Volume 22 Issue 26
Originally issued as E4



Global Journal of HUMAN-SOCIAL SCIENCE: E Economics
Volume 22 Issue 4 Version 1.0 Year 2022
Type: Double Blind Peer Reviewed International Research Journal
Publisher: Global Journals
Online ISSN: 2249-460x & Print ISSN: 0975-587X

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Abstract- For the enhancement of distant education and learning through web, the practice of e-learning has initiated in late 1990s. Because of the significant growth of information and technology, the adoption of e-learning became famous globally in late 2000s. By the mid of 2010s utilization of electronic devices (computers, laptops, mobile phones and tablets) which supports internet connectivity were prominently used by Indian educational institutions to facilitate e-learning process to educate the students through online platforms. In the later part of 2010, Indian organizations in collaboration with foreign companies, developed their own "web-based" software and application in order to persuade the practice of e-learning for the students. With reference to traditional learning, e-learning was adopted in a few numbers. Since the outbreak of pandemic issue (Covid-19), lockdown and pandemic protocols leads to closure of schools and colleges across the country. As a result, educating the students through online (e-learning) served as the full time replacement for traditional learning. Although educating students through e-learning made an appropriate replacement for traditional learning, students across many parts of India subjected to confront certain issues as well as merits while learning through online.

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GJHSS-E Classification: DDC Code: 306.483 LCC Code: GV706.5



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Impact of E-Learning on Indian Students during Pandemic: A Conceptual Approach

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Abstract- For the enhancement of distant education and learning through web, the practice of e-learning has initiated in late 1990s. Because of the significant growth of information and technology, the adoption of e-learning became famous globally in late 2000s. By the mid of 2010s utilization of electronic devices (computers, laptops, mobile phones and tablets) which supports internet connectivity were prominently used by Indian educational institutions to facilitate e-learning process to educate the students through online platforms. In the later part of 2010, Indian organizations in collaboration with foreign companies, developed their own "web-based" software and application in order to persuade the practice of e-learning for the students. With reference to traditional learning, e-learning was adopted in a few numbers. Since the outbreak of pandemic issue (Covid-19), lockdown and pandemic protocols leads to closure of schools and colleges across the country. As a result, educating the students through online (e-learning) served as the full time replacement for traditional learning. Although educating students through e-learning made an appropriate replacement for traditional learning, students across many parts of India subjected to confront certain issues as well as merits while learning through online. On consideration with perception of students, the article is aimed at investigating the positive and negative attributes of e-learning among Indian students based on the existing literary works.

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I. Introduction

Since the mid of mid of 2000s, most of the schools and Universities in India made more emphasize on providing online education to students, in order to make them to be more aware of their subject. In the modern time, digital media plays a significant role in influencing the students to be very active in learning new things and communicating with each other, specifically regards to sharing educational contents. Rapid innovation in the area of information and technology have ensured numerous educational institutions to practice online education system for students. On the other hand, most of the students from schools and universities started utilizing digital platforms such as social media, e-learning websites, and web-based applications for education in their daily life. With the outbreak of coronavirus, schools and colleges were supposed to close completely for 21 days during March 2020. The government of India took the decision of closure of educational institutions with the concern of providing safety life to students. Soon after the closure of schools and colleges, the nation experienced a socio-economic problems in all the states of India. To enhance the students with effective learning, most of educational heads started conducting online classes for students. As a result the practice of e-learning through online session was implemented across the nation. It encouraged the students and teachers to accept the possibility of gaining sustained education through e-learning courses. *Suraksha Subedhi et al (2020),* stated that "E-learning tools are playing a crucial role during this pandemic but in developing countries in Asia, technological, education or literacy background and socio-economic challenges exist. These challenges might act as a hindrance to the e-learning process".

