

## **Online Education During Covid-19: Issues and Challenges. A Case Study of Jammu Region, India**

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### **ABSTRACT**

During pandemic the education system got tremendously affected which had direct impact on educational institutions as well as the student community. In the pandemic crisis, majority of the educational institutes have changed the education system from offline to online (digitalization of education). The main objective of the study is to understand the impact of digitization of education on student community as well as their family and the teacher community. The study is qualitative in nature. Study has used random sampling and focus group discussion method to highlight the issues and challenges in the process of digitalization of education system. The digitalization of education has further put economic burden on family, such as to provide internet facilities, laptop and smartphone. The study has further observed that students living in far flung areas do not have the internet facilities nor the technology through which they can attend the classes. Most of the parents also stated that their children are suffering from health issues such as mental health, and problems of eye sight, and stress.

**KEYWORDS:** Pandemic, Digitalization, Education, Issues and Problems.

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the process of development, education is very important for human beings. It helps in enhancing skills, knowledge in individuals there by leading to overall development. (Sharma, 2021). Without education there will be no development of the society as well as of human being. From 2020, Indian universities and colleges, which were earlier not permitted to offer more than 20 per cent of degree online, are now lifting the restrictions on online learning to widen access to higher education and raise the profile of Indian institutions globally. Realising that rapid development depends on widespread education, the government rolled out a new National Education Policy (NEP) that put emphasis on digitalisation besides the use of technology in education. It also focuses on education tech for furthering education, particularly in the rural areas (<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/how-digitalisation-and-technology-are-shaping-education-in-india/article34090642.ece> download on 12/8/2021).

The pandemic has greatly affected the human lives and resulted in socio-economic and political changes all over the world. It has also had its impact on India. Various institutions like health, education and business are struggling to adapt to the huge changes that have taken place due to this pandemic (Pargal, 2021). Education sector is badly affected by it. It has hampered the education of millions of students across the globe. More than 35 crore students stopped going to school and all educational activities came on a standstill. The educational institutes were left with no choice then to switch on other platforms with technologies, online apps, and digital sources to provide seamless education washing away the menace of the pandemic (Mukesh, and et al, 2022). As schools have moved online during the COVID-19 pandemic, the tribal children are struggling to get education because of no access to electricity, television and smartphone (Shalini Lobo, 2021). Due to pandemic there is uncertainty and fear among the people who do not know how to handle this situation (Kumar and Mishra, 2020).

In the pandemic crisis, all over the world new way of learning has emerged. Most of the educational institutions have shifted to online mode of teaching. Online learning may be the norm in near future due to its efficiency and affordability. However, many health issues have been reported among children such as headaches, back pain, stress, insomnia, addictive behaviours (Pargal, 2021).

But since last 2020, due to the pandemic crisis, the education system has tremendously changed from offline to online education which is called digitalization of education. Majority of the educational institutes have changed their pattern of education which was the need of the hour. But due to the digitalization of education, many issues and challenges emerged in the society which has direct impact on the student community, teacher community as well as the family members. Here the question arises whether India is fully prepared for the digitalization of education system, the

question remains unanswered.

Census, 2011 reported that in India there are 37,439 inhabited villages do not have 3G / 4G mobile internet coverage. (<https://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/governance/as-told-to-parliament-february-10-2021-some-37-439-villages-in-india-without-3g-4g-coverage-75486>. Download on 6/8/2021).

It was observed that there is a big disparity between urban and rural region when it comes to digital platform for education. Majority of the people are living in rural regions without basic facility such as lack of proper internet connection, smart phone, lack of infrastructure facility in schools, colleges which is the basic need for the online education system.

