

How to Cite:

Yadav, A., Chitra, C., Pandey, G., Singh, N., & Pandey, A. K. (2022). Primary education system of Punjab in the COVID 19 era: Problem and challenges. *International Journal of Health Sciences*, 6(S3), 6050–6060. <https://doi.org/10.53730/ijhs.v6nS3.7338>

Primary education system of Punjab in the COVID 19 era: Problem and challenges

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Abstract---This era came with various challenges for mankind through the start of covid-19. The pandemic started from the city of Wuhan, china as per reports. The covid-19 pandemic has come up as a life-threatening disease to human existence. The effect of covid-19 is going to leave long term damages to the entire education system and the human life. In order to deal with the pandemic to ensure the suppression of the virus transmission lockdown was implemented in the various parts of the world as this action was considered to bring down the continuously increasing rate in the rise of covid-19 cases. The largest impact on the human life would be in the section on education system. As education decides the future of the country by making a population which contribute in the growth of any nation. The main purpose of the study of the paper is to highlight the problems and challenges that the system is facing and discussion them thoroughly.

Keywords---COVID-19, education system, lockdown.

Introduction

Education is the pillar of a nation that leads to development, but the covid-19 has given many challenges and new way to conduct classes to the education sector. Indian education system has been impacted in a very worse manner since the arrival of the pandemic. Since the rise of covid-19 cases in the country, the government of India has imposed lockdown as per requirement on the 25th march 2020 nationwide in order to suppress the rise of cases around. The pandemic has forced to implement various changes such as the shutdown of offline classes of many educational institutes to shift its mode of teaching from offline to online mode. The conduct of physical mode that is offline was prohibited in the wake of the circumstances prevailing and follow the guidelines issued by the government to prevent social gathering. The sudden change in the modes whether online or offline both had their own positive and negative impact on the education system. In order to face the ongoing situation an alternate option of conducting classes was introduced as to adopt into the online classes to continue to education without breaking the chain of continuation. The new way of conducting the classes shifted the weight of education from schools to families, the ones who were unfamiliar with all of the online mode faced various challenges in accessing their education.

The alternate way of assigning activities, teaching, student and teacher interaction was completely depending on an individual's access to required gadgets. This widened the gap in context of unequal access to technology or unawareness. As the pandemic had already given economic stain to various families, it caused the gap of rich and poor to widen up for access to access to education which shows makes the situation visible as the it was all alien and problematic to the financially disadvantage families. Lack of access to technology or better internet connection was hurdle for students to cross. Another effect of online classes was strain to the health of the students. The classes being held online through mobile phones or laptops etc., resulted in taking toll on the health of the students such as eyes strain, back pain due to lack of movement, headache due to increased screen time etc. The covid-19 has no boundaries as it has affected almost every part of the world it is infecting people all around the globe causing the rise in fear among them, for which guidelines for preventing the rise in cases was issued. However, there are different issues with the implementation.

The students from underprivileged background has been fighting off with the situation to get an access to continue their studies. Many relevant issues such as lessened income of the families is restricting their expenditure, with less chances to get everyone's needs fulfilled. Through the paper, the goal is to get our objectives fulfilled by survey and getting analysis on the data reports to check out the potential consequences that are becoming a blockage in the life of the students due to the ongoing covid-19 pandemic. The research gives an insight and highlight the problematic parts of conducting online education which is becoming a failure as a fulltime method of conducting classes.

Objectives

The main points for which the survey is done on the particular topic. Given below are the main purpose behind the study of the topic:

- What are the problems faced by the students?
- How the negative impact of conducting online classes.
- Analyze the positive impact of online classes to enhance its usability.
- In depth analysis of issues faced by rural and urban based students.

Literature review

The covid-19 pandemic has shown made the online education a new part of our life. Although the it has been a while that the system of online education has been adopted in some ways, the era of covid-19 have made it mandatory for everyone. The challenges and problems are some of the issues that came along with it. The idea of digitalization looked good before the occurrence of the pandemic. By the passing as the experience with online system of education is continuing the questions have started to rise by the time. The fact that excess of anything comes with no good seems to be true by the prevailing scenario. There have been several researches conducted with the concern of the issues that the fraction of population might be facing.

