

COVID-19 – Education amidst the Pandemic

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Abstract

COVID-19 has been declared a pandemic by WHO and there is a sense of fear and panic all around the globe. Since the first case of COVID-19 as emerged in India, government is taking all possible precautions to curb the spread of the disease. One of the most severe but important step by the government was a nationwide lockdown for 1.3 billion Indians, which meant that the education sector involving approx. 340 million students will suddenly be having access to home education. While we are not going to be able to learn in the physical environment of the classroom, the change is to ensure that students get what they need to, so that learning continues. To provide protection to young Human Resource, education must now move from rote learning to experimental technology-oriented learning. In the wake of this many educational institutions, Ed-tech companies and government have come together and shifted from their offline education to online teaching learning procedure through different ways social media, learning platforms, e-classroom and more. With a view to maintain social distancing and ensuring teaching learning continues promoting online education has become the need of the hour.

Keywords: - COVID-19, Lockdown, Online Education, Pandemic

Introduction

Coronavirus is an ongoing pandemic, started in Wuhan, China in the December of 2019.¹ Its outbreak has been declared to be a public health emergency of international concern on 30th January 2020, and recognized as pandemic by WHO on 11 March 2020.⁸

As of 14th April 2020, more than 1.93 Million cases of COVID-19 have been reported in 210 countries and territories resulting in more than 1,20,000 deaths. Around 4,64,000 people have recovered, although there is a possibility of relapse or reinfection.

In India the first case of COVID 19 was reported on 30th January 2020. On April 14th, 2020, the ministry of health and family welfare have confirmed a total of 10,815 cases, 1190 recoveries and 353 deaths in the country.

With the growing case of coronavirus outbreak, education sector seems to be in the state of lockdown. Several major boards have postponed their exams and have even cancelled assessments for almost all classes. This situation of crisis can be managed as education and technology have now become the two sides of the same coin, but overall, in long run it will have a huge learning impact.

Review of Literature

With suspended classes, postponed examination and closed campuses education system has come to a standstill.^{1,11} With each passing day every house is an Institution and every parent is an educator / teacher.⁶ In this period of lock down the fun time, the study time, the classroom and the bedroom have no boundaries. With children reading at night, sleeping during the day, unscheduled watching of television, series and movies, there hardly is existing any structural learning environment.

Shutting of schools and colleges have indeed put strain on guardians and parents to provide childcare and facilitate learning parallelly. This is challenging especially for parents with limited education and resources. Educational institutions not only provide learning atmosphere but also are a hub of social activities and human interaction, essential for active learning and development. With the given challenge and constraints, the aim is to keep our academic society healthy, both physical and mentally.

Measures taken to provide continuous learning environment with ensure protecting the young minds of our country under the given scenarios of lockdown exploring different modes of

online education is the need of the hour. With a view to maintain social distancing and continuing learning HRD, AICTE, UGC, Ed Tech companies have had a golden handshake and have transformed the Indian education's system making it driven by technology.^{2,3} Though the entire shift from physical to technological teaching is restrictive, discretionary and non-standardized efforts have been taken to reach to the masses and minimize losses.

Need for Study

The coronavirus outbreak being a health crisis the country has had an extended lockdown up to 3rd May. This has led to education which in which in India was conducted in a physical learning environment has now become a place where every home is an institution. The need for the study is to create an awareness about how a closed teaching environment is getting converted to a highly technology drive method of teaching. This study is to understand the challenge faced by all from parents, to teachers, to learners, to government and Ed tech companies but by embracing technology and action plan education has no boundaries.

