RESEARCH ARTICLE IMPACT OF PANDEMIC COVID-19 ON EDUCATION IN INDIA

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Abstract : *The impact of pandemic COVID-19 is observed in every sector around the world. The education sectors of India as well as world are badly affected by this. It has enforced the world wide lock down creating very bad effect on the students' life. Around 32 crore learners stopped to move schools/colleges and all educational activities halted in India. The outbreak of COVID-19 has taught us that change is inevitable. It has worked as a catalyst for the educational institutions to grow and opt for platforms with technologies, which have not been used before. The education sector has been fighting to survive the crises with a different approach and digitising the challenges to wash away the threat of the pandemic. This paper highlights some measures taken by Govt. of India to provide seamless education in the country. Both the positive and negative impacts of COVID-19 on education are discussed and some fruitful suggestions are also pointed to carry out educational activities during the pandemic situation.*

Introduction :

The pandemic Covid-19 has spread over whole world and compelled the human society to maintain social distancing. It has significantly disrupted the education sector which is a critical determinant of a country's economic future. On February 11, 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) proposed an official name of the virus as COVID-19, an acronym for Corona virus disease 2019. It was first identified in Wuhan, China on December 31, 2019. First death by COVID-19 was the 61-year old man in Wuhan, China on January 11, 2020. WHO declared COVID-19 as a pandemic on March 11, 2020. The first case of the COVID-19 pandemic in India was reported on 30 January 2020 in the state of Kerala and the affected had a travel history from Wuhan, China (Wikipedia). The first death due to COVID-19 was reported in India on March 12, 2020. It has affected more than 4.5 million peoples worldwide (WHO). According to the UNESCO report, it had affected more than 90% of total world's student population during mid April 2020 which is now reduced to nearly 67% during June 2020. Outbreak of COVI-19 has impacted more than 120 crores of students and youths across the planet. In India, more than 32 crores of students have been affected by the various restrictions and the nationwide lockdown for COVI-19. As per the UNESCO report, about 14 crores of primary and 13 crores of secondary students are affected which are two mostly affected levels in India.

Objectives :

The present research paper focused on the following objectives:

- To enlighten various measures taken by Govt. of India for education sector during this pandemic.
- To highlight various positive impact of COVID-19 on education.
- To enlist some negative impacts of COVID-19 and to put some effective suggestions for continuing education during the pandemic situation.

Methodology :

Data and information presented in current study are collected from various reports prepared by national and international agencies on COVID-19 pandemic. Information are collected from various authentic websites. Some journals and e-contents relating to impact of COVID-19 on educational system are referred.

- **Diksha** portal contains e-Learning content for students, teachers, and parents aligned to the curriculum, including video lessons, worksheets, textbooks and assessments. Under the guidance of its national boards of education (CBSE) and NCERT, the content has been created by more than 250 teachers who teach in multiple languages.
- **e-Pathshala** is an e-Learning app by NCERT for classes 1 to 12 in multiple languages. The app houses books, videos, audio, etc. aimed at students, educators and parents in multiple languages including Hindi, Urdu, and English.
- **National Repository** of Open Educational Resources (NROER) portal provides a host of resources for students and teachers in multiple languages including books, interactive modules and videos including a host of STEM-based games.

Suggestions :

- India should develop creative strategies to ensure that all children must have sustainable access to learning during pandemic COVID-19. The Indian policies must include various individuals from diverse backgrounds including remote regions, marginalised and minority groups for effective delivery.
- Immediate measures are required to lessen the effects of the pandemic on job offers, internship programs, and research projects.
- Many online learning platforms offer multiple programmes on the same subjects with different levels of certifications, methodology and assessment parameters. So, the quality of programmes may differ across different online learning platforms. Therefore, establishment of quality assurance mechanisms and quality benchmark for online learning programmes must be developed and offered by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in India keeping in view of rapid growth of the online learning platforms

Conclusion :

COVID-19 has impacted immensely to 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 (ODL) 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. But universities and the government of India are relentlessly trying to come up with a solution to resolve this problem. The priority should be to utilise 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.

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