The life of every individual is changing with the introduction of new ways to deal with situation. Every student has gotten new opportunities to get adapted with new normal by becoming more aware of with the technology. The usage of technology is coming with many benefits but as there is existence of positive there are drawbacks too. The digitalization is something that requires some necessities. For a student to continue their studies uninterrupted they need to get gadgets like phones, laptop etc. with the addition of other expenses like recharges the data packs. In order to get an access to their respective classes they need to get proper internet connectivity. These requirements are some essentials that is not possible to everyone to handle. In a developing country like India, there is a big population with the majority of middle class, lower middle families in which they share one room with 4-5 members in the family which disturbs their concentration in the class. The lack of concentration with the environment of house rather than school disrupts the effectiveness of the online classes.

The factors mentioned above are some of the problematic elements which makes the mandating of online education questionable. In order to understand the issues and challenges we have conducted the review of literature which concerns our study. In one study conducted by (Tarkar, 2020). there are several spheres the observation was done. They focused on the way online education is interrupting the learning outcome of the students and the disparities it is providing to others. It focused on investigating that impact of the new system their study results show that the digital divide will be giving long term damage to the economical growth in the country if the issue is not tackled properly. The new method of technology-based education has given opportunities to increase the utility and continuity to some students while another is getting further away from education. The online mode will show the negative impact on the overall personality of the students in

terms of lack of social skills and social awareness. They emphasized on the fact that the students might have less interest in the interest of higher education abroad. The study discusses on the changing system is creating many hindrances and making the parents feel pressure. The classes conducted online must have a knowledge of technology usage and certainly if a students faces any problem few parents who are unaware of the technology are feeling helpless for being unable to help the students and having no choices left rather than sitting at home it take a toll on the mental health of the student.

There are both positive and negative results of the online education mode conducted to continue education. To ensure the less disruption to the education system many changes are seen to be adopted. Another study conducted by (Dr. Pravat Kumar Jena, 2020). Focused on the different initiatives taken by the government of India to ensure the effectiveness of the online education. This paper has highlighted the positives and negative impact on education of the pandemic. They focus on the various program released by the government such as Swayam Prabha which enables the students to access classes by providing 32 tv channels transmitting education-based content (Dr. Pravat Kumar Jena, 2020). Then diksha portal which provides several online available pdf-based textbooks and other workbooks necessary for students to access the reading material (Dr. Pravat Kumar Jena, 2020). To improve the overall efficiency of the online education many programs are introduced to give a helping hand to students to cope up with the problems.

This study have observed the positives such as more involvement of parents effort towards the education of their wards, becoming more technology friendly with the drawbacks highlighted such as the decrease in the number of teachers due to being unaware of technology, delay in the conduct of examinations due to the pandemic which will delay the whole employment process thus increasing the unemployment rate of the country. The study comes up with some suggestions after discussing the positives of governments pros and cons of new methods. The study concludes with giving remarks on the possibilities like increasing scope of distance education and the system being unfair to the underprivilege group of students. Also, on the fact that the country needs more time to do some works to increase the technology sector to make it enable enough to cope up with these issues to ensure the way to sustain the effect of the pandemic. Another study conducted by Esteban M. Aucejo, Jacob F. French, Maria Paola Ugalde Araya, and Basit Zafar.2020, have been done to understand each student's perspective on the covid-19 impact based on their personal experience. The study had collected the sample of 1,564 students out of which 90 were considered for the evaluation (Aucejo et al., 2020).

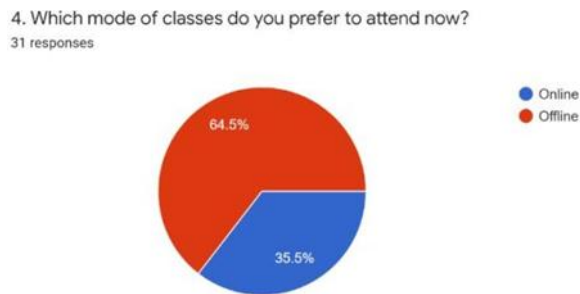
It also looked on the aspect of the scenario that that would have been without covid-19. Its study has discussed the student's point of view by getting their responses. The outcomes show the academic performance of a student from disadvantage background have dropped much than compared to the privileged one. It gives an insight into the change in the preferences as the students are becoming more sided with the idea of delay in graduation by taking drops among the college students. The discussion further gives an insight on how many students had financial issues which are taking toll on the education of the

students and the effect of such issue will result in the delay of graduation for the student due to financial instability. The paper concludes with the facts given above with the addition of its impact on the health of the less advantage groups.