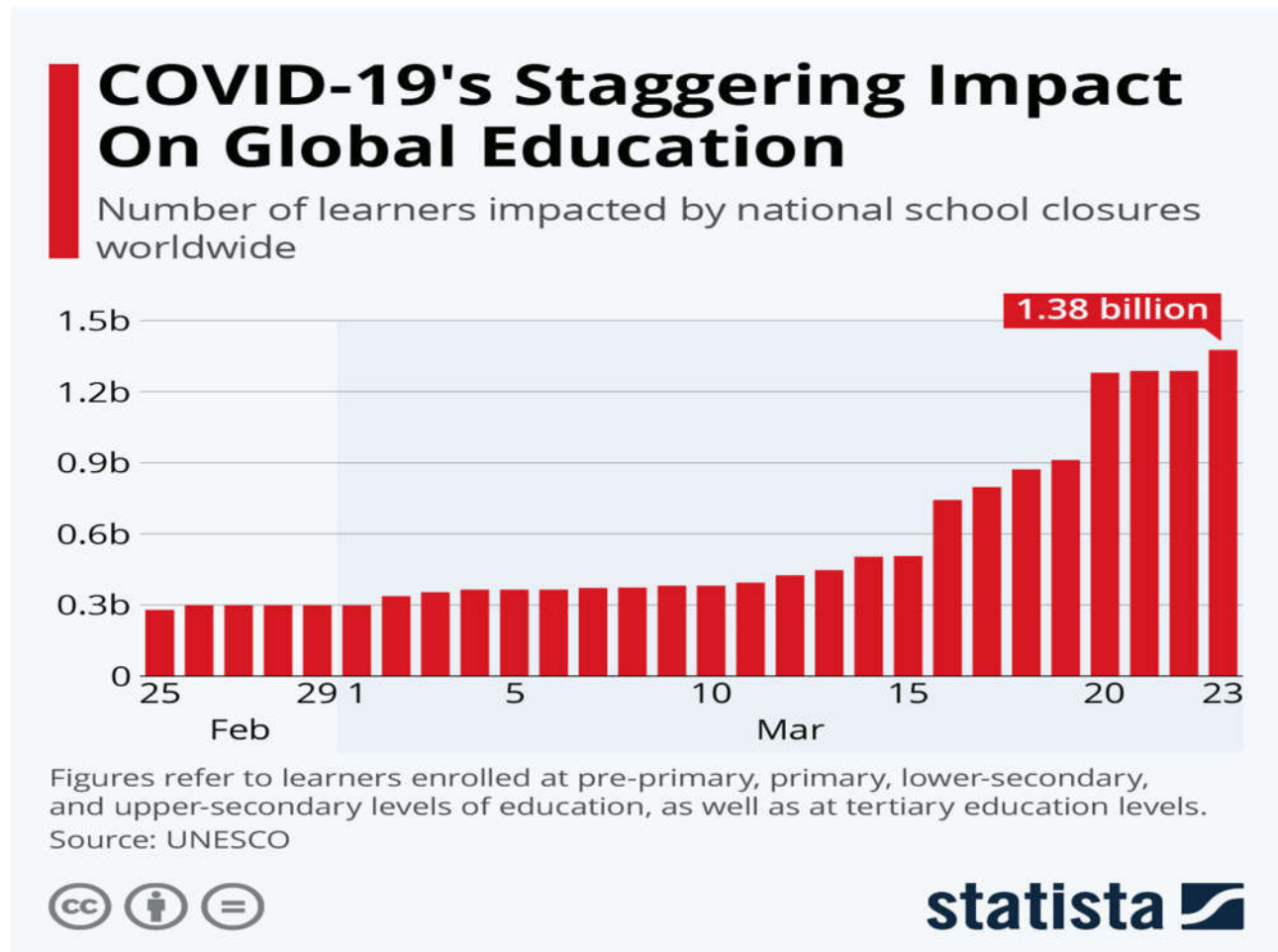
Research Objective

The objective of this study is to understand the impact of COVID-19 on the educators and learners and how this has given an opportunity to bring together technology and educators to make learning a persistent process.

