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The Impact of COVID-19 on Education

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Abstract: ***2020 has witnesses a different scenario in the world which has never been recorded in the history of any country in the world. Economy all over the world including the powerful nations USA & China has also been very badly affected. Production sector financial system at one side and education and other important services at another end. Due to coronavirus pandemic the state governments across the country temporarily started shutting down schools and colleges. As per the present situation, there is an uncertainty when schools and colleges will reopen. No doubt, this is the crucial time for education sector because entrance tests of several universities and competitive examinations are held during this period. Along with them how can we forget about board examinations and admissions into new courses and foreign education trips etc. The immediate solution of coronavirus is necessary or if like these days pass then closure of schools and colleges does not even have short term impact in India but can even cause far-reaching economic and societal consequences. Due to the closedown of educational institutes it is estimated to affect around 600 million learners across the world. Considering the statistical facts the universities, colleges and the complete education system has adopted the online impartment of education which has been adopted by learners as well and as a result many such online platforms has been initiated. This article is an attempt to throw some light on to the problems being faced by the online teaching and learning.***

Keywords: COVID-19, Coronavirus, Education

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic is first and foremost a health crisis. Many countries have (rightly) decided to close schools, colleges and universities. The crisis crystallises the dilemma policymakers are facing between closing schools (reducing contact and saving lives) and keeping them open (allowing workers to work and maintaining the economy). The severe short- term disruption is felt by many families around the world: home schooling is not only a massive shock to parents' productivity, but also to children's social life and learning. Teaching is moving online, on an untested and unprecedented scale. Student assessments are also moving online, with a lot of trial and error and uncertainty for everyone. Many assessments have simply been cancelled. Importantly, these interruptions will not just be a short-term issue, but can also have long-term consequences for the affected cohorts and are likely to increase inequality.

The Impact of COVID-19 on Schools

Going to school is the best public policy tool available to raise skills. While school time can be fun and can raise social skills and social awareness, from an economic point of view the primary point of being in school is that it increases a child's ability. Even a relatively short time in school does this; even a relatively short period of missed school will have consequences for skill growth. But can we estimate how much the COVID-19 interruption will affect learning. Not very precisely, as we are in a new world; but we can use other studies to get an order of magnitude.

2. Literature Review

Two pieces of evidence are useful. Carlsson et al. (2015) consider a situation in which young men in Sweden have differing number of days to prepare for important tests. These differences are conditionally random allowing the authors to estimate a causal effect of schooling on skills. The authors show that even just ten days of extra schooling significantly raises scores on tests of the use of knowledge ('crystallized intelligence') by 1% of a standard deviation. As an extremely rough measure of the impact of the current school closures, if we were to simply extrapolate those numbers, twelve weeks less schooling (i.e. 60 school days) implies a loss of 6% of a standard deviation, which is non-trivial. They do not find a significant impact on problem -solving skills (an example of 'fluid intelligence').

A different way into this question comes from Lavy (2015), who estimates the impact on learning of differences in instructional time across countries. Perhaps surprisingly, there are very substantial differences between countries in hours of teaching. For example, Lavy shows that total weekly hours of instruction in mathematics, language and science is 55% higher in Denmark than in Austria. These differences matter, causing significant differences in test score outcomes: one more hour per week over the school year in the main subjects increases test scores by around 6% of a standard deviation. In our case, the loss of perhaps 3-4 hours per week teaching in maths for 12 weeks may be similar in magnitude to the loss of an hour per week for 30 weeks. So, rather bizarrely and surely coincidentally, we end up with an estimated loss of around 6% of a standard deviation again. Leaving the close similarity aside, these studies possibly suggest a likely effect no greater than 10% of a standard deviation but definitely above zero.

3. Education Problems

According to some writers there are three major education problems that students and educators currently face due to the Covid-19 pandemic:

1) Students caught in the cross-wire

These are those students who are caught in the limbo on account of education outcomes being withheld due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Some of them do not have a result because exams either did not happen or were left in the middle.

Many of them face uncertainty as to their future because their next steps further education or careers are dependent upon them clearing their school or college leaving exams.

We believe that these students, while may face a degree of uncertainty with respect to future, are not facing a very difficult problem.

2) Students one year away from school or college-leaving exams

These students are in a bigger quandary because of the Covid-19 pandemic because not only their education process is disrupted, but they also face a big challenge of proving themselves for their next journey.

