IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON STUDENTS LEARNING BEHAVIOR WITH REFERENCE TO KAMRUP METRO DISTRICT OF ASSAM

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ABSTRACT

The nationwide lockdown has created the largest disruption in the education system impacting nearly about 1.6 billion students in more than 200 countries. Many research works has been done in context to COVID-19 impact on various aspects. This paper attempts to study the impact of Novel Coronavirus disease on students of Kamrup metro district of Assam. The study was conducted taking 221 samples from Kamrup metro district. The study is based on primary data collected through questionnaire. The study reveals that major challenges faced by the students in learning during the COVID-19 period were difficulty in focusing and paying attention towards their course though they have been offered with online classes from their institutions but due to network issue, difficulty in understanding lecture delivered in online mode, etc. it was not so fruitful as thought of in meeting the student's needs. Besides, students also have suffered from various socio-psychological issues due to closure of schools, colleges and universities such as worried about their carrier, lack of motivation, anxiety and depression, etc.

***KEYWORDS**: COVID-19, Digital Education, Impact, Nationwide, Lockdown.*

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Introduction

In November 2019, Coronavirus (COVID-19) was first originated and identified in Wuhan, China and spotted in India on 30th January 2020 among three medical students who had returned from Wuhan city. Gradually, the disease got spread at large leading to nationwide lockdown implemented by Honorable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi with effect from 24th March 2020. The nationwide lockdown had had impacted the world from all prospects be it economy, socio-psychological health of people, students, migrant workers, business, tourism industries, environment, etc. (Ghosh, Nundy, & Mallick, 2020). Due to the closure of schools, college and all educational institutions, social distancing as preventive measure physical classes were shifted to a new dimension called online learning (Rashid & Yadav, 2020). About 91% of student's population worldwide got affected due to the nationwide lockdown (Pragholapati, 2020). During the lockdown period except few services and activities, India's $ 2.9 trillion economy remains shut. But literally when the active cases were declining restrictions were ease and slowly the economy started reviving. For the revival of economy, the Government of India had launched a lot of initiatives for its recovery. Above all, education sector had faced a tremendous change in the entire traditional pattern of teaching and learning system due to the pandemic, schools, colleges, and universities were shut down and virtual education started to take the pace (Tarkar, 2020). Students all around the world have experienced negative as well as positive impact of Lockdown such as increased and decreased in study hours, delay in graduations, mental stress, etc. Research has shown that this impact differs among different socio-

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economic groups (Aucejo, French, Araya, & Zafar, 2020). It has been seen that mostly students learning was supported by their parents in school going children thus active role of parents enhance the learning process in the lockdown period but in the process, parents were facing issues like using of new technology or methodology of learning, networks, etc. (Bjorklund & K).

Review of Literature

The review of various journals, articles are given below:

(Jena, 2020) examined the major impacts of covid-19 on Higher educational Institutions in India. During the crisis, measures taken by Higher Educational Institutions and Educational authorities of India have provided seamless educational services are discussed in this paper. The Pandemic have shown many new modes of learning, new perspective, new trends which may take the regular mode of teaching-learning pattern.

(Tarkar, 2020) addresses the various consequences of the covid-19 in education system. The covid-19 pandemic has disrupted the whole education system, the policy makers are facing a lot of trouble in formulating policy related to the education system, teaching had shifted from physical class to virtual mode leading to many difficulties in front of students, teachers and parents.

(Nambiar, 2020) investigate teachers and students' perception and experience related to online classes. The study considered 70 teachers and 407 students from Bangalore city. The study concludes that quality and timely interaction between mentor and mentee, technical support, structured online class modules etc. are some important issues for teachers and students' satisfaction with online classes.

(Kapasia, et al., 2020) studied the impact of lockdown on UG and PG learners of various college and universities of West Bengal taking 232 students as the sample of the study. Primary data are being collected through questionnaire in google form mode. The study highlights major issues such as depression, anxiety, poor network connectivity, unfavorable study environment at home etc. during the pandemic period. Mostly students from remote areas are the victim of it and had to face enormous challenges.

(Gupta & Goplani, 2020) examined the impact of covid-19 on educational institutions in India. MHRD suggests for the use of digital learning platform and informed the stakeholder to work from home as a prevention measure during the pandemic period. Thus, the study highlights that Central government in cooperation with state government and relevant educational related bodies have taken appropriate action for the welfare of the stakeholders.

(Gopal, Singh, & Aggarwal, 2021) identified the factors affecting students' satisfaction and performance in regards to online classes during the pandemic period taking 544 samples for the study. Structured equation modeling was used to analyze the hypothesis set. The study found that quality of instructor course design, prompt feedback and expectation of students positively impact students' satisfaction and these factors will ultimately affect the students' performance.