Based on the convenience of students and teachers, online courses were conducted in some of the reliable online tools such as Zoom, MS Teams, Google-meet, Whatsapp and other digital platform. The sessions were carried out by Power point presentation, PDF and word document. *Raj Kishor Bisht, Sanjay Jasola and Ila Pant Bisht (2020)* stated that "online sessions were scheduled according to time table using learning management systems like Moodle, Google classroom or directly shared on WhatsApp on day-to-day basis. This transition to online mode of teaching and learning not only keeps academic environment running but engaged students in learning, thus keeping them away from any adverse mental and physical effects of lockdown". The authors also summarized that using similar e-learning tools, students were supposed to do assignment submission by the means of e-materials and examinations in virtual mode. Even though the e-learning went in a successful way, some of the students from rural area faced certain issues like poor internet facilities, unavailability of resources and students' inefficiency to follow the instructions of tutor. Based on these facts, the conceptual study is about unveil the advantages and limitations of e-learning courses from the students' point of view.

II. Background of the Study

a) The Rise of Online Education System

The traditional education system has to face serious threats with the advancements in digital technology. In recent years, the practice of "face-to-face" classroom system of education has shifted towards the online system of education. With respect to

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the pandemic issue (Covid-19), the entire education system in India started to follow virtual learning (online education system). *Kearsley et al. (1995)* initially described both advantages and disadvantages of online education in the earlier days of internet. During early 2000s, the practice of e-learning was limited very few students of schools and universities in India. The adoption of online education system was considered as the new dimension of academic learning. *Harasim (2000)* on his work described that transformation of traditional education system to online mode will have an impact in the minds of tutors and students as well. As compared to traditional education system, Harasim also mentioned the influence of digital technology over education system will be a greater challenge for the teachers to adopt online sessions in a daily basis.

Wallace (2003), through a review work on online education system established that e-learning system need a strong interactions between teacher and students as there was an unavailability of the traditional way of having a face-to-face interaction. It was recommended that institutions need to adopt an effective strategy while carrying out online education system. The problems associated with e-learning and scheduling the classes for students became more prominent, according to *Jones and O'Shea (2004). Zapalska and Brozik (2006),* addressed that e-learning costs only single-way communication between teacher and students, whereas traditional learning system provided two-way communication. Through traditional way, a teacher able to identify the learnings of individuals which is not possible in e-learning.

b) Improvements in e-learning

In the mid of 2000s, considering the rapid growth of online education, a wide range of online courses has been implemented to facilitate the students to learn more and new things on the interested areas. *Rai. L (2019)* in his work demanded that "MOOC (Massive Open Online Course)", coined by *Dave Cormier* have received impressive response from students around the world. Through e-learning, students belongs to different nations were provided with an alternative of acquiring subject knowledge with respective course certificates. *O'Connor (2014)* on his analysis towards e-learning, suggested online courses ensured students a crucial opportunity of learning additional knowledge apart from traditional classroom learnings. Since the introduction of two-way communication specifications in online education, students have the options to clarify their doubts with the tutor.

O'Neill and Sai (2014) defined the students in the late 2000s preferred traditional education system instead of online classes as they emphasize more on face-to-face classes. With wide variety of online courses, MOOCS proved a digital revolution in the field of education, according to *Kaplan and Haenlein (2016). Ahmad et al. (2017)* statistically proved that some of the Indian educational institutions started offering the MOOCs as supplementary course to their students. The practice of online education have created a huge impact in the minds of the students as it provides number of valuable course as compared with the traditional education. E-learning also ensures the students to choose their best course based on their convenience.

c) E-learning system in India

Sheikh (2017) in his approach on "challenges and opportunity in Indian higher education", stated that Indian institutions, primarily after the initial lockdown in March 2020 decided to implement e-learning process across the nation. Due to large land diversity, some of the hilly states in India encountered certain challenges in bringing efficient e-learning practice among the students. To overcome the challenging task of providing online education throughout India, the government continuously took serious efforts to ensure the most of the students to utilize e-learning in an effective way.