**METHODOLOGY AND OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The study is empirical nature and based on both primary and secondary sources. For conducting the study, both the rural and urban region was selected. In each region, 110 students were randomly interviewed regarding the issues and challenges they were facing during online education. Focus group discussion method was also used to highlight the issues and challenges in the process of digitalization of education system due to pandemic crisis in Jammu region. As far as secondary sources are concerned, news report, books, journals and online sources were used to collect data for the study. The main objective of the study was to understand the impact of digitization of education on student community as well as their family and the teacher community.

**FINDING AND DISCUSSIONS OF THE STUDY**

**Social- Economic Background**

The socio-economic background of the people plays a crucial role in the study which helps in the better understanding and come up with right conclusions. In the study it was observed that people have different social background due to which they face different kind of problems.

**Table.1 Occupation of the Family**

<b>Rural Region</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Urban Region</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Agriculture</b>	35 ( 32%)	Business men	52 (47 %)
<b>Agriculture &amp; Business</b>	55 (50 %)	Government Employee	28 (25 %)
<b>Daily wagers</b>	20 (18 %)	Private jobs	30 (28 %)
<b>Total</b>	110 (100%	Total	110 (100 %)

Table.1 shows the occupation of the family. It was observed that in rural region, 35 (32%) of the families are working in agricultural field. There were 55 (50%) of the families who were working both as an agricultural farmer as well as business men. The study has further seen that 20 (18%) of the families were working as daily wagers. While, in urban region, 52 (47%) families belonged to business community (such as karayana store, hardware, garments, beauty salon, medicine shops). There were 28 (25%) families who were working in government sectors (such as police, legal, medical, defence, and forest departments). The study further observed that there were 30 (28%) families working in private sectors (such as telecom department, pharma company, transport company, and Honda vehicle company).

**Table.2 Income of the Family**

<b>Rural Region</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Urban Region</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Income of the Family</b>		<b>Income of the family</b>	
10,000-15,000	34 (31%)	40,000-60,000	27 (25%)
16,000-20,000	49 (44%)	61-000-80,000	44 (40%)

21000-30,000	27 (25%)	Above 80,000	39 (35%)
Total	110 (100%)	Total	110 (100%)

Table.2 shows the income of the families in both the rural and urban region. It can be clearly seen that there is wage difference between the two regions which directly affects the family economically. In the rural region, majority of the families belonged to agricultural community. The study found that 34 (31%) of the families were earning between 10,000-15,000 rupees per month. There were 49 (44%) families who earned 16,000-20,000 rupees. The data further indicated that there were only 27 (25%) families who were earning

between 21,000-30,000 rupees per month. While in the urban region, the study found that 27 (25%) of the families were earning between 40,000-60,000 rupees per month. There were 44 (40%) families who were earning 61,000-80,000 per month. The study also observed that there were 39 (35%) of the families who earned above 80,000 rupees per month.

It is clearly seen that there is a huge wage gap between the rural and urban region which directly affects the family income. It was observed that those families who were economically sound did not face much problems during the pandemic crisis regarding their children's education. But in the rural region, most of the families faced a lot of economic issues regarding their children's education.

**Table.3 Education of the Students**

Rural Region (110 Students)	Percentage	Urban Region (110 students)	Percentage
5 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> class	35 (31%)	5 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> class	35 (31%)
9 <sup>th</sup> -12 class	45 (41%)	9 <sup>th</sup> -12 class	30 (28%)
BA/MA class	30 (28%)	BA/MA class	45 (41%)
Total	110 (100%)		110 (100%)

Table.3 shows the education of the students in both the regions (Rural and Urban). In the rural region, majority of the students were studying in primary, secondary and higher secondary classes which was 72 per cent (31 +41). There were 30 (28%) students studying in higher education department (colleges/ university). While in the urban region, 59% students were studying in primary, secondary and higher secondary classes. The study further seen that 41 % of the students were studying in higher education department (colleges/ University level).