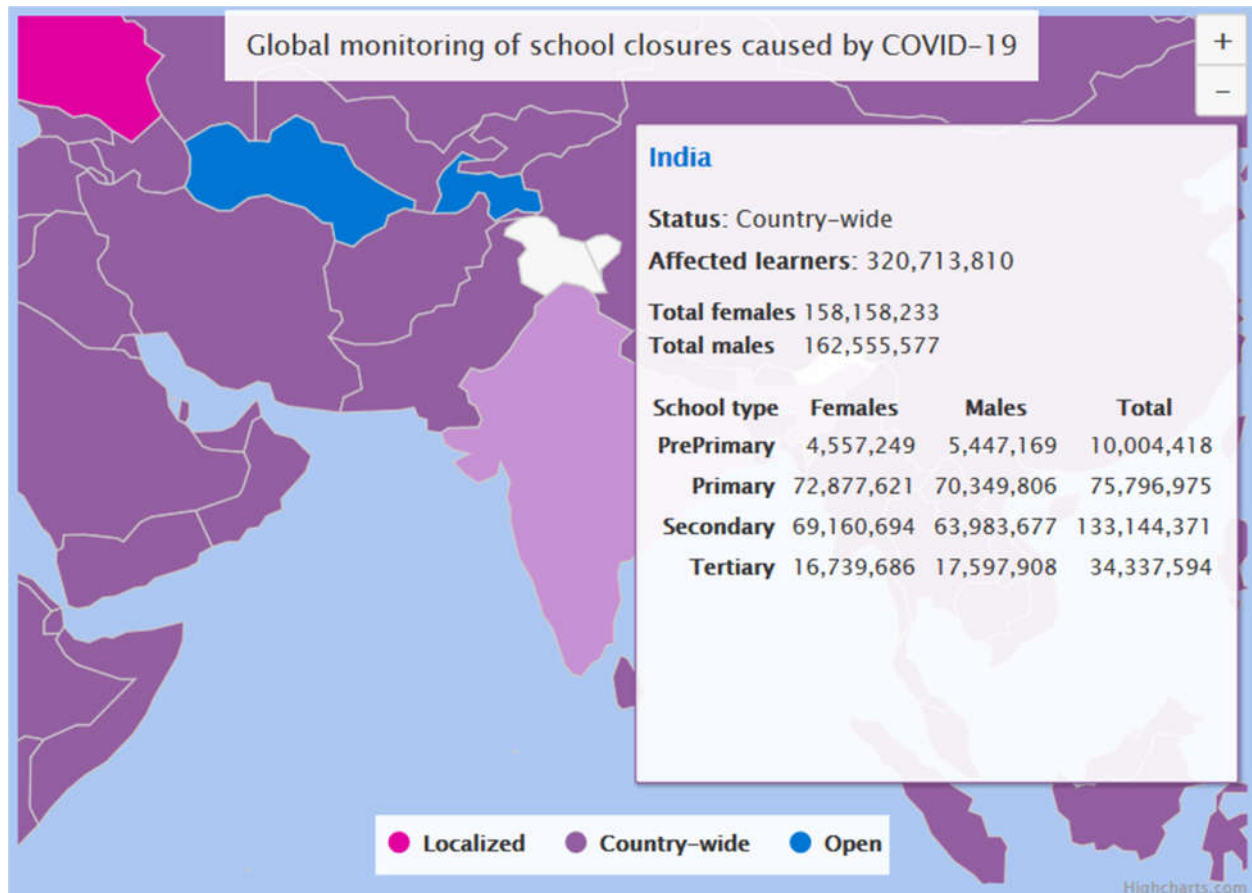
Research Methodology

The research paper is a result of Basic and explanatory research based on the secondary data sourced from E-books, journals, articles and reports. Qualitative data is used for gathering the data related to COVID-19, impact on education, making teaching online etc. The gathered data is also been helpful in preparation of the graphs and these are analyzed to meet the objectives of the study.

Research Analysis and Interpretation



UNESCO's figures refer to learners enrolled at pre-primary, primary, lower-secondary, and upper-secondary levels of education as well as at tertiary level.⁴ 1,379,344,914 students or 80 percent of the world's learners are now being kept out of educational institutions by country-wide closures. Another 284 million learners are being affected in some way by closures at a localized level, such as those seen in U.S. states like California and Virginia. 138 governments have now ordered country-wide closures of their schools and universities.



Note: Figures correspond to number of learners enrolled at pre-primary, primary, lower-secondary, and upper-secondary levels of education [ISCED levels 0 to 3], as well as at tertiary education levels [ISCED levels 5 to 8]. Enrolment figures based on latest [UNESCO Institute for Statistics data](#).⁵

Conclusion

With the increasing number of cases and extension of the lockdown period the young growing minds have been significantly impacted. Ongoing efforts must be taken for providing the best possible learning environment and make the youth both emotionally and mentally stronger. Reaching out to the rural students is extremely important. India and “we” the people must embrace technology and education with open heart and propagate the same not only to GEN NEXT where the future lies. Promoting online education in the farthest part of India, rescheduling of exams, restructuring the education system is the key to face this situation of crisis. We as peoples should seize the opportunity and transform our traditional learning system

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