



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Education

ONLINE EDUCATION A CHANGE IN EDUCATION SYSTEM: EFFECT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC, IN KOLKATA, WEST BENGAL

KEY WORDS: Online education, COVID-19, Lockdown, Digital divide, paradigm shift.

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ABSTRACT

To assess the changes are being made because of the COVID-19 pandemic in the education system of the country. It has affected the global education system, as a new paradigm shift has taken place in the way of education. Lockdown phases stopped the total education system for almost three months and after the unlock phase started the students are getting back to education with another way of learning. This study reveals the conditions of the students due to the emergence of online education. This study is based on primary data sources. The survey was done through online mode only and collected data have been analyzed to get the results. This study shows how the students adapted the online methods of learning and whether it is progressive for them. Some hindrances are there in between students and the online learning methods, to resolve those how the government has worked in this situation. From the study the students taking this process as a digital divide in the sector education. Lastly, suggestions are taken from students to continue the online learning process.

INTRODUCTION

India is the seventh-largest country in the world has a huge population of various age groups. India has a large population under learning age groups in various levels of education like schools, colleges, and universities. This COVID pandemic started spreading in January according to WHO reports and largely starts affecting in huge number from midway of March. Therefore, the government was forced to call a countrywide lockdown. Since the 21st of March, a complete lockdown was in effect and the educational institutions are under this lockdown period stopped learning processes for the students. With the extension of this lockdown period, the educational institutions are being forced to bring out a new way of teaching-learning. Online teaching-learning was the only possible way to continue the learning process for the students. This is not a new method for all but with a huge number of first-generation learners, this is mostly impossible to be implemented in every nooks and corner of the country. This study is to find out the changes brought by online learning towards various levels of learners and identify their problems. The other side of this study is to find out the satisfaction levels of the students by this online learning. However, there are some barriers to online learning those are affecting the learning process. Maximum problems are faced by the students who are the first generation learner, due to that they are not getting any help from their parents to cope up with this learning process. Another problem is, this particular method needs at least an android phone or laptop or desktop that is not available for the students of the school and in some cases for college students also. In the pandemic situation where the income sources have cut down even some of the parents have lost job jobs, so they are not able to buy any of the previously mentioned gadgets to continue their child education. For E-learning the basic need is a stable internet connection, that is a big hindrance in every corner of our country to continue this form of education. There is a big role to be played by the government, that they should help the students to get their basic education. However, in some cases, the students are benefitted and very easily continuing their education. Nevertheless, in some cases, students are struggling to get their proper education and lagging behind others. The online learning platform played a vital role all over the country and helped the learners from various levels of education to continue their studies. Still, this process is in beginner's position in developing countries like India.

20-27th August and every respondent's consent was taken before the survey. Based on the data collected through an online survey various descriptive statistical methods have been applied. All the analyses have been done through Excel software. Then finally based on the analyzed data interpretations were done through three data tables. This dataset gave a broader view of the students who are practically exhibited in the online learning process. By this study ultimately we can bring out the results in which way the online education affected the whole education system.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To study the impact of the online learning process as the new way of education due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. To show the impact of online education on the students.
3. Lastly to highlight the problems and prospects of this new paradigm in the education system of our country.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

Study based on 131 students three tables have been prepared and show how the students are dealing with the E-learning process. The first table shows the student's profile and basic information about them. Based on the survey three age groups have been divided as 10-15, 15-20, and 20-25. The first age group contains only 0.80% population, the second age group shows a maximum of 74.20%, and the last age group shows 25% only, so this shows that maximum teenagers are having the online classes. 69.7% of females and 30.30% of males participated in this survey. The maximum of the surveyed students are from the general caste with 75.6%, others are sc with 13.6%, obc with 10%, and st with least 0.80%. The monthly income of the family is one of the determining factors of the online education system. As higher-income groups will get the needed gadgets easily as well as they can also bear the net recharge cost easily. However, for the low-income groups in the lockdown and unlock phases it the unbearable to manage the data packs as well as the new gadgets for the students. Nearly 60% of the students are from the low-income group and 9.6% are from the high-income groups. Surveyed students are from college and schools. From the surveyed students highest from the science stream (61.83%), followed by Arts (19.84%) and commerce (8.39%) and lastly, others consist of the students from secondary levels who do not have particular streams.