**Table.4**

**Receiving Education from Government and Private Institutions**

Studying in Government Institutions	Studying in Private Institutions
155 (70 %)	55 (30%)

Table.4 shows the students who were studying in government and private institutions. The study found that 155 (70%) of the students were receiving their education from government institutions (schools/ colleges/ university). While, only 55 (30%) students were studying in private institutions (schools/ colleges/ university). From the above discussions, it was found that majority of the students were studying in government institutions which was badly affected due to CORONA virus. The study further saw that most of the government run institutes were closed during the pandemic which had direct impact on the student's

life. Majority of the students were unable to get proper education due to the lack of proper digital facilities for online classes.

### **ISSUES AND CHALLENGES OF DIGITAL EDUCATION**

In the findings the study has highlighted various issues and challenges which the student community, teacher community as well as family members were facing due to online education for their children in the pandemic crisis in Jammu region of Jammu and Kashmir. The study covers both urban and rural region and tries to understand the various problems in both the regions.

#### **Communication Gap**

Communication gap is one of the most important issue which the student community was facing. It was observed that in the digital platform of education, there was communication gap between the student community and the educational institutes. The students were asked questions regarding the communication gap. The study found that 135 respondents (64%) stated that they were facing communication gap constantly regarding attending class, conducting exams, declaring result, and other information related to education.

Here the question arises whether online classes really work for the student community who are living in rural region. Such questions remained unanswered. Majority of the rural students stated that due to the lack of proper internet facility, they are unable to get any information from the institutes regarding classes, exams and assignments etc. They are unable to attend the classes. Some of the students also reported that for attending the classes, they have to travel about 8-10 km to get proper internet connection.

The study further found that in the digital platform of education, the students were facing audio and video problems for attending the classes. The question was asked to the students regarding these issues. It was found that 125 respondents (60%) stated that they were unable to understand the lecture due to poor audio and video.

In online education it was observed that students living in urban area were only the ones who benefited from it. Universities and colleges in urban area had the internet facility and as such were able to provide online education. But the students living in rural areas could not benefit from this platform of education. Most of the universities and colleges in rural areas did not have access to internet so could not provide online education.

The study further found that submission of online assignment as directed by the university was creating a lot of confusions among student's community. Those students who could access internet were able to submit assignment easily. whereas most of the rural students faced lot of problems to upload the assignments due to the lack of internet facility. There was also a communication gap between students and university authorities which further resulted in lot of confusion among the student's community.

The university authorities put all the information on university website. But people who are living in rural regions are unable to access the information due to the lack of proper internet connections. The student community further stated that there is lack of communication on digital platform, because there is no proper communication platform on which the students can share their problems which they are facing. Some of the PG students also highlighted the issue related to conducting exam online. They said that during online exams, they submit the answer sheet to the respective mail/ website. But they do not receive any confirmation from the university whether their answer sheets have been successfully submitted or not. When the result comes out then students come to know that they have to reappear in one or two subjects, because their answer sheet was not properly uploaded due to lack of proper internet connectivity. So it is clearly seen that there is lack of communication between the educational authorities and the student community.

In the pandemic crisis, most of the universities would come up with a new plan every day regarding various issues such as conduct of examination. There was no clarity as how to conduct exam which further created lot of mental stress and anxiety among students. Moreover, the higher education authorities still are not clear about conducting competitive examinations. Every other day they are giving new dates for conduct of exam and later on postponing the exam. All this has resulted in mental stress among students.

### **Lack of Knowledge**

In the globalization era, digitalization of education system is one of the best platform to receive education. It also helps to save time and place. But the platform is only for the educated family who know how to operate the digital platform. In the online education system another issue which emerged in the society is *lack of knowledge*. It was observed that in the rural region most of the families were semi-literate and did not know how to use digital education platform.

The study further observed that families who are less educated faced lot of problems to access online education for their children. In rural region, majority of the families stated that they are taking support from educated youth for attending online classes. Most of the families further stated that their children are not able to attend the classes regularly due to lack of knowledge such as how to connect online link for classes. It has been found that most of rural people are facing lot of problems due to the new education systems which is further leading to chaos and confusion.

