



OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN EDUCATION DURING COVID PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT:

Coronavirus pandemic has significantly disrupted various sectors in India including oil and gas, automobiles, aviation, agriculture, retail, etc. We can't ignore that hardly a sector would remain unaffected by the crisis. The impact may be more or less. Same is with the education sector in India. As we know that due to coronavirus pandemic the state governments across the country temporarily started shutting down schools and colleges. As per the present situation, there is an uncertainty when schools and colleges will reopen. No doubt, this is the crucial time for education sector because entrance tests of several universities and competitive examinations are held during this period. Along with them how can we forget about board examinations, nursery school admissions, etc?



The immediate solution of coronavirus is necessary or if like these days pass then closure of schools and colleges does not even have short term impact in India but can even cause far-reaching economic and societal consequences. Let us tell you that due to the closedown of educational institutes it is estimated to affect around 600 million learners across the world.

India's education system is impaired, and students are unable to follow their regular academic routines. In wake of this emergency and keeping the student safety in mind and their academic concern, most of the institutes have taken the initiative to provide the facility of telecommunication, skype call, zoom call and access to other virtual options to fill the gap of learning. It is giving training to students and teachers to use technology to facilitate virtual classes and exchange of information. Undoubtedly, this is a very crucial time for students. So, the move is aimed at easing the pressure on students and helping them use their time profitably without compromising on the quality.

The institute is providing pre-recorded videos of lessons to students in which teachers explain the subjects and topics extensively. After a week, students will be asked to prepare their own notes, and can get their doubts cleared via a skype call. The institute institution is arranging group calls of about 20-30 minutes for each batch to avoid the gap in their studies. Ironically, it has taken the COVID-19 outbreak to get the whole education sector to shift to digital mode and with both human and technical support.

The edu-tech industry is taking the lead in increasing the efficiency or effectiveness of current practices and pedagogical change. The deployment of technology is opening up new avenues of learning for students of all ages and flipping the traditional notion of classrooms and education by breaking the geographical barrier. Technology is leading a pedagogical change while addressing issues that affect

learning, teaching and social functionalities. Technology can, therefore, be seen as a tool, a catalyst for change. We hope that this dreaded pandemic is controlled soon, but until normalcy returns, it is digital learning that will bridge the gap between teachers and learners.

KEYWORDS: *pandemic, impaired, telecommunication ,geographical.*

INTRODUCTION

The novel Coronavirus outbreak has had far-reaching consequences beyond the spread of the disease and the evolution continues. Sending a wave of fear and anxiety across the globe, the COVID-19 continues to cause a wide range of disruptions in various sectors. The outbreak has led to lockdown in many countries with some preparing to follow the suit, leading to a significant fall in economic activity.

Among others, the education sector is one of the hardest-hit sectors. It has led to the cancellation of exams, temporary closure of schools and universities, disturbing the curriculum at large. In fact, in the higher education sector, it is even posing a threat to the career prospect of students.

With the coronavirus spreading rapidly across continents, countries have taken swift actions to mitigate the development of a full-blown pandemic. OECD, on March 13, estimated that over 421 million children are affected due to school closures in 39 countries. In addition, another 22 countries have announced partial "localized" closures.

In a matter of days, pandemic disease has changed how students are educated around the world. The control measures have pushed millions of students into temporary 'home-schooling' situations. Ed-tech companies are jumping in to make the most of the situation, offering free access to their courses. Schools and colleges have temporarily shifted to a digital mode of education in a move to curb the coronavirus impact on learning. These changes have certainly caused a degree of inconvenience, but they are acting as a savior in a situation the world is witnessing.

However, lack of access to internet-connected devices, fast and reliable internet connection can prevent students in rural areas and from disadvantaged families from compensating the education loss they are bearing. School closures worldwide are negatively impacting student learning outcomes.

EDUCATION SECTOR: IMPACT AND CONCERN DURING COVID-19

All major entrance examinations are postponed including engineering, medical, law, agriculture, fashion and designing courses, etc. This situation can be a ringing alarming bell mainly in private sector universities. Maybe some faculties and employees may face salary cuts, bonuses and increments can also be postponed.

- The lockdown has generated uncertainty over the exam cycle. Maybe universities may face impact in terms of a slowdown in student internships and placements, lower fee collection that can create hurdles in managing the working capital.

- Another major concern is that it can affect the paying capacity of several people in the private sector, which is catering to a sizeable section of the students in the country.

- Student counselling operations are also affected.

- Several institutions may pause faculty hiring plans for existing vacancies which in turn affect quality and excellence.

- Structure of schooling and learning includes teaching and assessment methodologies and due to closure, it will be affected.

- Technology may play an important role in the lockdown period like study from home and work from home. In India, some private schools could adopt online teaching methods. Low-income private and government school may not be able to adopt online teaching methods. And as a result, there will be completely shut down due to no access to e-learning solutions. In addition to the opportunities for learning, students will also miss their meals and may result in economic and social stress.