(Chhetri, Goyal, Mittal, & Battineni, 2021) tries to understand the psychological state of Indian students during the lockdown period. Snowball sampling method was used for selecting sample and an online survey of the perceived stress scale was done on students across India. Variance and regression analysis were performed. As a result, it was reveals that students were very much worried about their studies, career and were stressed owing to fear.

Research Gap

Various studies were found in the area of impact of covid-19 on the education system and on students in different geographical region where psychological stress level of students was examined, education system & policy were analysed, pros & cons of digital learning were studied but no study were found related to North east region including Assam. Therefore, the researcher found a gap in the geographical area and aims to study the impact of covid-19 on students learning behavior and also the psychological health of students with special reference to Kamrup metro district of Assam.

Research Objectives

The following are the objectives of the study:

- To study the present perspective of students regarding the virtual learning system.
- To study the impact of COVID-19 on students learning behavior.
- To examine the socio-psychological impact of COVID-19 on students of Kamrup metro district of Assam.

Significance of the Study

        Outbreak of COVID-19 tremendously affected the world, as the disease was spreading at a very large scale resulting in closure of shops, educational institutions, business units except a few essential service providers. Mostly, the educational institutions have adversely been impacted leading to disruption in the education system. The pandemic has stood as hindrance mainly for students in their learning process. As the government had imposed certain COVID-19 protocols such as social distancing and due to social distancing protocol, physical classes were suspended and online teaching and learning took place. India is a country where different social class exists, thus the people belonging to poor/ middle class families unable to afford mobile phones or other gadget required for digital learning. Besides this network connectivity also stood as one of the major problems. This study will shed light on the student's learning behavior during the lockdown period. In addition, this research will add something in the existing body of knowledge as well as it will enhance the knowledge of the researcher.

Research Methods & Techniques

- **Universe of the Study:** All the students resided in Kamrup metro district of Assam is the universe/ population of the study.

- **Sample of the Study:** The sample of the study is 221.

- **Research Design:** Since the study is quantitative in nature, the study is descriptive and exploratory.

- **Sampling Technique:** Purposive sampling technique is being used for selecting sample from the population.

- **Sources of Data:** The study comprises of both primary and secondary data. Primary data is collected through structured questionnaire whereas; secondary data is collected from journals, websites, etc.

- **Tools used for Presenting the Data:** Bar chart and pie-chart is used for presenting the data.

Data Analysis and Findings

Demographic Findings of the Study

- In the present study, 54.3% were male students and 45.7% were female.

- In case of age group, 47.5% of respondents belongs to 18-20 years, 34.8% belongs to 20-22 years, 13.1% are 22 years and above and only 4.5% of respondents are under 18 years of age.

        With regards to courses enrolled in, majority of 67.4% of the respondents were pursuing under graduate courses, 16.7% of the respondents are enrolled in post graduate courses and the remaining 15.8% were pursuing their higher secondary.

Online Classes/ Digital Learning Facilities

        During the lockdown period, majority of the respondents (90.5%) were offered with online classes from their respective institutions. About 5% of the respondents are of the view that they have not been offered with online classes during the lockdown period and 4.5% of the respondents are not aware about the online classes offered by their institutions. The study has found that level of motivation and excitement to attend online classes was somehow average among the students while some are of the opinion that it's their worse experience in the learning process as the effectiveness and understandability of the topic taught in the online classes was found to be very worst. Above all, study materials of the online classes are made available and accessible to the students.

Challenges and Opportunities to the Students during COVID-19 Period

        COVID-19 acted as a stimulus for digital adoption in the education system. The NEP 2020 and other government initiatives such as National Digital Education Architecture (NDEAR), National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUR Bharat) are expected to provide a layout for this metamorphosis. The various initiatives undertaken to address the challenges like restraining dropouts during and post pandemic, decline in learning outcomes and wellbeing, integration of digital based learning, the role and capacity of teachers and sustainability of private schools. In case of online classes, students faced a lot of difficulties among which network issue were common to majority of respondents followed by difficulty in understanding lecture delivered through online mode, lack of concentration, lack of learning environment at home, etc.

The following are the challenges faced by the students during the lockdown tenure sorted (Majority to minority) on the basis of responses received from survey as below:

- Difficulty focusing and paying attention.
- Difficulty in managing time out of household work.
- Did not have quiet place to learn/ study.
- Lack of knowledge about the use of digital platforms.
- Others.

Impact of COVID-19 on Student Learning Behavior

The COVID-19 had adversely impacted the student learning behavior like majority of the respondents (61.1%) loss interest in study due to uncertain exam schedule followed by changes in their study timing at home, creativity of students was declining due to lack of proper guidance. Although, COVID-19 have mostly the adverse effect on people, economy, etc. but it has given certain positive impacts as well. From the survey, it was found that majority of the students have shifted themselves towards digital learning platforms. Some of the respondents are of the view that digital learning is enhancing their tech-savvy skills while some of them are favoring the digital mode as it's convenient in scheduling classes saving time and cost.

