

**COVID-19 Pandemic and Education Sector in India**

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***Abstract***

The main objective of present study is examining the impact of covid-19 pandemic in education sector in India. We will describe in this paper about vaccination myths and facts. To identify the impact of vaccination on online and offline education in India as well as in Haryana. Now the affected rate of covid-19 is declining after the vaccination. The speed of vaccination is not high as it should be. In India, vaccination of people up to 28 May 2021:- vaccinate are 1<sup>st</sup> dose 161,850,092 2<sup>nd</sup> dose 43,870,568 total dose 205,720,660 In Haryana vaccinations of people up to 28 May 2021:- 1<sup>st</sup> dose 4,710,972 2<sup>nd</sup> dose 972,444 total dose 5,683,416. The education system has also been adversely affected by covid-19 pandemic. Several business and business houses are going to be shut down due to emergence of corona virus. The aim was to contain the spread of COVID-19 pandemic and eliminate it post which hopefully the institutions would re-open but the virus persists educational institutions have remained closed. The education sector of India is badly affected by COVID-

19 pandemic .it has enforced the world wide lockdown creating very bad effect on the student life. 32 crore young citizen of the country and 600 million learners across the world stopped to move schools /colleges and all educational activities halted in India due to covid-19 pandemic. The education sector of India has been fighting to survive the crises with a different approach and digitizing the challenges to wash away the threat to covid-19 pandemic. Impact of covid-19 pandemic is also on the student of different age groups, time spend on online classes and self-study sleeping habits medium used for learning, daily fitness routine and the effect on weight social life and mental health. This paper highlights some initiative taken by government of India and state government of Haryana to provide coherent education in the country. This study also highlights awareness of people about the vaccination myths and facts. Both the positive and negative impacts of covid-19 on education are discussed and some fruitful suggestions are also pointed to carry out educational activities after the vaccination of student.

### ***Key words***

Education, COVID-19, Gov. of India, Mental and Social health Impact, Pandemic.

### ***Introduction***

The **COVID-19 pandemic in India** is a part of the worldwide pandemic of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The first case of COVID-19 in India which originated from China was reported on 30 January 2020. India has the largest number of confirmed cases in Asia. As of 12 June 2021 India has the second-highest number of confirmed cases in the world after the United States with 29.3 million reported cases of COVID-19 infection and the

third-highest number of COVID-19 deaths (after the United States and Brazil) at 367,081 deaths.

The first cases of COVID-19 in India were reported in the towns of Thrissur, Alappuzha and Kasargod, all in the state of Kerala, among three Indian medical students who had returned from Wuhan. Lockdowns were announced in Kerala on 23 March, and in the rest of the country on 25 March. By mid-May 2020, five cities accounted for around half of all reported cases in the country: Mumbai, Delhi, Ahmedabad, Chennai and Thane. On 10 June, India's recoveries exceeded active cases for the first time. Infection rates started to drop in September, along with the number of new and active cases. Daily cases peaked mid-September with over 90,000 cases reported per-day, dropping to below 15,000 in January 2021.

A second wave beginning in March 2021 was much larger than the first with shortages of vaccines hospital beds oxygen cylinders and other medicines in parts of the country. By late April India led the world in new and active cases. On 30 April 2021 it became the first country to report over 400,000 new cases in a 24-hour period. Health experts believe that India's figures have been underreported due to several factors. India began its vaccination programme on 16 January 2021, and by April was administering 3–4 million doses a day. India has authorised the British Oxford–AstraZeneca vaccine (Covishield). The Indian BBV152 (Covaxin) vaccine and the Russian Sputnik V vaccine for emergency use. As of 25 May 2021 the country had administered over 200 million vaccine doses. In this paper we investigated and analysed the potential consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on the life of students. Our research shows that there is a wide gap between the government's policy aspirations and the implementation of these online education policies at the grassroots level. Our study attempts to assess the mental situation of student. We will also discuss about the vaccination myths and facts.

### ***Objectives of the Study***

1. To study about the covid-19 pandemic vaccinations myths and facts.
2. To study about the negative impact of covid-19 pandemic in education sector of India.
3. To study about the positive impact of covid-19 pandemic in education sector of India.
4. To identify the Government initiative for online education during the covid-19 pandemic in India

5. To provide suggestions and recommendation for education sector in India during the covid-19 pandemic.

## ***Methodology***

This study is descriptive in nature and it used the exploratory technique. The data for the study were gathered from the secondary sources such as journals, articles, published online and offline sources various newspapers and Government website.