In the absence of hard academic indicators such as grades and marks, many of these students find themselves in a situation where they are unable to differentiate themselves and lack a cohesive framework to get themselves ready for the jobs and education tasks they face next.

3) Education disruption

All other students who are away from such outcome-dependent situations such as above also face severe education disruption.

In response to the Covid-19 scare, many schools have moved online and parents seem to have assumed the role of teachers and are fast becoming savvy with resources created for home-schoolers to cause minimal disruption to their children's education.

Again, while there are a ton of fantastic resources which are available, there are not too many resources which mimic the school that is, provide for multidisciplinary learning, encourage connections across different domains and inspire ideas which help a child develop 21st century skills and prepare themselves for the jobs of the future.

No doubt, that the Covid-19 pandemic has unleashed the biggest calamity that humanity has faced so far. We all are going through perhaps the most trying circumstances of our lives.

Education disruption impacts our readiness for the future and also has huge economic and lifestyle costs.

Make sure that you take all measures to minimize this disruption so that when life returns to normal, you are even more prepared to take advantage of the opportunities that life and the world-at-large presents to you.

4) Some Statistical Data of Students Appeared for SSC/CBSE in 2019 from Metropolitan Cities

S. No	Name of the State	Total students appeared for SSC/CBSE exam in 2019	Total students appeared for class 12th exam in 2019
1.	Maharashtra	17,00,000	7,91,092
2.	West Bengal	5,00,000	10,50,397 7
3.	Tamil Nadu	8,42,512	8,69,423
4.	Telangana	8,70,974	9,63,546
5.	Gujarat	8,28,944	8,22,823
6.	Karnataka	8,25,486	6,71,653
7.	Rajasthan	10,88,241	9,23,243
8.	Delhi	13,00,000	13,00,000

The school is a place where child will spend the next 14 years of his/her life It's the season of school admissions. But completely stuck under this COVID-19 Nearly 226 million Indian children are enrolled in schools -- 90 million of these children are attending 75,000 private schools across the country. As the months roll towards Christmas and the New Year, these private schools around the country witness large lines of anxious parents outside their admissions office, waiting to get application forms and secure seats for their tiny tots. For many parents, getting admission in the school with the best facilities and a good transport system is paramount -- after all, passing out from a good school is a ticket to future success. Parents may not appreciate the gravity of the decision they're making – after all, the child will spend the fourteen most formative and crucial growth years in a person's life in the institute they select.For most parents, a choice of school for their children is driven by perception, word of mouth (reference from other parents), and infrastructure provided by the school. Most of these are shallow criteria, considering how important this decision is. It's not enough if the school has a great building, play areas, air conditioned classrooms, activity labs and computers or tablets. There is more to learning than just an infrastructure and facilities.

4. Assessments

The closure of schools, colleges and universities not only interrupts the teaching for students around the world; the closure also coincides with a key assessment period and many exams have been postponed or cancelled.Internal assessments are perhaps thought to be less important and many have been simply cancelled. But their point is to give information about the child's progress for families and teachers. The loss of this information delays the recognition of both high potential and learning difficulties and can have harmful long-term consequences for the child. Andersen and Nielsen (2019) look at the consequence of a major IT crash in the testing system in Denmark. As a result of this, some children could not take the test. The authors find that participating in the test increased the score in a reading test two years later by 9% of a standard deviation , with similar effects in mathematics. These effects are largest for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Importantly, the lockdown of institutions not only affects internal assessments. In the UK, for example, all exams for the main public qualifications – GCSEs and A levels – have been cancelled for the entire cohort. Depending on the duration of the lockdown, we will likely observe similar actions around the world. One potential alternative for the cancelled assessments is to use 'predicted grades', but Murphy and Wyness (2020) show that these are often inaccurate, and that among high achieving students, the predicted grades for those from disadvantaged backgrounds are lower than those from more advantaged backgrounds. Another solution is to replace blind exams with teacher assessments. Evidence from various settings show systematic deviations between unblind and blind examinations, where the direction of the bias typically depends on whether the child belongs to a group that usually performs well (Burgess and Greaves 2013, Rangvid 2015). For example, if girls usually perform better in a subject, an unblind evaluation of a boy's performance is likely to be downward biased. Because such assessments are used as a key qualification to enter higher education, the move to unblind subjective assessments can have potential long-term consequences for the equality of opportunity.

