Impact of Covid-19 on higher education in India: A literature review

[1]Sangita Borah, [2]Nandita Chitrakar

[1]*Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of Education, Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh*
[2]*Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of Education, Rajiv Gandhi University, Arunachal Pradesh*

Abstract

Due to national wide lockdown from 23 March 2020 all educational institution including colleges and universities remain close physically and online learning has become the alternative method of teaching-learning process. In India, while this change has been come all private universities, public or government universities adapted online learning as a substitute of traditional or face to face learning method. But there have also been debates on the nature of classes, and the future of examination and evaluation, whether examination could be conducted online or not. As there was no other option online examination takes place in higher education till now and this sudden changes influence whole education system. This paper will discuss the problems faced by the students in India who are pursuing higher education during thisCovid-19 pandemic. The Investigator conducted this study to show the impact of Covid-19 on higher education and tries to find out the positive & negative impact of covid-19 on the teaching-learning and evaluation process at college and university level in India. Some suggestions have also been pointed out in this paper with regard to how we can cope up with the new method of teaching & learning process to improve the experience of both teachers and learners in future.

Keywords: Covid-19, Online Learning, Higher Education, Teaching-Learning.

1. INTRODUCTION

The spread of Covid-19 has create storm across the globe and raise various new issues to peoples life like; public health crisis, unprecedented lifetime, human suffering and loss of life. Due to national wide lockdown from 23 March 2020 all educational institution including colleges and universities remain close physically and online learning has become the alternative method of teaching-learning process. The outbreak of covid-19 has taught individual that change is inevitable and we must walk with time to adapt and adjust with any situation. After the global lockdown all were worried about students academic lost, want a method which can fulfill students need without compromise with quality of education. In India, while this change has been come for most private universities, the public or government universities adapted online learning as a substitute of traditional or face to face learning method. But there have also been debates on the nature of classes, and the future of examination and evaluation, whether examination could be conduct online or not. As there was no other option online examination takes place in higher education till now. But it is also noticeable that in higher education most of the course especially science stream are based on practical knowledge which could only possible in laboratory. Research work also effected due to crisis. Various problems faced by the students in India who are pursuing higher education during thisCovid-19 pandemic. Covid-19 impact positively & negatively on the teaching-learning and evaluation process at college and university level in India. Government also take initiative to by adapting various tele-conferencing technology and some of the digital initiative of UGC and MHRD for higher education during Covid-19 like- e-GyanKosh, Gyandarshini, Gyandhara, Swayam, National digital library of India (NDLI), e-Yantra, Virtual labs etc. (Ramakrishna, K. 2021) Development and change is the nature life and inevitable part of human life. During the pandemic people had to accept sudden change as

it became very necessary for the survival. It encouraged personalized learning which in future will be beneficial for qualitative teaching and learning process. It also helps in improvement in collaborative work as educator, teachers, and students could get knowledge from every corner of world virtually. So after the Covid era in post Covid era we can cope up with the new method of teaching & learning process to improve the experience of both teachers and learners in future.

2.0 Significance of the study:

Higher education a path to fulfill individual dream or career always plays an important role in student's life. All want to get higher education not only for knowledge but also to secure satisfactory career. Because of this sudden arousal of Covid-19 Corona Virus all educational institute are closed. Covid-19 spread quickly around the world and was declared as pandemic by the WHO on 11 March 2020 (Global survey report, 2020). In this perplex situation each and everyone need some backup plan to combat with the situation. As online or virtual learning take place of traditional learning during this crisis. But these changes affect the whole education system. The higher educational institutions must be ready for a tough road ahead post pandemic where their decisions will shape and steer the future of their students (Rashid et al, 2020). Reviewing some study related to literature finds investigator attention towards the topic and feel the lack of study on this topic, so that, this paper will help the society directly or indirectly to improve our education system and adjust with the new world of educational technology.

3.0 Review of related literature

Borkotoky, D. K. & Borah, G. (2021) conducted a study on the impact of online education on the university students of Assam in Covid times and found that online education has both pros and cons, many students were of opinion that classroom teaching learning cannot replaced by online learning and the new mode of learning as online learning did not have a great impact on students education because of its various challenges face by students.

