



E-Learning During Covid-19 Pandemic In West Bengal: Its Effectiveness, Problems and Solution

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ABSTRACT

In short, e-learning is a medium where we use electronic devices for learning. E-learning helps us to acquire knowledge at anytime from anywhere in the classroom and outside the classroom. In this situation of Covid19, e-learning is the main and only medium of our education. So, there is no doubt that e-learning is helping us in our education. However, not everyone is benefiting equally from this e-learning. Teachers and students are facing various problems especially when online classes are being conducted through e-learning. So, I selected twenty participants for this study who are actively involved in this e-learning. By collecting data from them, I have tried to show here what problems teachers-students are facing during e-learning and how it can be further improved. Moreover, we have tried to give a complete idea of how much it is affecting our current education system.

Keywords: *E-learning, Covid-19, Impacts of E-learning, Problems of E-learning, Improvement of E-learning.*

1. Introduction

We have always turned our plans into reality since ancient times. This means that the things we think about and imagine later we turn them into reality. It could be an airplane, wireless internet, or a computer. There was a time when these technologies were limited to fantasy. At that time no one could have imagined that we would be so advanced in a few decades. And yet this development continues to happen. We see such development in the field of education. One of the most popular in the current context is e-learning i.e., electronic learning. In this situation of Covid-19, it would not have been possible at all to continue the education system without e-learning. And without e-learning, we would not know what is happening in the world. So, in this article, we will learn about e-learning such as what e-learning is, how it helps students, what problems students are facing, and how we can improve it.

2. Objectives

- To clarify the concept of e-learning.
- To know how much e-learning is affecting the education system.
- To find out what problems teachers and students are facing during e-learning.
- To find out how e-learning can be improved.

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3. Methodology

This is qualitative research. For this research, I have used both primary source of data and secondary source of data. In the case of primary data, I have taken twenty people as purposive samples. And I have used observation and interview techniques while collecting data. On the other hand, as a source of secondary data, I have taken help from various research papers, articles, journals, abstracts, books, websites, etc. I have also participated in more than five online seminars related to this topic.

4. Concept of E-learning

When students acquire knowledge with the help of an electronic gadget, it is called e-learning. In this case, the teaching-learning process is not limited to the classroom, but teaching-learning is possible even outside the classroom. The main components of e-learning are computer and internet connection. There are many terms used to describe learning that is delivered online, via the internet, ranging from Distance Education to computerized electronic learning, online learning, internet learning and many others. E-learning is done both online and offline. When we have an internet connection with an electronic device, we call it online learning. In this case there is direct teacher-student interaction and the teacher can provide feedback to the students. On the other hand, when there is no internet connection with the electronic device, the student can only read the materials stored in the device. Students can acquire knowledge at their own pace and also acquire knowledge on their own. However, it must be with the help of an electronic gadget. It is possible to provide teaching to many students in a short time only through e-learning. We use eLearning daily to develop ourselves as individuals. We watch YouTube videos, play games, read various articles by our smart phones which exercise our brain. Organizations, from small level to a higher level, also utilize eLearning to train students.

5. Definitions of E-learning

Different experts have different opinions about e-learning. Here are some definitions of e-learning given by several experts.

- “E-learning is the use of electronic media for a variety of learning purposes that range from add-on functions in conventional classrooms to full substitution for the face-to-face meetings by online encounters” (Guri-Rosenblit, 2005).
- “E-learning is to take a course online using a modem, wireless, or cable connection to access academic course material from a computer, phone, or handheld device” (Governors State University, 2008).
- “E-learning is distance education through remote resources” (Marques, 2006).
- “E-learning is the use of technology to deliver learning and training programs” (E-learning portal, 2009).
- “E-learning is the delivery of education (all activities relevant to instructing, teaching, and learning) through various electronic media” (Koohang & Harman, 2005).
- “E-learning is education that uses computerised communication systems as an environment for communication, the exchange of information and interaction between students and instructors” (Bermejo, 2005).
- “E-learning is learning based on information and communication technologies with pedagogical interaction between students and the content, students and the instructor or among students through the web” (González-Videgaray, 2007).
- E-learning is defined as learning facilitated by the use of digital tools and content that involves some form of interactivity, which may include online interaction between the learner and their teacher or peers. (Ministry of Communication and Technology of New Zealand, 2008).

6. Effects of e-learning on education during covid-19 pandemic

1. E-learning has made it possible for us to wake up the education system that has suddenly stopped.
2. In the current Covid-19 situation, however, e-learning has kept students connected to learning.
3. E-learning has taken students one step further towards digitization.
4. As a result of e-learning, students do not have to go out of the house with difficulty. They can gain knowledge from being present at home. So, it is helping a lot of physically handicapped children.
5. E-learning protects students from wasting time so students can study at any time at their convenience.
6. In this situation of covid-19, it is not possible to study in the institution, so the only solution is to study through e-learning. As a result, the number of students participating in e-learning is increasing day by day.
7. As a result of e-learning, on the one hand, the students are able to study by keeping in touch with the teachers and on the other hand, they are able to study at their own pace and at their convenience.
8. Physically all the seminars we attend are a waste of time and money in various ways. However, as a result of e-learning, we can easily attend seminars at home. We address these with the term webinar.
9. E-learning is helping to reduce the digital divide among students. Because in the present situation all kinds of people are coming forward towards e-learning.

