, teaching techniques & assessment methodologies, is quite affected, resulting in a shift to online education with most focus on virtual education to accomplish the set aims and objectives. But only limited schools and universities could adopt such methods and the many other institutes are affected badly.

**Objectives**

The overall objective of this study is to analyze the Impact of COVID-19 on Indian Education System. In particular, this study will examine:

- \* How the Indian education system is facing the Impact of COVID-19, and highlighting the role played by teachers and students through online education
- \* How the positive impact helpful to students, parents and school teachers in the scenario of the online education
- \* How to reduce the negative impact of COVID-19 on students for their smooth education.



### Methodology

Data and information presented in the study are collected from various reports, magazines and articles published by national and international agencies on impact of COVID-19 pandemic. Secondary methodology is been used.

### Purpose of the Study

All systems have strengths and weaknesses. Maximizing strengths and minimizing **weaknesses** in order not to miss the opportunity to move forward should be the goal. The **main** purpose of the study is to analyze the impact of COVID-19 on the Indian education system. It covers the impact of COVID-19 on rural and urban students, Higher Education Institutions.

### Digital Infrastructure in India

Before the COVID-19 lockdown in India, no one estimated that the face of the Indian educational institutions could change so drastically. Schools that never allowed students to carry an electronic gadget turned into learning centers for online classes. Both teachers and students are getting familiar to this new normal, which is definitely more challenging for the teachers to handle with this situation. The teachers also face challenges in designing effective lessons and changing of teaching when shifting to online learning; this was possible through workshops and training conduct for the teachers especially.

### Impact on Teachers and Students

Both teachers and students are facing many hurdles during online education. At home, a lack of basic facilities, external distraction and family interruption during teaching were major issues noticed. Educational institution support barriers such as the budget for purchasing advanced technologies, a lack of training, a lack of technical support and a lack of clarity and direction were also noticed. Teachers also faced technical difficulties. The difficulties were grouped under a lack of technical support; it included a lack of technical infrastructure, limited awareness of online teaching platforms and security concerns. Teachers' personal problems including a lack of technical knowledge, course integration with technology are depressant for their engagement in online teaching.

### Positive impact on education system

Though the outbreak of COVID-19 has created many negative impacts on education, educational institutions of India have accepted the challenges and trying their best to provide support services to the students during the pandemic. Indian education system got the opportunity for transformation from traditional system to a new era. The following points may be considered as the positive impacts:

- \* Develop the use of soft copy of learning material- In lockdown situation, students were not able to collect the hard copies of study materials and hence most of the students used soft copy materials for reference and studying during online lectures.
- \* Improvement in collaborative work- There is a new opportunity where collaborative teaching and learning can take on new forms.
- \* Rise in online meetings- The pandemic has created a massive rise in teleconferencing, virtual meetings, and webinars and e-conferencing opportunities.
- \* Enhanced digital literacy- The pandemic situation induced people to learn and use digital technology and resulted in increasing the digital literacy.



- \* Improved the use of electronic media for sharing information- Learning materials are shared among the students easily and the related queries are resolved through e-mail, SMS, phone calls and using different social medias like WhatsApp or Facebook.
- \* Better time management- Students are able to manage their time more efficiently in online education during pandemics.
- \* Demand for Open and Distance Learning- During the pandemic situation, most of the students preferred Open and Distance Learning mode as it encourages self-learning providing opportunities to learn from diverse resources and customized learning as per their needs.

#### **Negative impact on education system:**

Indian education system has suffered a lot due to the outbreak of COVID-19. It has created many negative impacts on education and some of them are as pointed below:

- \* Educational activity hampered- Schools are closed and classes have been suspended. Different boards have already postponed as well as cancelled the annual examinations and entrance tests across India.
- \* Unpreparedness of teachers and students - Teachers and students are unprepared for online education; they were not ready for this sudden transition from face to face learning to online learning.
- \* Parent's role- In urban area some educated parents are able to guide but some may not have the adequate level of education needed to teach children in the house.
- \* Digital gadgets: Especially in rural area 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.
- \* Create Difference: This online teaching-learning method creates a big gap between rich v/s poor and urban v/s Rural Students.

#### **Observation and Recommendation**

This pandemic has revealed some of the major loopholes in the Indian education system. The closure of schools and colleges has made a severe impact on marginalized students. One of the critical trends that can be followed is the need to have a combined approach to online learning with increase in investment on the upgrading of the technology infrastructure of educational institutions. Stress needs to be given to training the teachers. All higher education institutes now are aware of the importance of technology and should take serious measures to conduct technology-driven education through the learning management system. It is recommended that educational institutions should use technology in all aspects. This pandemic shows the partnership between technology and education is going to stay forever.

One more suggestion is that education Institutes can divide the courses into conventional teaching and online teaching, it will help in inculcating the technology into the classrooms. Online teaching will increase digital literacy among teachers and students which will increase their exposure and learning and making them more employable for the digital world-leading thereby contributing to social sustainability.

#### **Conclusion**

COVID-19 has impacted vastly the education sector of India. Though it has created many challenges, various



opportunities are also evolved. The Indian Govt. and different stakeholders of education have explored the possibility of Open and Distance learning by adopting different digital technologies to cope up with the present crisis of COVID-19. India is not fully equipped to make education reach all corners of the nation via digital platforms. The students who aren't privileged like the others will suffer due to the present choice of digital platforms. The priority should be to utilize digital technology to create an advantageous position for millions of young students in India. 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 utilization of online platforms. India should develop creative strategies to ensure that all children must have sustainable access to learning during pandemic COVID19. As online practice is benefitting the students hugely, it should be continued after the lockdown. At last want to conclude that the role of education sector is right now to focus the health of teachers as well as students too and facilitate remote learning at all levels.

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