Tari, S. & Amonker, G. (2021) carried out a study on impact of Covid on higher education and their study stated that in second week of March 2020 all education institutes shut down because of Covid-19. During this time various examination and entrance was to be held but this crisis destroyed all and it impact negatively on their academics or future. This pandemic affected more than 285 million young learners in India. Though zoom, WebEx, Google meet etc take place as a substitute of traditional learning a big question arise that is online learning effective?

Jena, K.A. (2021) in his study stated that online has became the default method of education but there is a must need for teachers, learners as well as parents about awareness, skill competency, practical knowledge of online learning so that it became not only the substitute of traditional learning instead it became permanent solution of education as well.

Ramakrishna, K. (2021) in his study on topic Impact of covis-19 on higher education concludes that; covid-19 pandemic affected all educational system of India and some most impacted areas of higher education were-destabilized all educational activities because of the sudden change in teaching learning mode and started conduct classes through various e-conferencing tools. This pandemic also affected the educational assessment system and impact on student's future. Students faced anxiety problem for various reason like cancellation of all entrance test for which they are prepared themselves, these aspect created negative impact on higher education system of India.

Rahman, A. (2021) conducted a study in the context of Assam to see the effect of emergency online learning on undergraduate students of Assam. In real this study reveals an unsatisfactory picture of emergency online learning. Poor internet connectivity, insufficient technology infrastructure, irregular electricity, costly data packs, lack of proper environment at home are central problems faced by students. A country like India all are struggling to adjust with the situation and now delivery of education is more important than quality of education. So it is the high time for stakeholders to get ready for this new era of technology education system.

Pokhrel, S. & Chhetri, R. (2020) review various study and concludes that online teaching and

learning is not everyone's cup of tea as data packages are costly compare to the income of family income and here in this situation policy makers should also play an important rile to improve this situation. Making of online teaching creative, innovative and interactive through user friendly tools helps learners to interest in online study. After the covid-19 pandemic also teacher and learners should be encourage to continue online tools to improve teaching learning process.

Jena, K.P. (2020) in his study analyzed various literature and reports and stated that Covid-19 impacted the whole education system of India and created many challenges as well as opportunities. Indian government and various stakeholders explored the possibility of Open and Distance Education (ODL) by adopting various digital technologies to cope up with the crisis situation. His studies suggest govt. to ready technologically for facing situation like Covid-19 so that Students education doesn't waste because of such situation and ready for future digital oriented situation.

Schleicher, A. (2020) Covid-19 pandemic had a severe impact on higher education as well as universities were closed because of lockdown measure. Though higher education institute adapt online learning instead of face to face lecture but these closure affected learning and examination of students as well as their safety. This crisis also raises questions about the value offered by a university education.

Das et al. (2020) conducted a study on primary, secondary and territory level students, teachers and parents in Assam to know whether Covid-19 pandemic induced teaching learning experience or not and found that shift of traditional learning to online earning is both boon and bone for students, teachers and parents. While adapting and adopting online learning it has both positive and negative impact. Though numerous challenges like poor internet connectivity, unavailability of resources face by students and educator but they are able to adapt and adopt new challenges as it is the need of the hour.

4.0 Objectives:

The investigator conducted this review study

1.   To know the impact of Covid-19 on higher education in Indian context.

2.   To study the positive and negative impact of covid-19 on higher education institutions of India.

5.0 Methodology:

This is a review paper and there were used two criteria to find out the literature. First, for review investigator used paper published in peer-reviewed journals, various blogs and articles available in online. Second, various reports published by WHO and UNESCO highlighted and suggested the impact of corona virus on higher education.

6.0 Positive impact of Covid-19 on higher education:

Though Covid-19 pandemic created many negative impacts on education system but it has some positive impact also. Some positive impact of Covid-19 pandemic on higher education are-

1.   Covid-19 has give chance to familiar with digital technologies. All educational institution move towards the digital learning which help them to technology friendly.

2.   This pandemic has created a massive rise in teleconferencing. Many webinars organized online by various universities and colleges which help the learners to gain knowledge.