Research Methodology

The survey was conducted in an online survey method with the use of google forms with the link with 11 number of questions asked accordingly in order to understand the opinion. The questionnaire was made in an objective mode with about 31 respondents from the region of Punjab reachable via the online mode. The questionnaires google form was spread through the use of social media platforms such as WhatsApp, telegram etc. the data taken from the google sheet is presented in the form of pie chart to make, the ethical assurance is that no one was forced to fill up the questionnaire and everyone responded with their consent. This survey was conducted to get an idea about the student's point of view.

Data analysis



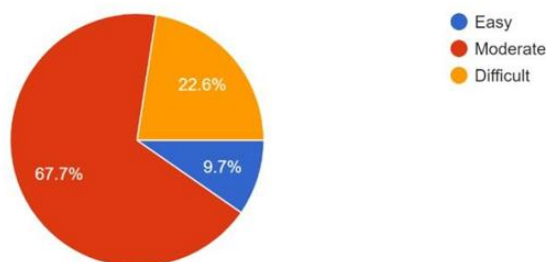
The above figure given in a form of pie chart representation of the responds shows the data that when asked about the mode of classes the students want to attend is 64.5% students with yes to offline mode meanwhile the rest chose to go with the online mode in the preference of attending classes. This chart shows the maximum number of students want to attend the offline classes rather than the online. There are several reasons for the offline classes to be more favourable as it ensures the discipline of the students in the monitor of the teacher in classroom, socializing with classmates, lack of laziness, more physical movement compared to online mode and the issues with online classes are many such as internet fluctuation in between the classes, less interaction, and so on.

This figure shows the data about the perception on interaction with teacher in the class conducted in online mode. The distribution of responds shows the negative results as only 41% students seem to be satisfied meanwhile the other 38.7% said not satisfied while 19.4% don't have chooses none of them. It means the interaction level have dropped drastically in the online classes due to not having a teacher around in face to face interaction. The reason behind is the lack of discipline and low self-confidence. The digital platform-based classes solely depend on the discipline, interest which gives a room for them to be able to skip classes or be inactive during the class session. The interaction shows the interest

of the class engaging in the class conversation or discussion is necessary to let the idea of each individual be shared in the class as well as for clearing doubts etc.

6. How easy or difficult it is to remain focused on your schoolwork?

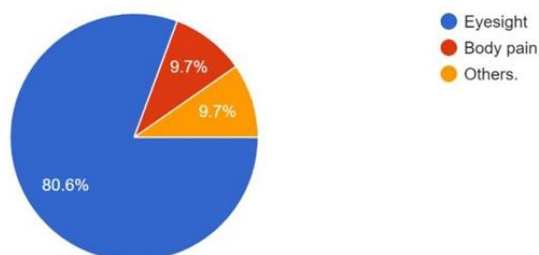
31 responses



Focus on the studies. so, the purpose of this query is to get an idea on whether there is any problem in focusing on their studies during this new mode of classes conducted. The figure shows the result as the majority finding it difficult to remain focused with 67.7% finding it in between difficult and 22.6% saying straight out difficult to answer the question. The shift to online mode could be taken via gadgets such as laptop, phone, tablet and so on with its embedded various applications available on the phone. This gadget is an extremely distracting as it is an easy way to escape the studies and rather do something else like surfing on social media accounts and so on. The dependency on gadgets has increased to such a level that students have been using Google to answer almost every question without having to listen to the whole lecture session given by the teacher which makes them more lazy.

7. How does digitalization of education affect the health of the students?

31 responses

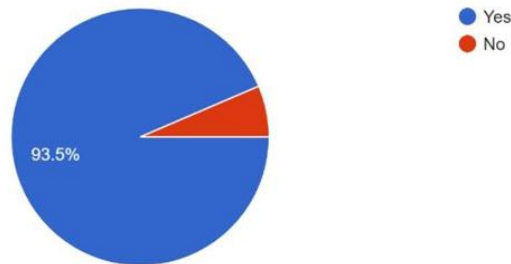


Online education system has made the gadgets like phones, laptop must for continuing the studies. But the necessity of these gadgets for doing the studies which is almost about 4-5 hours a day in the class which is slowly showing its ill effect on the health of the students. The students don't have any other option rather than joining the classes through such gadgets. The data given in the question result is about which is the most common health issue according to them and the result goes in such a manner as 80% of students answered eyesight to be the most general health issue and then going for body pain and other issues. The screen time increase in the student's life for classes or getting the notes reading

pdfs are all over the gadgets to which they have to give in as resulting in damage to eyes and due to limited body movements other issues such as body pain, headache and mental health is deteriorating day by day.

