Article

A Study on Impact of COVID - 19 in the Higher Education System

Journal of Development Economics and Management Research Studies (JDMS),
A Peer Reviewed Open Access International Journal
ISSN: 2582 5119 (Online)
08(08), 23-32, April-June 2021

http://www.cdes.org.in/
http://www.cdes.org.in/journal/

A Study on Impact of COVID - 19 in the Higher Education System

T. Dhivakar[1]

Abstract

COVID - 19, a global pandemic outbreak all over the world and has affected every country in the world. Because of this pandemic, most of the schools and colleges are remain closed from the month of March 2020. In this paper, we have mainly discussed, How Higher Education is affected and the need for alternative solutions for the students in learning. To maintain social distancing which is the main reason for the closure of schools and colleges, so we are analyzing the alternative measures in educating the students through other modes of teaching. In this study, we are also analyzing the various challenges faced by the students and teachers in online teaching. We strongly recommend every Education Institution to equip with necessary online facilities which will help the students to continue the education without any disruptions in the future.

Keywords: *Covid-19, Pandemic, Schools, and Colleges, Online Teaching, Social Distancing.*

Introduction

COVID -19, stands for Coronavirus, the virus originated in Wuhan, China, and spread all over the world. Due to the COVID outbreak, this has led to the closure of Education Institutions

[1] Assistant Professor, Departments of Accounting & Finance and Bank Management, RKM Vivekananda College, Mylapore, Chennai -04

all over the world. As per the UNESCO report, more than 157 crore students across 191 countries are severely impacted by the closure of educational institutions. In India, nearly 32 crore students are impacted by the COVID-19 and nationwide lockdown from March 25 which forced the government to close contain the spread of COVID-19 pandemic. It has affected the academic activities at various levels, including cancellation of board exams, college exams and even conducting entrance exams is also postponed for medical and others.

As per the instructions of the Union Ministry of HRD (Human Resource Development) has made several arrangements for conducting classes for the students through the online portals and through the educational channels to continue the learning. Even closures of the educational institutions are only temporary, but it is problematic for various reasons. The first main reasons are to fill the learning gap of the students by providing enrichment activities; those are not able to attend the schools and colleges. Secondly in adopting appropriate distance learning practices, considering to safeguard the students and also engaging them in learning.

In this pandemic, at least 179 professional colleges, including engineering colleges and business schools are shut down in India for this academic year 2020-2021, due to falling demand and restrictions on the mobility of students because of the pandemic. It is the highest in nine years and it is doubled in comparison to that of the previous year.

As per the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), more than 134 institutions did not seek approval for fresh batches in 2020 due to disruption in the higher education sector. There are multiple challenges in the education sector for these years that are as follows:

1. Enrollment of students for the next academic session
2. Reduced intake of courses
3. To Create new digital infrastructure
4. To pay full salary to the teachers
5. Not to demand fees from the students
6. No stimulus support from the government

Some of the strong educational institutions are able to manage the situation, but other institutions are not able to afford them. When a physical campus cannot be opened because of this pandemic situation, it's an expensive year for the institutions in getting the running capital. A professional education provider association in Tamil Nadu has requested the prime minister

office to provide the financial aid of Rs.50,000 crore for the higher education institutions as a relief measure in this pandemic situation.

India is facing a tough situation where every sector is facing huge pressure due to this COVID-19 and economic downturn. The business has been shedding jobs or cutting salaries of the employees to get sufficient return from it. Even if the pandemic comes under control it is difficult for several students to continue the education due to poor family background. In some of the rural and urban areas, girls are facing physical and sexual abuse which also results in dropouts from the schools or colleges. In this kind of situation, both central and state governments have granted permission to conduct online classes to the students, but most of the students are not able to afford the basic need for mobile phones to attend the online classes due to the rise in unemployment problem.