DATABASE AND METHODOLOGY:

This study is based on a primary survey by online modes like E-mail, WhatsApp, and Google forms. 131 students from various levels of education from school to universities responded to this study. The survey was conducted between

Table 1 INFORMATION OF THE SURVEYED STUDENTS

Characteristics	Frequency(n)	Percentage
<i>AGE OF THE STUDENTS</i>		
10- 15	1	0.80
15-20	97	74.20

20-25	33	25
<i>SEX</i>		
MALE	40	30.30
FEMALE	91	69.7
<i>CASTE</i>		
GENERAL	99	75.6
SC	18	13.6
ST	1	0.8
OTHER BACKWARD CLASSES	13	10
<i>MONTHLY INCOME</i>		
0-10000	79	60
10000-20000	32	24.3
20000-30000	8	6.1
MORE THAN 30000	12	9.6
<i>PRESENTLY STUDYING IN</i>		
SCHOOL	19	14.50
COLLEGE	100	76.33
POST GRADUATION	10	7.63
OTHERS	2	1.52
<i>STREAM OF THE STUDENTS</i>		
SCIENCE	81	61.83
ARTS	26	19.84
COMMERCE	13	9.92
OTHRES	11	8.39

Table 2: INDICATORS TAKEN TO STUDY THE IMPACT OF ONLINE LEARNING PROCESS ON THE STUDENTS

INDICATORS	FREQUENCY (n)	PERCENTAGE
<i>ATTENDED ONLINE CLASSES DURING LOCKDOWN</i>		
YES	124	94.7
NO	7	5.3
<i>ATTENDED ONLINE CLASSES BEFORE LOCKDOWN</i>		
YES	27	20.6
NO	104	79.4
<i>ATTENDED ONLINE CLASSES PER WEEK</i>		
LESS THAN 3 DAYS	33	25
3-5 DAYS	53	41.1
DAILY	45	33.9
<i>USED GADGET FOR ONLINE CLASSES</i>		
ANDROID MOBILES	125	95.3
LAPTOP OR DESKTOP	6	4.7
<i>GADGET USED FOR ONLINE CLASSES IS OWNED BY STUDENT</i>		
YES	112	85.2
NO	19	14.8
<i>FORCED TO BUY ANY GADGET TO ATTEND ONLINE CLASSES</i>		
NO	101	77.4
BORROWED	17	13.4
YES	12	9.4
<i>ATTENDING ONLINE CLASSES BY TAKING HELP OF OTHERS</i>		
YES	29	22.5
NO	82	62.8
DON'T KNOW IF THEY HAVE TAKEN ANY HELP	20	14.7
<i>FIRST GENERATION LEARNER OF THE FAMILY</i>		
YES	110	83.6
NO	12	9.45
DON'T KNOW	9	7.0

The second stage of discussion is about the study of various indicators those can justify the impact of online learning on the students. From the study of the students it can be seen that almost 94.7% of students have done online classes during lockdown phases and 5.3% have started doing since the unlock phase. The shocking number is that 79.4% of the students have not done any online classes before the COVID -

19 situations and only 20.6% knew about it or had any idea about it. Therefore, the data reveals that maximum online learners are first time having the experience of studying through online mode so it is difficult for them to cope up with the situation. These students having daily classes is about 33.9% and 3-5 days of classes 41.1 % so it is also a big problem for the students to go through this method almost 5 days a week. Only 25% of the students are having classes fewer 3days per week. From the study, it is shown that 95.3 % of the students are connecting through their android and only 4.7 % can use a laptop or desktop. Another issue is that 14.8 % do not have their device to do the classes and it an alarming situation for the students. In this pandemic condition, each person is facing economic distress. In this, worst condition it is quite impossible to buy a new gadget to continue online education. Almost 9.4 % of students are forced to buy new gadgets to continue this process and 13.4 % have borrowed any gadgets. As a teenager, some students are not able to handle online classes alone and are forced to take the help of others, which is a big barrier for first-generation learners as they will not getting any help from their parents or any person. Almost 22.5% are taking the help of others to go through the class and 14.7 % do not even know either they have taken any help or not. A very big issue is that 83.6% of the students are first-generation learners so they have to handle the whole process single-handedly. Therefore, these are the basic issues related to online studies.

From the next, table the impact of online education on the students has been discussed. This whole process is a new paradigm to shift the countries education system. The students are somehow able to continue their studies through the online process. However, the students are always not satisfied with this method as various problems faced by them. Also, they have some problems attending classes and are not completely satisfied with the process that has been studied. Besides, they have enlightened the impact of government policies in this pandemic situation to continue education for all. Lastly, the impact of the COVID pandemic on the education sector has been studied.