3.   It helps to induce digital library, induce people learn and use digital technology and increasing digital library.

4.   This pandemic has significantly helps large number of educational sector specially higher education sector to use global data or knowledge as there was no other option to gain knowledge as all college, university library were closed.

5.   It raised collaborative work as educators from various countries get opportunities in various webinars, Faculty development programme, special talk to discuss with each other through virtual mode.

7.0 Negative impact of Covid-19 on higher education:

Educational sector has hampered because of Covid-19 pandemic. Some negative impact of Covid-19 on higher education are-

1.   For online education broadband and computer are needed as well as a supportive environment so that students can focus on their studies. But India is a developing country and everyone has not this type of facilities to attend online classes. This pandemic has exposed many inadequacies and inequalities in Indian education system.

2.   Though education system and community have made concerted effort to maintain sudden changes mode of teaching learning process stable but somewhere they are failed. In online learning teachers had also to adapt new pedagogical concept and modes of delivery of teaching but they are not trained for this.

3.   In Indian education system students also more dependent on teachers as students has habit of face to face traditional learning but because of this crisis students have had to rely more on their own resources to continue learning through internet, video call, television or radio. These sudden changes in mode of teaching and learning impact on both teachers- students as well as Indian education system.

4.   Because of Covid-19 all educational activities hampered and all examination is suspended. Students suffered 3 months of academic loss (2020-2021 year) cause of this lockdown.

5.   Covid-19 also impacted in employment. Most of the requirements are postponed because of sudden visit of Covid-19 Corona virus.

6.   To adapt a new technique or skill both teachers and students should trained so that it will be comfortable for them. But they were not prepared for them as; most of the teachers just doing online classes through various video platforms like Zoom call, Google meet etc. But all are not comfortable with these new adaptations.

8.0 Findings:

UNESCO (2021) conducted a global survey to provide an evidence based overview of the current situation of the higher system of national and global level. This survey attempts to assess the varying impact the pandemic had on higher education systems in terms of access, equity and quality of teaching and learning, university operation, national challenges, emerging issues, and strategic responses.

The key findings for the various assessment dimensions are:

•   Mode of teaching and learning: The major impact of COVID-19 on teaching and learning is the increase in online education. The hybrid mode of teaching has become the most popular form.

•   Access: The impact of COVID-19 on enrollment varies by regional and income levels. High income and Europe and North American countries are better able to cope with the disruption due to government funding support and increase in domestic enrollment.

•   International mobility: Mobility took a major hit, affecting international students significantly, but virtual mobility could compensate or even replace physical mobility.

•   University staff: Despite the closure of many universities, the impact of COVID-19 on university staff compared to the previous academic year is limited.

•   Disruption of research and extension activities: COVID-19 caused suspension and cancellation of teaching and research activities globally.

•   Widening inequality: The mixed impact of the pandemic on university finance shed a light on the exacerbation of inequality in higher education. Financial support from the government and external sources are crucial to the survival of HEIs.

•   University operations: The strong impact of the pandemic on HEIs operations caused reduced maintenance and services on campus and campuses closures worldwide.

•   National challenges: Health and adaptation to new modes and models of teaching are the top concerns for students and institutions.

• Transition from higher education to work: The significant reduction of job opportunities makes the transition from higher education to the labor market more difficult. Employers are also seeking applicants with higher technology skills.

• National priority: Strategic options for country-specific response are to improve infrastructure and availability of digital devices for online or distance learning as well as support for teachers and more international collaboration in research and policy dialogues.

9.0 Discussion and Conclusion: After reviewing various articles it is seen that Covid-19 has impacted education sector a lot in India and it has created many challenges. But it has both the positive and negative impact not only on higher education but on whole educational system. As it is the need of the hour to adapt online or virtual learning as a mode of education in this new era of post pandemic. With adjust with the pros and cons of online learning we have to adapt and adjust with it. Most importantly in higher education and in the field of research face to face learning is most needed. In research laboratory work are involved for that the researcher have to attend laboratory regularly. So it is the responsibility of government as well as stakeholders to innovate new method which can helps those students to avoid their academic lost. By adopting various digital technologies and by exploring the possibilities of Open and Distance learning (ODL) India can beat with the present situation of crisis.

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