Digital learning to face COVID-19

Most of the schools and colleges are remain closed, due to the spread of coronavirus. The ongoing crisis perceived an opportunity in online education. E-Learning overcomes all the geographical barriers and provides equal access to education. En-number of ed-tech firms are providing interesting and interactive teaching to the students. E-learning is the only option to fill the gap in this pandemic situation due to the absence of classroom teaching. The one – Nation-one platform facility through the PM E-Vidya platform has provided dedicated channels for the welfare of the students will liberalize distance and online learning platform. The temporary suspensions of academic activities are continued through the E-Learning and teachers also able to assist the student and monitor their learning progression. The Indian government has provided MOOC (Massive Open Online courses) is partnering with several online learning platforms which will provide various facilities like freely accessible video lectures, digital libraries, etc..,. In this pandemic situation distance education or online learning is the only way for the students to continue the learning. It provides an opportunity for the students as well as teachers that "Learning can be done anywhere" when we desire to transform knowledge. Nowadays students are having en-number of facilities for learning like YouTube, Google Classroom, Google Meet & Zoom to conduct free online classes to the students. The student should be provided with necessary course instruction and other services in the online portal for academic continuation.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the impact of COVID 19 in the higher education system in India.
2. To analyze the various challenges faced by the students in e-learning.

3. To analyze whether institutions have provided necessary facilities with respect to online teaching.

4. To study the importance of alternative modes of teaching like this pandemic situation.

Review of Literature:

Online learning can be termed as a tool that can make the teaching–learning process more student-centered, more innovative, and even more flexible. Online learning is defined as "learning experiences in synchronous or asynchronous environments using different devices (e.g., mobile phones, laptops, etc.) with internet access. In these environments, students can be anywhere (independent) to learn and interact with instructors and other students" **(Singh & Thurman, 2019).**

E-learning has become an important part of our educational life. Different web-based Learning Management Systems (LMS) have been developed to support the learner in the learning process. Previous learning methods were restricted to access and assimilation of knowledge. The art of designing good E-learning systems is difficult and is of great challenge for the human mind. The way this is done is also dependent on the learning culture in each country. The key issue is to facilitate new learning modalities for younger generations. Future Investigating methods in an E-learning system are to support students with special needs such as super intelligent, retarded, etc. **(Mukta Goyal, Divakar Yadav, Alka Choubey, 2012)**

Need for the Study

In this pandemic situation, every sector has affected for the indefinite period. In this study, we mainly focused on the impact of COVID- 19 in the higher education system. Nearly 32 crores of students are affected due to pandemic, due to schools and colleges that are shut down from the month of March. We are mainly focused on providing e-learning to the students in this pandemic situation which helps them to continue their education without any disruption. We also look into various challenges and difficulties faced by the students in providing e-learning.

Research Methodology

Primary Data:

To conduct the research both the primary and secondary data are more important. The primary data is collected by constructing the structured questionnaire and distributed to the students of various levels such as Under Graduates, Post Graduates, and research scholars of the various educational institutions through the Google Forms. The sample size of 114 respondents

was used with a convenient sampling technique. For the data analysis, we have used Factor Analysis, T-test, and Chi-Square tests to provide the best results of the research.

Secondary Data:

We have used various secondary sources such as books, magazines, literature reviews, and research of various authors in the relevant field was taken into consideration.

Area of Study:

The respondents of the study are collected from Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

The Hypothesis of the Study

H0: There is a significant relationship between various apps used for learning help to enhance the skills of the students.

H1: There is no significant relationship between various apps used for learning help to enhance the skills of the students.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Correlations

		Ap used for learning	Accessing various e-learning applications improves the skills
App used for learning	Pearson Correlation	1	.032
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.732
	N	115	115
Accessing various e-learning applications improves the skills	Pearson Correlation	.032	p1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.732	
	N	115	115

Inference: Since the significant level is greater than 0.05, H1 is rejected.There is a relationship between various apps used for e-learning and its accessing helps to improve the skills of the students.

T-Test

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 0					
	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Learning difficult in the absence of a classroom	40.794	114	.000	3.96522	3.7727	4.1578
Gender	93.522	114	.000	1.94783	1.9066	1.9891

Inference: No significant between the two variables, hence we can able to understand both genders feels that learning is more difficult in the absence of the classroom.

T-Test

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 0					
	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Educational Qualification	43.452	114	.000	1.05217	1.0042	1.1001
The satisfaction of marks awarded based on internal on cancellation of exams	24.380	114	.000	2.00870	1.8455	2.1719

Inference: No significant difference between the two variables, hence we will able to understand that every student (UG & PG) are satisfied with the marks awarded based on internal marks in this pandemic situation.

Factor Analysis
KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.671
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	240.641
	Df	28
	Sig.	.001

Inference: 1) KMO test value is 0.671 which is more than 0.5, can be considered as acceptable, and valid to conduct the data reduction technique.

2) Bartlett's test of the sphericity significance level is <0.001 which shows that there is a good level of correlation between the variables.