TABLE 3: IMPACT OF COVID -19 PANDEMIC ON EDUCATION SYSTEM

LEARNERS PROFILE	FREQUENCY(n)	PERCENTAGE
<i>SATISFIED WITH ONLINE TEACHING</i>		
YES	32	24.6
NO	99	75.4
<i>MORE EFFICIENT METHOD OF TEACHING</i>		
ONLINE	11	8.5
OFFLINE	120	91.5
<i>AMOUNT OF SYLLABUS COVERED BY ONLINE METHOD</i>		
LESS THAN 25%	42	32
25%-50%	72	54.7
>50%	17	13.3
<i>EASY TO UNDERSTAND BY ONLINE METHODS</i>		
THEORITICAL	107	81.4
PRACTICAL	8	6.2
BOTH	16	12.4
<i>PLATFORMS USING FOR ONLINE CLASSES</i>		
ZOOM	11	8.5
GOOGLE MEET	97	74.2
TEAM LINK	3	2.3
SKYPE	2	1.5
YOUTUBE	3	2.3
OTHERS	15	10.8
<i>TAKEN STUDY MATERIAL THROUGH ONLINE BY</i>		
WHATS APP	69	52.3
E-MAIL	7	5.4
GOOGLE MEET	15	11.5
GOOGLE CLASSROOM	27	20.8

ZOOM	5	3.8
INSTITUTIONS WEBSITE	7	5.4
OTHERS	1	0.8
<i>EDUCATION AFFECTED BY COVID</i>		
YES	117	89.3
NO	3	2.3
DON'T KNOW	11	8.4
<i>CREATED ANY DIGITAL DIVIDE</i>		
YES	93	71.1
NO	8	6.3
DON'T KNOW	30	22.7
<i>IMPACT OF GOVERNMENT POLICIES</i>		
YES	23	17.70
NO	57	43.1
DON'T KNOW	51	39.2

From table three the satisfaction levels of the students from online teaching have been determined. As the study shows the worst result with almost 75.4 % of the students are not satisfied with online teaching and only 24.6 % of students are satisfied with the study. From the study, almost 91.5% think that the offline method is more efficient in teaching. Maximum institutions have started the online mode of teaching since the starting of the unlock phase. The syllabus covered by the online mode is about 54.7 % in the case of 25-50 % and the lowest coverage on more than 50% with only 13.3%. Another big issue is the subject based on practical are very difficult to study by online mode, as only 6.2 % of students have understood practical classes online. In theoretical classes, almost 81.4 % of the students have agreed that they have no issues to understand. Various online platforms have been used to study online. The most famous one is Google meet with 74.2% followed by others (10.8%), zoom (8.5%) and team link, skype and youtube is the other option used by the students. The students are nowadays getting materials through online only. For this purpose various online platforms have been used as mostly used is WhatsApp (52.3%) followed by google classroom (20.8%), google meet (11.5). Even some institutions have created online websites to be connected with the students.

COVID-19 has hit the education system very badly. The new model of emergence in education created a digital divide among the students. Some students can cope up with the situation and some are not able to do so. By the survey, almost 89.3% of the students agreed that COVID -19 has affected education. Even 71.1% agreed that this online learning process also created a digital divide with some long-term effects. The government has played a big role to implement the policies to continue the education system easily. However, almost 43.1 % of the students questioned the policies as did not agree with the government's impact on the system.

CONCLUSION:

The previously mentioned discussions have shown the impacts of online learning methods. Lastly, the students were asked to give some suggestions about this method of teaching. Students have said about some problems they are facing and the changes they want to be made by the government or any administrative bodies. Some suggestions said by them are as follows: as they have asked to have good internet connectivity in every area. Secondly, they want to get the vaccine as early as possible and after that, they will start the offline system. Next, they want teachers to be more patient as the capacity of every student is not the same for online learning. In some cases students want the government to give free internet connectivity to continue the studies as well as some needs smart gadgets to be connected with this method. Lastly, some students are very much panicked, as they did not want any classes to be held and saying that after resilience of the full situation they should be able to continue the studies as normal as earlier. So as the concluding observation through this study can say the COVID -19 pandemic has changed the system of education in our country. It has affected the whole

system and due to this, various students are getting affected. Some of them are lagging and some are trying to cope up with the situation. Ultimately, it is working as a paradigm shift in the countries education system. Government policies should be more practically implemented and the gaps in these methods to be filled up for the students of all levels.

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