Selvakumar (2019) discussed a comparison statement on the basis of past and present scenario of education on consideration with number of factors such as internet access and network availability, structure of online education, and e-learning schemes and polices for students offered by the government. On considering the situations of students in remote areas, the Indian government played an important role in providing those students with quality online education up to greater extent.

d) Practice of Online assessments

Sarrayrih and Ilyas (2013) strongly recommended the necessity of conducting assessment in the online mode order to evaluate the students' knowledge on their subject. The authors also revealed that carrying out assessments in online need to confront certain challenges such as connectivity of internet, type of device, use of software and hardware, type of web-based applications and so on. Since online assessment might be beneficial for students as they able to do the assessment works in quick period of time, there were certain issues such as descriptive questions, strategies for the subjects given to the students should be addressed. *Ozden et al. (2004)* enquired the perspectives of students towards online assessments and derived that students were found easier as well as struggles on answering the randomized questions, feedback about the tests and possibility of scoring marks for the respective subjects. While during online assessments students found to achieve number of benefits like improved commitment of students, quick response and feedback to the tutor. Such faster response from the students enhanced the e-learning process across the nation, according to *Baleni (2015).*

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e) Perception towards online education

During Covid-19, *Mishra et al. (2020)* focused on teachers' and students' perceptions of online teaching and learning approaches. The necessity for online teaching grew urgent, bringing both institutions and individuals out of the ice age. Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, keeping the rule of social separation makes it difficult to give classes in a regular style. Teachers are putting forth effort to effectively teach pupils online through the use of multimodal techniques. In the event of a pandemic, *Ray and Srivastava (2020)* recommended that students use the online study modality. Virtual laboratories, video demonstrations, and simulations were the subjects of this research. It would aid students in making effective use of e-resources while also encouraging critical thinking. Students favoured online courses during this outbreak, according to *Fatonia et al. (2020).* Despite the fact that online teaching-learning provides students with flexibility, convenience, a comfortable atmosphere, and recognized as a sustainable from the instructors, students prefer to return to normal classrooms following the epidemic.

f) Satisfaction of students on E-learning

Sameh Al Nator and Carson Woo (2020), examined the satisfaction level of students through online sessions. The authors derived that different presentations are delivered in sequence in traditional in-class presenting settings, with little ability to seek advantage of the favourable potential impacts of social comparison. Given the limited period between presentations, presenters are unlikely to make modifications to their own briefings based on what they see in others' work. When other people's work is exhibited before one's own, it might cause anxiety. This amplifies the negative impacts of comparison bias while ignoring any of its favourable effects. The digital presentation learning method, according to this study, minimises the urge to compare one's presentation to others. This diminution in comparison bias is defined as the amount to which students' propensity to assess their progress by comparisons with others is reduced when they use the internet streaming presentation approach.

g) Covid-19 and online education in India

Prior to pandemic, traditional education system was followed by most of the schools and universities of India. Therefore, online education system was not a major part in schools and colleges. Since the pandemic outbreak, e-learning became the most prominent amongst all the educational institutions of India. From the beginning both teachers and students encountered challenges and problems while handling the online sessions. *Ferrara et al. (2013), Lawrence and Abel (2012) and Moore (2005)* addressed that a "digitally literate" worker can be able to carry out the online session in an efficient manner. To conduct online sessions effectively, the teachers should possess definite experience on handling the students while practicing e-learning courses through digital medium.

With the midst of the COVID-19 outbreak, the Indian National Commission for Cooperation with UNESCO has published a list of numerous e-learning sites in India (INCCU, 2020). *Ray (2020)* also claimed that government should provide equal and quality online education to entire Indian students which includes students from villages and rural areas. As per the goals of United Nations on education to all students, the Indian government emerged effectively on achieving the goal by providing quality education through online during the pandemic days.

III. Conclusion

The current study strongly argue that shifting of regular sessions to online sessions was due to the safety concern of students, in order to stay away from the hazardable disease (Covid-19). Due to the sudden change of learning process, initially both teachers and students felt hard to be work with web-based learning on a daily basis. The study also revealed that students' preference on online education is positively related as it provides more facilities for students to develop their subject knowledge even without the guidance of the instructor. With the existing literature on e-learning, it has been analyzed that students feel more comfortable on online session rather than the regular classes. Since the assessments were held on online, students found easier to answer the questions without hesitations. Furthermore, studies claimed that e-learning practices made students to carry forward their academic progress even in the pandemic conditions. Most of the existing literature shows that poor internet connection and students' inability of having frequent interactions with the teacher and friends seems to be the crucial issue on practicing online education. Through this study, it is concluded that online education system is most welcomed by students and it is quite acceptable to encourage students on utilizing the standard applications for learning and career aspects also.

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