8. Do you think covid-19 have impacted on your learning outcome?

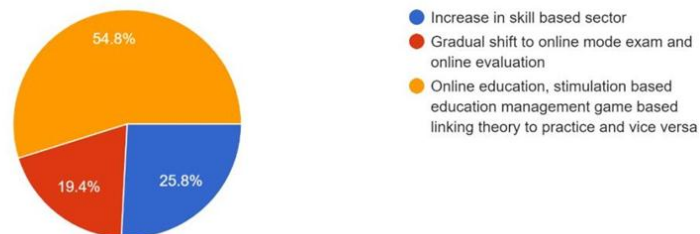
31 responses



Impact of covid-19 in the learning outcome of students have become a serious issue for education sector. The use online platform is an option kept for managing the continuity of education without waiting for the unguaranteed time. However, the learning outcome is a big issue according to the responds received. The result shows about 93.5% students denoting the fact that the leaning outcome is affected really bad. The number of percentages is alarming as an indicator on how and where the later generation is going in the field. It shows the ineffectiveness of the online classes or the negatives of the online classes are more than its ration of positives.

9. What could be major disruptions in the education sector?

31 responses

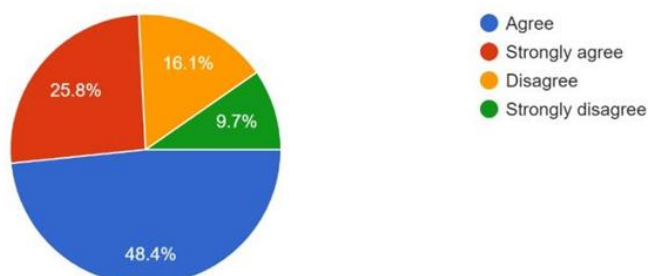


This question is about the major disruptions caused by the pandemic. The result in the figure have majority of the opinion on the side that the most affected area was in the division of online education-based stimulation-based education management and like linking the theory to practice and vice versa with 58.6% of responds. As well as to 25.8% responds in the end of increase in the skill-based sector and the remaining 19.4% to the shift to online mod exams and evaluation. This areas are concerning as the theoretical subjects could be handled by the online mod lectures like being taught and well perceived by the students but in case of relating the subjects topic on the courses such as science practical or the lab practical could not be conducted by the schools because of this issue the practical learning of the students which is the most crucial and evident way of understanding the learning of one is slipping way due to the shift in the online

mode as this is one of such things which cannot be done by the students at their house.

10. Do you agree that covid- 19 effect girls education ?

31 responses



This question holds its focus on getting an idea on the perception of bad effects of online classes to the girls. The responses are showing the very negative result as on the parameter of scaling the results is as except the 9.7% of the respondents, others says that girls education is affected due to shift in mode. The possible reasons for this outcome is the gender inequality which is subconsciously within the mind of majority of the population of India. The issue with the shift to mode is the change in the environment from school to home. The girls when being at home are expected be helping around in the household chores as they are still seen as one only responsible for the household works. In between disturbance with the classes adding the workload of household works in to the studies makes them worn out by the end of the day which is making the drastic drop in the result of the females, which will eventually drop the level of education to the female students.

Results and Discussions

To understand the base problems and challenges faced by the students due to a sudden change in their entire way of education for time being. The survey was done in order to get students response and their own perception towards the new mode. As the education system is the base for anyone to get development as it holds the future of an individual and society as a whole. The education sector of India was already in not a very good shape and now its suffering more. The rise of covid-19 case as a pandemic have further caused a damage shock to the entire system. This kind of issue is faced by the students if no tackled well soon it ill worsens the situation to the future. Hence, the necessity of conducting this survey or choosing this particular topic seems to be required. Since, there is no clear answer to the end of this pandemic yet, it is necessary to study this matter in depth to understand the problems in the system of online education first and then come up with some good solutions which would make the situation better by increasing the facilities whether in terms on internet connectivity or digitalization. As this is the age of digital world that we are living into, such lack in these facilities would be big drawback for a developing nation. The role of government is important here, s to increasing the sector of technology by looking onto small basic details like ensuring the availability of network for communication by

installing cell sites or towers of each sim company used nationwide or statewide. The role of government here is to better the services given by the telecom service provided by the government and for the private companies the work of documentations works needs to be done faster by the bureaucrats assigned in the area of installation.