Rotated Component Matrix

Factor Name	Item Description	Rotated Loading	% of Variance	Eigen Value
Measure to cope up with academics	Proper Guidance from the Teachers	.924	32.111	2.569
	Make Interesting Lectures	.912		
Main Difficulties in the Online Learning	Poor Network connection	.409	23.921	1.914
	Poor Communication	.832		
	Not able to understand the subject	.811		

Accessibility to the Online Class	Non –Availability of device to access	.897	12.457	.997
Other difficulties of Online Class	Unable to clarify the doubts	.938	9.906	.793
Interest in Learning	Using Gamified apps	.980	7.033	.563

Inference: The Eigenvalue of factor 1 is 2.569 i.e., nearly 32.111% of the variance. All those variables are related to measure taken to cope with the academics for the students in the pandemic situation. Factor 1 has a very high significant loading on the variables, proper guidance of the teachers (0.924) and Make Interesting lectures (.912).

Major Findings of the Study

- ✓ The majority of the respondents felt that learning is more difficult in the absence of classroom teaching.
- ✓ Most of the respondents prefer E-learning plays a dominant role to continue their learning even in this pandemic situation.
- ✓ On a whole of 40% of the samples, collected education institutions are equipped with necessary facilities to provide the learning to the students even in pandemic situations.
- ✓ From the research, we are able to understand that accessing various applications of E-learning helps the students to improve their skills.
- ✓ Most of the respondents are satisfied with the marks awarded through internal assessment for the semester examination.
- ✓ From our study, we can able to understand that students to continue their studies after this gap, various measures taken to cope with academics are by providing proper guidance by the teachers and making interesting lectures in online classes.

Limitations of the Study

Primary data is collected only from the selected population. To collect the data, the convenient sampling technique is used so it will not apply to the whole population.

Conclusion

In general, due to this pandemic, all the Educational Institutions are closed for the indefinite period. Nearly 32 Crores of Students are affected in India due to this COVID-19. Most of the students are facing difficulties in learning due to the absence of classroom teaching. E-learning is the only way to continue their learning even in this pandemic situation.

All the UG/PG students are satisfied with the marks provided through the internal assessment for the cancellation of the semester examination. A proper measure for the students to continue their learning in this situation is to provide guidance to the teachers and make interesting lectures which will encourage the students to cope up with the studies.

The major difficulties faced in online learning is a poor network connection, due to this technical glitch students are not able to understand the subjects. No proper communication is another difficulty for the students. So, teachers should communicate in a proper way which helps the student to understand the subjects. By utilizing various gamified apps available in the E-learning which will make interesting in the topics covered by the teachers.

References:

1. Agarwal, P. (2006), "Higher education in India: The need for change", New Delhi, Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations.

2. Edgar John Sintema., April 2020, Effect of COVID-19 on the performance of Grade 12 students: Implications for STEM Education.

3. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Impact_of_the_2019–20.

4. Future of Jobs and its implications on Indian higher education, (2016), FICCI & EY http://www.ficci.in/spdocument/20787/FICCI-Indian-HigherEducation.pdf

5. Indian Higher Education Sector Opportunities aplenty, growth unlimited, 2012, Deloitte, https://www2.deloitte.com/content/ dam/Deloitte/in/, Documents/IMO/in-imo-indian-higher_education _sector-noexp.pdf

6. India's Education Policy, Submission to Ministry of Human Resource Development, (2018), UK India Business Council, https://www.ukibc.com/wpcontent/uploads/2018 /03/2018-06-14-IndiaEducation-Policy-Web-version.pdf

7. Mukta Goyal, Divakar Yadav, Alka Choubey, (2012), "E-learning: Current State of Art and Future Prospects", IJCSI International Journal of Computer Science Issues, Vol. 9, Issue 3, No 2, May 2012 ISSN (Online): 1694-0814

8. “Provisional Report of the ambitious All India Survey on Higher Education” (AISHE) at New Delhi on September 28.2012

9. “Report of the University Commission" (December 1948-August 1949) 3 Vols. New Delhi: Ministry of Education, Government of India, 1963

10. Singh V., Thurman A. (2019). How many ways can we define online learning? A systematic literature review of definitions of online learning (1988-2018). American Journal of Distance Education, 33(4), 289–306

11. Vrat, Prem (2006), "Indian Institutes of Technology", Encyclopedia of India (vol. 2) edited by Stanley Wolpert, 229–231, Thomson Gale.

12. voxeu.org/article/impact-covid-19-education

***