The study was further observed that the older teachers whose age is above 50 years are also facing problems due to the lack of proper knowledge about how to operate digital platform for education. They don't know how to use google chrome, google meet to conduct the classes.

To understand their problems, the study conducted a focus group discussion with older teachers (above 50 years) in which 20 teachers participated. From the FGD, majority of the teachers stated that they don't have any knowledge about the digital platform such as how to use google meet, google class room, how to upload lectures and study materials and how to connect google link for classes. They further added that the digital education system is good for the young generation because they know how to operate all the things. But we people (older) are unable to understand the digital platform.

From the above discussion, it can be seen that the digitalization of education system would not be possible in all parts of the country particularly in rural region due to the lack of knowledge. More than sixty per cent of the Indian population are living in rural region. They do not know much about the digitalization of education system due to being semi-literate and lack of proper knowledge. In the digital world, lack of proper knowledge has become a new challenge for the rural society. There is a big disparity of digital literacy in both urban and rural regions as well as young generation and older generation. How to fill the digital literacy gap? The question remains unanswered particularly in India where majority of population are living in rural region.

### **Economic Burden on Family**

The covid-19 pandemic and lockdown has highlighted the sharp differences between the economic classes. It is observed that in developing country like India, internet is not an essential commodity for million because of low economic status of the family. The study also observed that student from underprivileged community do not have smartphone as well as internet facility. It was observed that since the COVID-19 outbreak, most of the people lost their jobs and regular sources of income. The social economic life of people got tremendously affected. People are living constantly under stress, fear and depression. In between the COVID-19 virus, on one hand, people are facing economic insecurity and on the other hand problem about children's education. The online education put additional economic burden on people to buy laptop, smart mobile phone and provide internet connection and also school fee for their children's education.

In the study it was found that 110 families (50 per cent) stated that they faced lot of economic burden to provide smartphone to their children for their online education.

Study further found that some of the families reported that they sold their gold and livestock (buffalo and cow) to fulfill their children's demand for education. They further added that the online education has put more economic burden on them because they are paying school fee and also one thousand more for the internet facility. They also reported that since, last two years there is no regular source of income due to COVID-19 virus and they are living under stress and depression. There is uncertainty in the society and nobody knows when this pandemic will get over.

### **HEALTH ISSUES AMONG CHILDREN**

A FGD was conducted with families regarding the issues of health among children during online education. There were 35 families who participated in the group discussion.

They further highlighted that most of the children are also facing neck, shoulder and back pain for spending long hours at one place which can cause severe musculoskeletal issues. They also reported that due to the online classes, there is reduced physical activity among students which may increase the physical health problems such as risk of obesity.

In the FGD, majority of the families reported that due to online education, children are facing health problems such as regular headache, eyesight problems, anxiety, stress and depression. Families also stated that children spend 4-6 hours for online classes which has directly affected their health. As far as offline classes there was lot of physical activities in the school. They would do lot of exercise and were thus active physically throughout the day, but now due to this pandemic the students sit before the laptop and mobile together for hours without doing any physically activity which has led to many health problems among children.

In the FGD, some of the families reported that every month children go to eye specialist for checkup. The family also reported that their children feel constant pain in their eyes when they attend the online classes.

Some other families further reported that they consulted psychiatrists as their children were living under stress and depression due to online classes. They also reported that due to the lack of quality education, poor lecture quality, lack of proper facilities, and proper planning they were facing lot of stress and depression.

The parents of the students reported that since last two years, the online classes are going on due to pandemic and the students have no other option but to attend online classes. Most of the families also highlighted the health issues in the digital platform. Children are constantly using laptop and mobile for several hours everyday which directly affects their health.

