

GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS VS PRIVATE SCHOOLS-DURING COVID 19 PANDEMIC SITUATION

NAME : MOUSAMI BAGCHI
DESIGNATION : RESEARCH SCHOLAR,
UNIVERSITY: SEACOM SKILLS UNIVERSITY, BOLPUR, WEST BENGAL.

ABSTRACT

The **COVID-19 pandemic in India** is part of the worldwide pandemic of corona virus disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome corona virus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The first case of COVID-19 in India, which originated from China, was reported on 30 January 2020. India currently has the largest number of confirmed cases in Asia, and has the third highest number of confirmed cases in the world after the United States and Brazil with the number of total confirmed cases breaching the 100,000 mark on 19 May, 200,000 on 3 June, and 1,000,000 confirmed cases on 17 July 2020.

India's case fatality rate is relatively low at 2.8%, against the global 4.7%, as of 6 July. Six cities account for around half of all reported cases in the country – Mumbai, Delhi, Ahmedabad, Chennai, Pune and Kolkata. As of 24 May 2020, Lakshadweep is the only region which has not reported a case. On 10 June, India's recoveries exceeded active cases for the first time reducing 49% of total infections followed by recovery rate crossing 60% till early July. Although, active have continued to increase persistently.

In this situation schools and colleges are closed from 22nd of March.2020 and parents are totally confused regarding future of their wards.

Whereas government schools are busy in providing mid day meals to the students, proving their school building to be used as quarantine centres private schools have emerged as a saviour for continuing the classes via online mode.

There is a lot of debate regarding the role of schools, future of students, payment of fees but we cannot ignore the fact that private schools are doing their very best to keep the education process rolling.

Still they are facing many outrages like spreading of inequality because poor families cannot afford android phones or can pay huge fees so, they are deprived from education.

Again the question comes who is better in terms of providing quality education still in this pandemic situation.

INTRODUCTION:

The COVID-19 crisis has jolted the global economy with a pervasive impact on almost all sectors. It has triggered the announcement of a lockdown by several nations in an attempt to arrest the transmission risk of the disease. According to a UNESCO report, the pandemic will adversely impact over 290 million students across 22 countries due to the closure of schools in the wake of the lockdown. Extended school closures will not only weaken the fundamentals of students, but it will also lead to loss of human capital as well as economic opportunities in the long -run. According to the World Bank, its impact will be profound in countries where education is grappling with low learning outcomes and a high dropout rate. Several educational institutions had no choice but to embrace e-learning to sustain the momentum.

Over the past few years, e-learning has witnessed an uptick due to ubiquitous Internet connectivity, the proliferation of smart phones and significant advances in technology. The ongoing crisis should be perceived as an opportunity in disguise for online education. The e-learning overcomes geographical barriers and ensures equitable access to education. It also facilitates convenient, quick, on -the- go and 24x7 access. Numerous ed-tech firms have leveraged this opportunity to offer lessons in an interesting and interactive way to students. E-learning seems a viable solution at the moment to fill the void created due to the absence of classroom learning.

Fortunately, the Indian government has taken cognizance of the untapped potential of e-learning. The one-nation-one platform facility through the PM E-Vidya platform and a dedicated channel for students from Class 1 to Class 12 will liberalize distance and online learning regulatory framework. Moreover, emphasis on community radio, podcasts, and customized content for differently-abled will enable more inclusivity into access to education.

However, certain challenges need to be addressed to bring online education into the mainstream in India. Firstly, uninterrupted access to the Internet is yet to become a reality in Tier 3 and remote cities in India. Secondly, the absence of a comprehensive policy regulation leads to ambiguity over the operational framework. Also, online education needs to take cognizance of different learning pace of students and develop customized solutions for them. Moreover, the concerns of increased screen time, anxiety and stress triggered due to the continuous use of electronic devices also need to be addressed.

Although online education cannot replace classroom education due to the personalized nature of attention and face to face interactions, it can be an effective supplement to the brick-and-mortar model of education. There is a need to revamp the current pedagogy to seamlessly integrate online learning into mainstream education. Equally significant is the need to devise a quality benchmark for education providers. This will encourage the weaning away fly -by- the -night players in the field. So far, e-learning has proved a boon for urban areas. It should be further expanded to serve the rural and underserved hinterlands as well as differently-abled sections of society. New-age technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, Virtual Reality among others can be instrumental in bridging the crucial gaps.

The ongoing COVID-19 crisis has presented an opportunity to rethink the deep-rooted classroom mode of education and underscored the significance of online learning. It has been a great leveller as it has enabled various stakeholders to collaborate and assess the gaps and shortcomings in the conventional model. The COVID-19 pandemic may be just the ‘tipping point’ for reform of the Indian education system.

In this situation where students are insecure about their future private schools are doing their very best by providing online class and tests to keep the circle of education running and motivating students. Whereas Government schools are only focusing on mid day meals and shelter home, what about the students? There are lots of controversies regarding distribution of mid day meal, teachers non co-operation etc. But now the question arises that how the Government school students will compete with the private school students who are getting all the facilities.

Role of private schools during covid 19 pandemic-

1. Students are given school books and study material despite the lockdown via courier/post.
2. Online class is provided to the students on regular basis.

3. Online test are conducted to test the progress of the student.

Role of Government school during covid 19 pandemic-

1. Controversy regarding distribution of mid day meal at the residence of students by school teachers.
2. No stress on education of the students.
3. Online classes cannot be conducted because every student is not from economically strong background.
4. Non co-operation from the teachers to conduct online class.
5. Use of school infrastructure as quarantine centres.

In the above mentioned points we can clearly see that financial background of a student plays a very vital role in the education system. Students who can afford are getting ahead in their syllabus as well as preparation for promotion in the next class, whereas the government school student's future is doomed.

CONCLUSION

The debate regarding Government schools vs private schools is going on for decades but this covid 19 pandemic made the picture quite clear and relatable that why a parent who is little bit financially strong must choose a good private school so, that his ward gets ready for future.

Unless government authorities give stress on Government schools to provide quality education to the students who are coming from different backgrounds but have the equal right to get good quality education. As Government schools are busy in performing other tasks like engagement of teachers in other activities like election etc.

Schools must focus on the roots and should thrive to give quality education to the students by hiring good qualified teachers and providing all round holistic education to the students.

BIBLIOGRAPHY :

- 1.Desai Sonalde. et. al. (2008) *Private Schooling in India: A New Educational Landscape*. Pratham, India Human Development Survey, Working Paper No.11.
2. Lynn Bosetti (2004). *Determinants of school choice: understanding how parents choose elementary schools in Alberta*. University of Calgary, Canada, Journal of Education Policy, Taylor and Francis, 19(4).
3. Dahari Zainurin and Bin Ya Mohd Sabri (2011). *Factors that Influence Parents' Choice of Pre-Schools Education in Malaysia: An Exploratory Study*. International Journal of Business and Social Science.
4. Different reports on covid-19.