**Objective1:** To study about the covid-19 pandemic vaccinations myths and facts.

### **COVID-19 Vaccines were rushed they cannot be trusted**

Developing a vaccine generally takes 3-4 years but because COVID-19 is a viral infection that's spreading at a rapid rate and it is an unprecedented phenomenon in the current lifetime many of the procedures that could be bypassed have been bypassed. This was done to quicken the process of vaccination, not rushed. There has been no other time in history when humans have been more equipped to deal with any pandemic. We have the technology and knowledge to develop vaccines in this short time. With all trials and follow-ups in place COVID-19 vaccines are effective. Different vaccinations have different efficacy and you can choose between those options. The fact of COVID-19 vaccines is that they have been developed and launched for the public after proper trials.

### **I Will Contract COVID-19 Even After Being Vaccinated**

Vaccines are not a holy grail that once you are jabbed it will prevent you entirely from the infection. Even after being vaccinated, you will be at risk of contracting COVID-19. The difference between before and after vaccination is that you will not develop severe symptoms of the disease. If you manage to contract the coronavirus, the COVID-19 vaccine will fight off against the virus and prevent it from being severe. It greatly reduces the likelihood of you needing any medical help. After the vaccination, you may contract the virus but it will be fought off by the vaccine and you might not even know it.

### **No One knows what is in the Vaccine**

This is also not true because no person or organisation in India is allowed to manufacture anything without listing all its ingredients on the back label on the packaging. You can pick any strip of medicine or bottle, and you will see the list of all ingredients used to make it. The truth of COVID vaccine is that it says on the packaging of the vials everything that it contains and this is verified by concerned authorities. Since it is not possible for you to hold a vial of a vaccine in your hands and check it out, you can look it up on the internet about what each vaccine contains. You can further read more and precisely know how each vaccine works.

### **I have already recovered from COVID-19 so I don't need the vaccine**

Many people have been infected the second time by COVID-19. Since it is a new infection and we don't know all about it, no one can say for sure what the immunity period after recovering from COVID-19 is. One can still be affected by COVID-19 even after they have recovered. The second time the infection can be much more severe than the previous time. It is a safe option to go for a vaccination dose, regardless of whether or not you have had COVID-19 in the past.

### **Mortality Rate is Low so I don't need the vaccine**

Yes, it is true that the mortality rate in COVID-19 is between 2 and 3%. It is also true that the majority of the people are recovering from the disease. However, the truth is that no one controls who will end up in the 2-3%. It might be you, it might be someone else. While there's a 97-98% chance that you and your loved ones will recover from COVID-19, it is not a prudent option to even being at the risk of 2-3%. The COVID vaccine will further lower that risk and prevent the disease from becoming severe in the first place. In other words, it further strengthens your body against the disease.

### **Vaccine will make Me Infertile**

This is another myth surrounding the vaccine that has no foundation. COVID-19 vaccines do not affect your fertility at all. Similarly, no other vaccine does. It is not even a potential side

effect of the disease. Infertility has nothing to do with the COVID-19 vaccines. You can safely go ahead and get a vaccination shot without worrying about being infertile.

### **The Vaccine Can Have Long-Term Effects**

At this stage, people around the world have been given the COVID-19 vaccine. Many in India have had their second dose. Vaccines are designed in a manner that if they have any side effects it shows within 2-4 weeks after the dose. Since no adverse effect has been noted so far, this also remains only a CoVid-19 vaccine myth. The fact of COVID-19 vaccines in India is that they do not have any side effects. Even the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, has had his second dose. No adverse effects have been reported in any case so far.

### **Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women Should Avoid Getting the Vaccination**

Women who are pregnant or are breastfeeding a child are not prescribed any heavy medication because it can directly affect the child as well. It is the right question to ask whether the COVID vaccination can affect the child as well. But we have had reports of pregnant women who were affected by COVID-19 to pass the infection to their child during childbirth. By not taking the vaccination, you put yourself and your child at risk of infection. If you are a frontline or essential worker you should go ahead with the vaccine. If you are not and are still worried about the COVID-19 infection or vaccine, it is best to consult your doctor.

### **You Should Not Take Vaccine when you are on your Period**

This is one of the most popular myths about COVID-19 vaccines in India that was circulated. It said that the vaccine affects your menstrual cycle. However, there has been no data that backs this claim. Further, the second phase of the vaccination drive started with inoculation of people above 45 years. Women at this age are close to menopause. None of them reported any delay in their menstrual cycle. Now that vaccination in India has entered the third phase everyone above 18 is being vaccinated, no woman has reported a delay in their menstrual cycle due to the vaccine. This, too, remains a myth with no data to back it.