#### **ISSUES AND CHALLENGES AMONG GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE INSTITUTES:**

In the digitalization of education system, it is observed that there is a big disparity of digital literacy between the government and private educational institutes. In the pandemic crisis, it was observed that most of the private institutes (schools, colleges, university) have provided online platform for their students so that they do not suffer. They have used high tech technology to provide online education which is one of the best method in the pandemic situation. Whereas on the other hand if we talk about the government educational institutes, they are very few who can provide online platform for the students like universities, IIT, IIM, NIT. But if we see the schools, and colleges it shows a different picture. Most of the government run institutes do not have digital platform. So, it was difficult for the study to analyze the facility of digital platform for education in government run institutes due to the lack of official data. In India 2020, as per the latest Central Government record, there are 10,83,678 government school in India. (<https://allschoolsinindia.in> download on 6/8/2021). How many of them have online facilities for education there is no official data?

Unified district information system for education, (U-DISE) 1996 reported that there were only 10% students who were able to receive private education. But in 2016-17 the report suggested that 43.18% of students from classes 1-12 received private education. (<https://www.centralsquarefoundation.org/private-schools/> download on 6/8/2021). It indicates that 57 per cent of the students are still studying in government run institutes.

To understand the problems and issues regarding online education, the focus group discussion was conducted among students and their parents who are studying in government and private institutes.

The study conducted four FGDS with the students who are studying in private schools, colleges and universities in Jammu region. In the FGD, there were 100 students who were divided into four groups, one group was of 10<sup>th</sup> class students, followed by 12<sup>th</sup> class, Graduation and PG students. In each group there were 25 students who were willing to participate in the discussion.

From the focus group discussion (FGD), most of the students and their parents were quite happy with the private institute's management, because since last two years the management is providing all the facilities to students regarding digital platform for education. The students who are studying in private institutes did not face much problems. It was also observed that the socio-economic background of the students was good and all of them belonged to business community, doctor's community, and some of their parents were in government sector.

But on the other hand if we talk about the government run institutes there is different picture regarding the digital platform of education. The study was conducted in five government run institutes like schools and colleges in Jammu region and also informal discussion was held with teachers. Study came to know that none of the institutes have digital platform for education. Most of the teachers stated that they are using their own personal gadgets such as mobile and laptop and also internet connection to conduct the classes, but it is not possible to conduct all the classes as the internet data is limited. Focus group discussion was conducted among students who are studying in government institutes to try understand their issues and problems which they are facing in the digital education system.

In the FGDs, there were 90 students who willingly participated in the discussion. The students were divided in three groups and in each group there were 30 students. Most of the students were from secondary, senior secondary schools and from College/ university.

From the FGDs, majority of the students stated that they did not attend the online classes because their schools and college management did not provide online facility for classes. They also highlighted the problems which the government run institutes are facing such as lack of infrastructure facility for online education, lack of trained teacher for digital platform. Since last two years the government run institutes are unable to provide online education which is a big setback for the student community.

Most of the government institutes have come up with plan of mass promotion for the students. Here the question arises whether this mass promotion is good for the healthy education. The answer still remains unanswered. There is a need of the hour for the all government run institutes to come up with the constructive plan for the student community, so that their future life would be secured. The study also observed that if this pandemic situation remains same for the next couple of years then the education system would collapse. Because government institutes don't have any plan except mass promotion.

#### **ONLINE EDUCATION AND DISABLED CHILDREN**

Pandemic and continuous lockdown has tremendously affected that education of children throughout the world. Due to restrictions, digital education was the platform for education. The disabled children intelligent quotient of learning, capacity and also need different social environment. The disabled children were more affected due to continuous lockdown (Kalgotha, 2021).

The present study has also found 10 disabled students in Jammu region. Four among them were visual impaired, and six were affected with polio. For understanding their problems regarding online education during pandemic crisis an FGD was conducted with them and their family members. In the FGD, family members highlighted their issues and problems which they faced. The students reported that during the online classes, they were not properly understanding the lectures due to audio- visual problems and poor internet connectivity. Most of the time they were unable to understand lectures. They further reported that being a visually impaired student, they need special classes for better understanding. But unfortunately it did not happen.