Education should be provided of every individual in the country and to fulfill this goal of education a separate fundamental right as an article is included in the Indian constitution. These factors which are creating hindrances and giving an insight on the drawbacks of shifting to online mode of education. The survey purpose is to show that there are many areas where the differently works are required to make it better or feasible and at least decreasing its minus points with its comparison to the offline mode of classes. The problematic areas are further discussed in few points below more elaborately.

Unavailability of necessities- the infrastructure that is required to conduct online classes in mass is not applicable in the south Asian countries as all of them are still developing countries with semi facilities which could be availed by the only privileged facilities or specific areas. Several issues are faced by students even after years of declaration of digital India movement. There are number of hurdles to jump on such as the gadgets availability, internet signal, electricity issues, expenses on the internet connection charge. There is a growing rate of problems visible as not all the areas have the facilities, many rural areas are still not having any tower in their areas. There are many families which have lost their employment in the pandemic making it hard for them to even manage the food and living expenses with the addition of the charges required for online education take a toll on their finances.

Increase in distraction- there are number of distractions while going for online classes as the classes on gadgets with the application on the phones such as slipping for social media or going google for every answer that needs to be obtained. The dependency on the phone like gadgets have increased more than its limited which is going to cause several issues as the learning outcome will see a downfall. With the gadget's distraction the addition of change in environment is also a topic to be alarmed about. In countries like India which are still developing nation with many families having low income don't have too spacious houses required for peaceful study purpose. It's a must for each kid to have a space for studies with peaceful environment as such was with pupils in the classrooms. The effect of the home environment is distraction to see the family members often, with many interruptions in between class. There are several houses with kids or without the chaos created have made it difficult for them to focus on the studies.

Other factors- There are several factors such as the above given. Furthermore, the lack of teaching staff is another thing. Since the developing tag is still in India and there is a long way to go not many of them are aware of the usage and the directions to be using the digital gadgets. Many faculties are unfamiliar with the usage and thus, decreasing the number of faculties available. Gender disparity on partiality on by making the girls engage in the household chores during the class hours. Such like many issues are being faced by students. Due to being in the house for most hours lone besides the phones or laptop the effect of isolation is

reflecting, the inactive body is making the kids lazier creating an imbalance on the diet control making many of them obese with other health issues such as eyesight degrading, body pain etc. There are many kids who used to go to school to get the benefit of the mid-day meal scheme's benefit as they are now deprived of the facilities given back in past. The too much reliance is giving mental pressure to kids due to pandemic and their fear with the isolation making them more socially awkward, which make them unapproachable.

Suggestions

- Setting up towers of government-based telecommunication company at very all the area making them accessible.
- Training of all the teachers to make them familiar with the usage of online platforms.
- Schools need new ways to formulate in order to provide the mid-day meals to the students during the school closer.
- increasing the interaction in the classes by getting more engaged with the parents of the kid

Conclusion

It is evident by now that covid-19 have a big effect on the education system. Although, the government have tried to take initiatives as a big effort to decrease the effect of covid-19, there are still many issues with the adaption of going to continue the education by fulltime online mode. The problematic areas are highlighted in the report which are evident of the negatives of the shift in the mode of education. In order make things better as covid-19 is taking quite longer to end the areas where government can do some works needs to be done. Some important improvements such as availing internet connectivity in all areas of the state, training of teachers for familiarity with the new mode of teaching and so on. The initiative was indeed not a bad move by the government to deal with the loss due to covid-19. But in Punjab there is a lot more needed before the implementing of such method of imparting knowledge. The situation needs to have a quick improvement in providing the internet even in the remote areas. Still, not denying the fact that online education has their own number of advantages in them such as time management, study from home etc. but there is more need to have a balanced system of education.

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