Now that the Government of India has opened the vaccination for everyone above the age of 18, you should book yourself a slot at the earliest. Whether you should go with Covishield or Covaxin is your choice. Both of these COVID-19 vaccines are effective and there's trial and data to back them. Do not believe anything against the vaccine just because a person says it. Always follow the latest updates from verified sources about the vaccines.

**Objective2:** To study about the negative impact of covid-19 pandemic in education sector of India.

There was unimaginable collaboration among all the stake holders in the field of education including administration teacher's students' parents and companies making the software for transfer of knowledge in innovative ways. Many found that global education and worldwide exposure to ideas is available for those who seek after it. The expenditures on travel, tours and the purchase of study materials has gone down, and it could result in savings in these hard times. Though there was much advancement in the technology side of education we could also see negative impacts of COVID-19 on education.

Educational activities are hampered to a great extent and we could sense a great amount of confusion, the postponement or delay in exams, academic sessions or the like. There was not enough space for the so-called co-curriculum. The digital world was a dilemma for the teachers who were experts in book, talk, chalk and classroom methods. They had to be trained to meet the challenges of the present situation and go ahead with online teaching. And many students struggled to obtain the gadgets needed for digital learning.

Many educators looked for alternative jobs to sustain their families as they lost their teaching jobs or their salaries were withheld. Now former teachers are now trying to fit into any job that they can get. Everything went better — though difficultly — for educated parents as they helped their children, but it's also time to understand the helplessness of the parents who could not help their children.

As the midday meal provision is a great blessing to many students in India closure of schools during lockdown meant many children were deprived and malnourished. Pandemic has been a challenge to educational institutions, as the payment of fees was very poor. Many low budget schools got shut down.

Everyone has doubts and questions: When will life be normal? Is the vaccine ready? But life continues to go on and so does education. We sense the great damage done to the field of education in this era of the coronavirus. The situation demands the updating of infrastructure and knowledge of how to face events like these in the future.

**Objective 3:** To study about the positive impact of covid-19 pandemic in education sector of India.

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 smartphones and significant advances in technology. The on-going 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 24×7 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. 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. 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 on-going 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.

**Objective 4:** To identify the Government initiative for online education during the covid-19 pandemic in India

**Percentage of school students owning a smartphone increased from 36.5% in 2018 to 61.8% in 2020 in Rural India.**

The Economic Survey 2020-21 presented by the Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs Smt Nirmala Sitharaman in the Parliament today states that online schooling took off in a big way during the COVID-19 pandemic. Quoting the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2020 Wave-1 (Rural), released in October 2020, the Survey states that the percentage of enrolled children from government and private schools owning a smartphone increased enormously from 36.5 per cent in 2018 to 61.8 per cent in 2020 in rural India. The Survey recommends that if utilized well, the resultant reduction in the digital divide between rural and urban, gender, age and income groups is likely to reduce inequalities in educational outcomes.

To facilitate learning during COVID-19 pandemic, the Government is implementing several initiatives to make education accessible to children. An important initiative in this direction

is **PM eVIDYA** which is a comprehensive initiative to unify all efforts related to digital/online/on-air education to enable multi-mode and equitable access to education for students and teachers. Around 92 courses have started and 1.5 crore students are enrolled under **Swayam MOOCs** which are online courses relating to NIOS. To mitigate the effect of COVID-19, Rs. 818.17 crore is allotted to States/UTs to promote online learning through digital initiatives and Rs.267.86 crore for online teacher training under **SamagraShiksha Scheme**. **PRAGYATA** guidelines on digital education have been developed with a focus on online/blended/digital education for students who are presently at home due to closure of schools. The **MANODARPAN** initiative for psychological support has been included in AtmaNirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.

The Economic Survey 2020-21 observes that India will have the highest population of young people in the world over the next decade. So, our ability to provide high-quality educational opportunities to them will determine the future of our country (National Education Policy, 2020). As per U-DISE 2018-19, the physical infrastructure of more than 9.72 lakh government elementary schools has improved significantly. Out of these, 90.2 per cent have girls' toilet, 93.7 per cent have boys' toilet, 95.9 per cent have provision of drinking water facility, 82.1 per cent have wash (drinking water, toilet and hand wash) facility, 84.2 per cent have medical check-up facility, 20.7 per cent have computer and 67.4 per cent have electricity Connection and 74.2 per cent have ramps among other essential services.