Some of the family members of the disabled students stated that their children faced lot of problems during online education such as poor quality of education, lack of internet facilities lack of regular classes, lack of trained online teacher and lack of infrastructure facility in government schools. They further reported that since the pandemic break, their children were not get proper education which is directly affects their carrier.

From the FGD, it was observed that disabled children needed special attention regarding online education, but unfortunately, they are the ones who suffer most.

Similar kind of issues and problems were seen in other parts of the country. According to Business standard on 18 July, 2021 a survey was conducted by Swabhiman, a community- based organization in different parts of the country on children with disabilities and online education. The survey reported that 56.48 per cent of students with disabilities are continuing their study and the 43.52 per cent will drop out or not continue their study because only 56.48 per cent had smartphones either personally or collectively in the family. The study was conducted oh Odisha, Jharkhand, Haryana, Chennai, Sikkim, Jammu and Kashmir, and Nagaland in the month of May, 2021.

The report further added that 39 per cent visually impaired students were unable to understand lessons with many students talking simultaneously. In the survey report, it is also mentioned that the parents of 86 per cent children with disabilities said that they did not know how to use technology and around 81 per cent teacher said they did not have

accessible education material with them. 74 per cent disabilities children also reported that they needed data/Wi-Fi support for educational purposes. While 61 per cent expressed a need for scribes, escorts readers and attendants.

From the above finding it can be clearly seen that India is not fully prepared for online education. Education should not be totally depending on technology, because there are so many issues and challenges which the Indian society is facing such as lack of infrastructure, lack of proper knowledge, lack of ICT knowledge, poor internet connection in rural region. The digitalization of education system is playing little role in the teaching learning process. Since last two years the pandemic is going on and online education is also playing an important role for the student community. But if we go by the above data it is observed that only 55 percent of the students are getting online education and 45 per cent of students do not have access to online classes due to lack of resources. There is uncertainty existing within the society and nobody knows when this pandemic will get over. So there is need of the hour to change the education system so that student community would not face any kind of difficulty.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION ON DIGITAL PLATFORM AND LACK OF FACILITY**

The first question which comes to (my) mind is that whether India is fully prepared for digital platform of education. Does online platform provide quality and better education or not? If we see the geographical region and population of the country, there are so many questions arising particularly if we talk about the education system. Nearly, about 65 per cent of the Indian population is living in rural areas and how many have online facility for education, and how many have smart mobile phone, the question remains unanswered.

The quality of education is one of the most important part in the education system. It is the quality in education system by which the student community can have their all-around development of the personality. The study tries to highlight whether the digital platform was providing good quality of education or not. The study conducted a focus group discussion of both the students and teachers and tried to understand whether the digital platform provided quality education or not. The first FGD was conducted with teachers and there were 30 teachers who willingly shared their experiences about the quality education on digital platform.

From the FGD, it was observed that most of the teachers stated that students are not actively participating in online teaching and there are very less number of students who attend the classes. The study further found that students do not take seriously online classes and there is only one-way communication. Majority of the students do not give any kind of response during online classes. Teachers also reported that during online classes they lose their teaching interest because most of the time they do not receive positive response from the students. The quality of education is not showing through digital platform due to the lack of positive response from the students.

Another issue which the teachers have highlighted in the FGD is lack of proper facility such as proper internet connection, computer devices, projectors which is the basic need for online classes. Most of the teachers reported that they are using their own smart phones and internet facility for online classes. There were only few teachers who were using own computer/ laptop for online classes. The teachers face another problem i.e. *limited internet data*. They said that every day they get only 1.5 GB data. It is not possible to use limited data throughout the day. They were using own mobile data for online classes. They also said that they cannot provide quality education with limited data. For the good quality of education, there is need for better facilities such as wi-fi connection, projectors, computer/laptop and positive response from the students. Otherwise digital platform is just fulfilling the formalities and not providing quality education.