It is also possible that some students' careers might benefit from the interruptions. For example, in Norway it has been decided that all 10th grade students will be awarded a high-school degree. And Maurin and McNally (2008) show that the 1968 abandoning of the normal examination procedures in France (following the student riots) led to positive long-term labour market consequences for the affected cohort.

In higher education many universities and colleges are replacing traditional exams with online assessment tools. This is a new area for both teachers and students, and assessments will likely have larger measurement error than usual. Research shows that employers use educational credentials such as degree classifications and grade point averages to sort applicants (Piopiunik et al. 2020). The increase in the noise of the applicants' signals will therefore potentially reduce the matching efficiency for new graduates on the labour market, who might experience slower earnings growth and higher job separation rates. This is costly both to the individual and also to society as a whole (Fredriksson et al. 2018).

5. Benefits of Online Education

1) **Flexibility** Students have the freedom to juggle their careers and school because they aren't tied down to a fixed schedule.
2) **Reduced Costs** Online education can cost less due to a variety of reasons. For example, there is no cost for commuting. Assorted costs that are related to transport, such as fuel, parking, car maintenance, and public transportation costs don't affect the online student.
3) **Networking Opportunities** Online education also provides students with the chance to network with peers across nations or even different continents. This often leads to other opportunities in terms of collaboration with other individuals in the implementation of a project. At the same time, it makes them culturally sensitive and able to fit into other environments easily given their exposure to other cultures.
4) **Documentation** All the information that you will need will be safely stored in an online database. This includes things like live discussion documents, training materials and emails. This means that if there's ever anything that needs to be clarified, the student will be able to access these documents fast, saving valuable time. This is especially useful for individuals that need to carry out research for a project and submit their findings to a panel.
5) **Increased Instructor - Student Time** Students in traditional classrooms may not get the personalized attention they need to have concepts clarified. Although class sizes are small at CCA, most colleges have classes of students that number in the hundreds. This is not a problem

for this type of education because online guided discussions and personal talk time with their professors and lecturers is a hallmark of online classes. This increases the chances of a student performing well due to the time their instructors give them. This also enhances their problem-solving and communication skills, as well as knowing how to defend their arguments to superiors if needed.

6) **Access to Expertise** An online college education might give students access to specialized degree courses that may not be available in an easily accessible or local institution of learning. For example, at CCA you can pursue a degree in Marketing or a certificate in C++ Programming without having to live near the institution. Online classes allow the sharing of expertise that helps more people have access to education that is not readily available in certain geographic locations.

6. Limitations of Online Education

- **Require good time-management skill:** Online courses require the self-discipline to set aside chunks of time to complete your studies. It means you have to make online studying a priority and not let other activities interfere. Sometimes, it means making difficult choices.
- **Require more time than on-campus classes:** Believe it or not, the student will spend more time studying and completing assignments in the online environment than in an on-campus course. The point is that here the student will likely learn more in an online environment, but he/she will have to make a greater effort to accomplish that learning.
- **Allow to be more independent** It's a much better situation for the student. By the time a student enters a community college, they want to be independent. They don't want someone telling them what to do all the time. They want their freedom.
- **Gives more freedom, perhaps, more than a student can handle:** This freedom can be dangerous if the student don't learn how to handle it.
- **It makes the students to be responsible for their own learning:** Only the student is responsible for their own learning. The teacher can share a little knowledge and experience. So, in a philosophical sort of way, the real disadvantage to an Internet-based course is that a student might not own up to it. Students might not take responsibility for their studies and goals, might get way behind and never catch up.
- **Creates a sense of isolation:** Studying alone with only the computer as an companion can be terrifying. There's no whispering in the back of the room, no wise remarks from the peanut gallery, no commanding presence at the front of the classroom pleading for everyone to listen. The online environment is a much different atmosphere that takes some getting used to. Hopefully, online instructor is sensitive to this problem and can help student overcome those feelings.

7. Conclusion

The importance of disseminating knowledge is highlighted through COVID-19 Major world events are often an inflection point for rapid innovation – a clear example is the rise of e-commerce post-SARS. While we have yet to see whether this will apply to e-learning post- COVID-19, it is one of the few sectors where investment has not dried up. What has been made clear through this pandemic is the importance of disseminating knowledge across borders, companies, and all parts of society. If online learning technology can play a role here, it is incumbent upon all of us to explore its full potential.