The Survey states that India has attained a literacy level of almost 96 per cent at the elementary school level. As per National Sample Survey (NSS), the literacy rate of persons of age 7 years and above at the All India level stood at 77.7 per cent. Female literacy remained below national average among social groups of SC, ST, OBC, including religious groups of Hinduism and Islam.

To provide quality education in schools and institutions of the government in affordable and competitive manner, the government announced the new National Education Policy, 2020 replacing the 34 year old National Policy on Education, 1986. The new policy aims to pave the way for transformational reforms in school and higher education systems in the country. It aims to provide all students, irrespective of their place of residence, quality education system with special focus on the marginalised, disadvantaged and underrepresented groups. Some of the other programs and schemes for school education during 2020-21 include SamagraShiksha, Enhancing Capacity Building of Teachers, Focus on Digital Education,

strengthening school infrastructure, focus on girl education, focus on Inclusion, focus on sports and physical education and focus on regional balance.

### **Skill Development:**

The Economic Survey 2020-21 states that only 2.4 per cent of the workforce of age 15-59 years has received formal vocational / technical training and another 8.9 per cent of the workforce received training through informal sources. Out of the 8.9 per cent workforce who received non-formal training, the largest chunk is contributed by on-the-job training (3.3 per cent), followed by self-learning (2.5 per cent) and hereditary sources (2.1 per cent) and other sources (1 per cent).

Among those who received formal training, the most opted training course is IT-ITeS among both males and females, followed by electrical-power and electronics, mechanical engineering- strategic manufacturing, automotive, office and business-related work for males while the other preferred courses of females were textiles handloom- apparels, office & business-related work, healthcare & life sciences and work related to childcare-nutrition-pre-school & crèche.

The Government has taken several policy reforms for skill development recently. The Unified Skill Regulator- National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET) was operationalized. For the first time, the Awarding and Assessment Bodies' Guidelines were notified in October, 2020 for more credible certifications and assessments. PradhanMantriKaushalVikasYojana 3.0 was rolled out in 2020-21 with a tentative target to skill 8 lakh candidates including migrants. The grading of ITIs has been undertaken to improve their quality and transparency. Integration of Vocational Education and Training (VET) in general education has received a big fillip with the NEP, 2020 envisioning giving 50 percent of school and higher education candidates exposure to VET over the next 5 years.

**Objective 5:** To provide suggestions and recommendation for education sector in India during the covid-19 pandemic.

- 1) Teachers and educators need to be trained in the current education scenario

2) To create value engagement. Teachers and professors are expected to interact with different kind of students at all given points in time which include international students, non-urban students, working professionals and so on and so forth.

3) Play dynamic multi-functional role

The Covid-19 induced lockdown forced a lot of sectors to go digital, and the education sector was not an exception. Exams, lectures, assignments and grading had to be digitized. In turn, teachers are required to be continually trained in different learning systems and education of all schools and colleges that continued unabated across the world.

4) Teachers also had to don multiple hats of being tutor, coach, mentor, counsellor, instructor, friend and more to play more dynamic role in means of learning's not just academic but also the mind-set of learners.

5) Flexibility in India education system

One important change which is to be a permanent feature of the Indian education system is flexibility. Most of the courses offered by any Indian University have a single entry and single exit opportunity.

6) Global par excellence standards

As a part of its vision, NEP 2020 emphasized the objective of making India a global knowledge superpower. In fact, there are regulatory mechanisms in place that allow dual degrees, joint degrees, twinning arrangements among others that foster academic collaboration with foreign higher educational institutions.

Enhance vocational skills

7) NEP 2020 emphasizes equally on honing better vocational skills as much it does on academics. Educational Institutes and schools are now expected to add experiential learning through creative and logical reasoning skills, vocational skills, mathematical thinking and skills such as data science and coding.

8) Educators, thus, are trained to create more holistic learning experience for students which would include components of digital literacy, scientific temper and computational thinking.

## ***Conclusion***

After discussion about the covid-19 pandemic vaccinations myths and facts we can say that vaccine is not harmful. It is only way of protection ourselves from covid-19. At that time awareness about the vaccination is most important because many people are not feel good about the vaccine. The education sector of India has adversely affected by covid-19 pandemic and major impact on rural education sector of India. Because not sufficient facility are available in rural area regarding online education platform. So that many difficulties face by rural area student. Covid-19 pandemic also affect the mental health of student.

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