The second FGD was conducted among students to understand their problems. There were 40 students who participated in the discussion.

From the FGD, majority of the students stated that they are not fully satisfied with the online education, because the teachers are using smart phone without power point presentation (PPT). They are unable to understand the lectures. They further added that the quality of education is totally missing. There is no proper graph, figure shown in online classes. So the students are unable to understand what the lecture is all about.

Most of the medical students highlighted the issue such as lack of proper graph, images, chat and practical are missing in online education. Because most of the teachers are using mobile devices and it is not possible to prepare PPT on mobile and show during online classes. Some of the students also highlighted that without practical they are unable to understand the lectures. These are some of the important concerns which the students highlighted during focus group

discussion. So it is clear seen that the quality of education is not visible in digital platform due to lack of proper facilities.

It is being observed that day by day the quality of education is getting tremendously affected due to the lack of proper facilities on digital platform. Students who are living in far flung regions are most vulnerable group in the online education system. In the group discussions, it is clearly visible that there is inequality in digital literacy because of big disparity between urban and rural regions particularly when it comes to online education system, internet facility, wi-fi connection, smart phone etc.

The study also observed that there are similar kind of issues and challenges which the people are facing in other parts of the country when it comes to digitalization of education system.

India today, on 18 feb, 2021- published a report which was conducted by a learning Spiral, one of India's leading online examination solution providers. The survey found that above 50% of Indian students including both urban and rural areas don't have access to the internet for online studies. The report further added that only 27% of Indian households have access to the internet while only 47% of the households have any access to the internet own a computing device (including a smartphone).

Kerala 51 per cent of rural household have access to the internet but only 23 per cent of rural household have access internet at home. In Andhra Pradesh where 30% of rural households have access to the internet but only 2% have access at home.

(<https://www.indiatoday.in/education-today/latest-studies/story/more-than-50-of-indian-students-in-rural-and-urban-areas-don-t-have-access-to-internet-survey-1770308-2021-02-17>).

#### **CONCLUSION:**

COVID-19 is one of the deadly virus which kills millions of people across the globe. There are so many sectors which are badly affected in the society and education is one of them. Continuous lockdown and social distancing further creates lot of chaos, confusion, stress, fear depression among people. The education sector of India has been obstructed hugely by COVID-19.

The study observed that in the online education system, there are many issues and challenges in front of the society such as lack of infrastructure facilities regarding digital education, lack of trained teacher, communication gap between institutes and student community.

There are some other issues which the people were facing in the digital platform of education such as economic burden on family, health issues among children, infrastructure facility among private and government run institutes, problems of quality education on digital platform.

From the above findings we can clearly observe that the digitalization of education system during pandemic is *classist and impractical*. As far as classist is concerned, only limited number of people have access to online education who are sound socially and economically. People who are living under low economic status are unable to access online education. They faced lot of economic burden on digital platform such as to provide smart phone and internet facility for children's education. It was observed that majority of the people who are living in rural region are totally dependent upon agriculture and there is no other regular source of income. The student community who are residing in far flung region stated that their families are unable to provide online education facility such as smart phone, laptop, and internet facility. There is a big gap between high class and lower class people when it comes to the facility available regarding online education.

#### **SUGGESTIONS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATION**

1. Internet facilities are necessary for digital education. More attention should be paid to rural region as majority of the student community are living in rural region.

2. Proper training should be given to teacher community so that they will not face any kind of difficulties in the digital platform.
3. Affordable internet data packages should be given to all the learners/ schools/ colleges/ university.
4. There should be special focus on information and communication technology and effective pedagogy.
5. Policy level intervention is mandatory for the digital education to progress. Making online teaching resourceful, inventive and cooperative through accessible tools is the other area of research and development.

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