Figure 1: Socio-psychological Health of Students Due to Lockdown
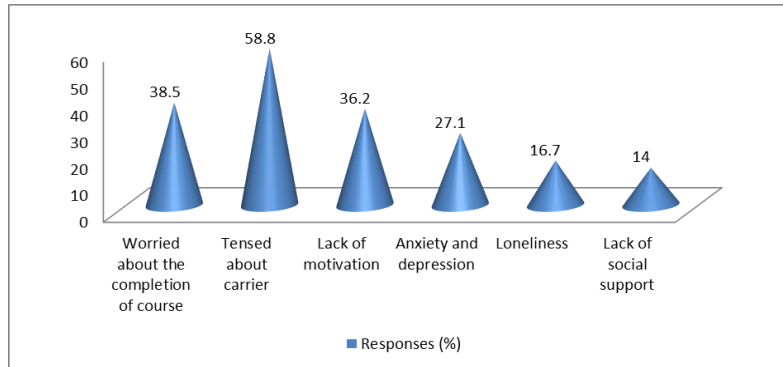
Source: Field survey

The above chart shows the socio-psychological health of students due to lockdown. It can be seen that 58% of are tensed about their carrier, 38.5% are worried about the completion of their course they are engaged in, 36.2% are of the view that they lack motivation towards their study, 27.1% of the respondents faced anxiety and depression due to closure of schools, college and universities. In addition, it can also be seen that 16.7% and 14% of the respondents feel loneliness and were lacking social support during the lockdown period respectively. As a result, mostly students were worried about their carrier and completion of their course during the lockdown period.

Figure 2: Students Present Preference towards Learning System/Pattern
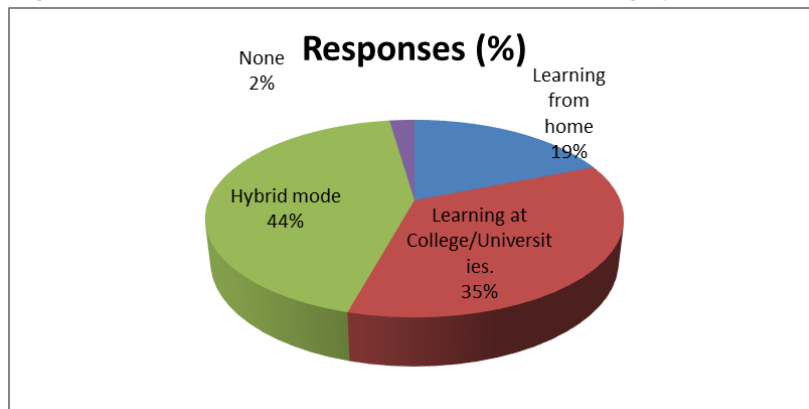
Source: Field survey

The above pie-chart shows the preference of students post lockdown after the opening of educational institutions for physical classes, it is found that 44% of the respondents prefer both learning from home and from their institutions which indicates that students now prefer to go for digital learning also besides the normal physical classes, 35% of the respondents are comfortable in learning from Colleges/Universities while 19% of the respondents wants to learn sitting at home. As a result, it may conclude that now as COVID-19 had taught something which was very new to everyone i.e. online teaching-learning methods to make it a part of the existing learning process and considers it as a part of regular classroom teaching.

Conclusion

COVID-19 and lockdown have impacted the world from various aspects such as economic growth, business and trade, tourism sector, film industry, educational system, stock market etc. The lockdown caused disruption to the education system due to social distancing educational institutions are forced to shut down and the transition of students and teachers to online teaching-learning. In the study, the researcher had focused on impact of COVID-19 on students in their learning behavior as students were among those who were adversely affected due to lockdown. As the lockdown was imposed physical classes were replaced by online classes by most of the educational institutions but were found to be ineffective in meeting the requirements of students. But literally students started attending online classes besides having network issues and many others hindrances. The study have concluded that the major challenges faced by the students in their learning process like unable to concentrate, lack of learning environment at home, lack of motivation etc. In addition, students have also suffered from anxiety, depression, lack of social and moral support, worried about their carrier etc. The post lockdown behavior of students is found as students prefer both physical and online mode of learning from their institutions. As a result, online teaching-learning methods to be a part of the existing learning process and be consider it as a part of regular classroom teaching. The study is only limited to the students of Kamrup (M) and the impact of COVID-19 has been analyzed only on students although COVID-19 has impacted various people, business organization, economy etc. which stood as a limitation of the present study and leaving a scope for further research in the area.

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