- Higher education sectors are also disrupted which again pave an impact on the country's economic future. Various students from India took admissions in abroad like the US, UK, Australia, China etc. And these countries are badly affected due to COVID-19. Maybe there is a possibility that

students will not take admissions there in future and if the situation persists, in the long run then there will be a decline in the demand for international higher education also. Isn't it!

- Another major concern is employment. Students those have completed their graduation may have fear in their minds of withdrawal of job offers from the corporate sector due to the current situation. The Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy's estimates unemployment shortage from 8.4% in mid-March to 23% in early April. In the urban unemployment rate is 30.9%.

We can't ignore that technology plays a crucial role in the educational system and the demand for the current situation is this only.

THREE WAYS THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC COULD RESHAPE EDUCATION

Surprisingly fast, (COVID-19) has changed how understudies are taught all over the planet. Those changes give us a brief look at how training could improve - and the more regrettable - in the long haul.

These gamble control choices have driven large number of understudies into impermanent 'self-teaching' circumstances, particularly in the absolute most intensely affected nations, similar to China, South Korea, Italy, and Iran. These progressions have surely caused a level of bother, yet they have additionally incited new instances of instructive advancement. In spite of the fact that it is too soon to judge what responses to COVID-19 will mean for schooling systems all over the planet, there are signs proposing that it could lastingly affect the direction of learning advancement and digitization. Underneath, we pursue three directions that could indicate future changes:

1. EDUCATION - NUDGED AND PUSHED TO CHANGE - COULD LEAD TO SURPRISING INNOVATIONS

The sluggish speed of progress in scholarly establishments universally is shocking, with extremely old, address based ways to deal with instructing, settled in institutional predispositions, and outdated homerooms. In any case, COVID-19 has turned into an impetus for instructive foundations worldwide to look for creative arrangements in a somewhat brief timeframe.

With 5G innovation turning out to be more predominant in nations, for example, China, US and Japan, we will see students and arrangement suppliers genuinely embracing the 'advancing anyplace, whenever' idea of computerized instruction in a scope of configurations. Conventional in-person homeroom learning will be supplemented with new gaining modalities - from live transmissions to 'instructive powerhouses' to augmented reality encounters. Learning could turn into a propensity that is incorporated into every day schedules - a genuine way of life.

2. PUBLIC-PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS COULD GROW IN IMPORTANCE

In only the beyond couple of weeks, we have seen learning consortiums and alliances coming to fruition, with different partners - including legislatures, distributors, instruction experts, innovation suppliers, and telecom network administrators - meeting up to use computerized stages as an impermanent answer for the emergency. In arising nations where schooling has dominantly been given by the public authority, this could turn into a pervasive and significant pattern to future instruction. the Hong Kong-based readtogether.hk gathering (China Daily video here) is a consortium of north of 60 instructive associations, distributors, media, and media outlet experts, giving in excess of 900 instructive resources, including recordings, book sections, appraisal apparatuses, and directing administrations for nothing. The's consortium will probably keep utilizing and keeping up with the stage even after COVID-19 has been contained.

Through models like these, it is clear that instructive advancement is getting consideration past the common government-financed or non-benefit supported social venture. In the previous ten years, we have effectively seen far more prominent premium, and speculation, coming from the private area in instruction arrangements and development. From Microsoft and Google in the U.S. to Samsung in Korea to Tencent, Ping An, and Alibaba in China, companies are arousing to the essential basic of an informed people. While most drives to date have been restricted in scope, and generally disengaged, the

pandemic could prepare for a lot bigger scope, cross-industry alliances to be conformed to a typical instructive objective.

3. THE DIGITAL DIVIDE COULD WIDEN

Most schools in impacted regions are finding band-aid answers for keep educating, however the nature of learning is intensely subject to the level and nature of computerized admittance. All things considered, just around 60% of the globe's populace is on the web. While virtual classes on private tablets might be the standard in Hong Kong, for instance, numerous understudies in less evolved economies depend on illustrations and tasks sent through WhatsApp or email.

Also, the less well-off and carefully wise individual families are, the further their understudies are abandoned. At the point when classes change on the web, these kids miss out in view of the expense of advanced gadgets and information plans.

Except if access costs reduction and nature of access expansion in all nations, the hole in schooling quality, and in this way financial fairness will be additionally exacerbated. The advanced separation could turn out to be more limit assuming instructive access is directed by admittance to the most recent advances.

POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES OR SOLUTIONS FOR INTERRUPTED EDUCATION DURING COVID-19

- With the help of power supply, digital skills of teachers and students, internet connectivity it is necessary to explore digital learning, high and low technology solutions, etc.

- Students those are coming from low-income groups or presence of disability, etc. distance learning programs can be included.

- To provide support for digitalisation to teachers and students.

- The necessity to explore digital learning platforms.

- Measures should be taken to mitigate the effects of the pandemic on job offers, internship programs, and research projects.

- EDtech reform at the national level that is an integration of technology in the present Indian education system.

We can't ignore that at this time of crisis effective educational practice is needed for the capacity-building of young minds. Central Government and State need to take some measures to ensure the overall progress in the country. Time never wait, this tough time will also pass.

Till then stay safe, stay at home!

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