10. E-learning is the only way for financially backward people to continue their studies in this situation. Because if there is no e-learning, those whose financial condition is good would have taken some measures.
11. E-learning is especially helpful for physically challenged children to learn at home. Because they had to risk a lot of time to go to school to take regular classes.
12. Through e-learning, teachers are able to provide materials at their convenience. On the other hand, students are also able to collect materials at their convenience.
13. As a result of e-learning, on the one hand, teachers are interacting with students during online classes. On the other hand, those who could not do the class at that time are getting the opportunity to watch the video of that class at another time or at their convenience.
14. Although it fails to meet the full needs of the student, e-learning is the only way to learn in this covid-19 situation.
15. Many learning materials on the same topic are available through e-learning. So, all the students are able to acquire knowledge independently according to their ability.
16. During online learning, teachers can easily present various pictures, charts, etc. related to the topic in a short time. As a result, students can easily understand the content.

Here we realize that e-learning has influenced our current education system a lot. So, it can be said that e-learning in this situation of covid-19 has given life to our ongoing education system. And the development of science and technology has made so much possible. So, the government has to come forward more actively to impart the knowledge and facilities of this science and technology to every citizen of our country.

7. Problems faced by teachers and students during e-learning

1. Internet service in our country is not very satisfactory so in many cases, students are distracted.
2. Many people in our country still live below the poverty line. Most of the families do not have enough mobile. So, they are not able to participate in e-learning.
3. Usually, mobile has both necessary and unnecessary things. But most of the time students are more attracted to unnecessary things. So, indifference can be noticed among the students towards e-learning education.
4. Students who are not good at studying do not show any interest in online classes.
5. Online classes for a long-time cause eye problems and lack of attention. So later students do not show interest in participating in online classes.
6. Students can easily make excuses during e-learning. And in that case the teacher has nothing to do. Such as 'network problem', 'mobile was not charged' etc.
7. During e-learning, management errors can be seen from both the teacher and the student. Because there is very little technology related knowledge among the students in our country. So, both teachers and students have to face various problems during online classes.
8. The interaction between teacher and student during online class does not become adequate. So, it becomes difficult for the teacher to know how much knowledge the students have acquired.
9. It is not possible to evaluate students properly through e-learning. Because it is very easy to get dishonest help while sitting for exams online.
10. Fatigue, monotony is very easily going on among the students during e-learning. So later on, many are hesitant to participate in online classes.
11. There is still no internet connection in many places in India. Somewhere there is an internet connection but there is no strong internet connection. So, e-learning is not possible for them.
12. There are many families who know nothing about e-learning. So, they are not able to participate in e-learning.
13. In this situation of Covid-19, almost every family is short of money. So, they are not able to take the internet package. As a result, they are unable to participate in e-learning.
14. In many families, boys have mobile phones and girls do not. So, girls are becoming dependent on e-learning and are being deprived of online classes. So, the digital divide is going to be more noticeable among girls than boys.

Here more than 15 participants all repeated the problems mentioned in points 1, 2, 6, 13 and 14. They also talked about how to solve the problems. I have mentioned these solutions in 'What can be done to improve e-learning'.

8. What can be done to improve e-learning?

1. If the education system is largely dependent on e-learning, the government will have to provide free Wi-Fi for students.
2. Students need to take short courses to know the basics of e-learning. And these courses have to be given during their academic education.
3. The content of e-learning should be presented in an effective way and not haphazardly. If necessary, charts, diagrams, pictures, etc. should be used.
4. Since online classes have suddenly created new situations for us, teachers should make sure that the classes are not too long. Because if students sit in front of the screen for a long time, the students will get bored. Moreover, there may be eye problems and headaches.

5. The teacher will take the help of 3D animation to explain the practical subject or the complex subject of science. As a result, it will be possible to do some practical work in the case of online classes.
6. As much as possible, teachers will provide the necessary information in their e-learning content. Because if you give too much information unnecessarily, students will lose interest in online classes.
7. The teacher will advise the students to sit down with notebooks and pens so that they can actively participate during the online class.
8. The teacher will motivate all the students towards e-learning and give equal opportunity to all without giving importance to certain students during the online class.
9. The teacher will want to ask the students about the problems they are facing during e-learning. And if necessary, he will have online meetings with parents and he will provide advice accordingly.
10. The teacher will encourage the students who are more experts in learning to help their classmates.
11. The content that teachers will organize for taking online classes should be simple and effective. So that students do not feel bored. In addition, the teacher will provide appropriate opportunities for all students to interact appropriately.
12. The teacher will not only rely on the lecture method during the online class but will also present the content using different methods. So that students can better participate and enjoy the class.
13. Teachers will always use conventional and useful software instead of new unfamiliar software to take online classes.
14. Some devices can be used for student e-learning that will not divert the student's attention. One such example is the Kindle.

9. Conclusion

Today, many educational organizations use e-learning to manage their students' development, upgrade their qualifications, teach them new skills, or retrain them for new positions. So, how exactly do organizations achieve these goals with eLearning? The quality of a digital course is much higher than the amount of content and the sequence of slides. The content that we will present to the students will meet their needs; the content will have the appropriate information. So that they can interact easily and the content will make them attractive. In order to make e-learning more effective, informative, engaging and interactive, we need to pay attention to the above-mentioned points and apply it in the field of e-learning.

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