7. Impact of Covid-19 on Junior School Education – With Special Reference to the East Singhbhum District

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Abstract:

The unusual circumstance created by the COVID-19 epidemic has caused significant changes in the Indian education system, compelling teachers and students to adapt to new social conditions in the online learning process in a short amount of time. Before the pandemic, East Singhbhum students and teachers rarely used the e-learning system; nevertheless, the research shows that students have quickly accepted online learning, even if they believe it is less effective. The impact of COVID 19 on the East Singhbhum District's Junior School education system is examined in this article. The study is essential since the pandemic is not yet over, and specialists predict that the COVID 4th wave will hit India in June or July 2022. The study not only addresses the pandemic's impact on the Junior School education system but also the opportunities and solutions to mitigate the negative effects. The study is based on a poll based on a questionnaire prepared for junior high school students and teachers, and it is studied from two perspectives: teachers and students. Non-probability sampling was used to choose the participants. The findings reveal that there is a negative impact on junior high school education.

Keywords:

Covid 19, e-learning, Teaching methodology, Education system

Introduction:

No one would have thought that a virus-like Covid19 would come in and change people's lifestyles without being differentiated. Thanks to Covid19, many changes have occurred in our world and it has taken some time for everyone to embrace the new normal. The impact of Covid19 was widespread and led to the closure of schools and other educational institutions. First, most governments have decided to temporarily close schools to reduce the impact of Covid 19. It was then reopened in some classes, increased in infections, and then closed again. Although the school is closed, students attend classes through various educational initiatives such as online classrooms and radio programs.

The fast international unfolding of the brand-new coronavirus (COVID-19) has created unprecedented demanding situations for safety, health, education, the economy, and task stability. According to UNESCO statistics, in May 2020, 1.21 billion students, respectively 69.3% in their overall number, couldn't go back to faculties and universities [1]; thus, the closure of tutorial establishments generated considerable social and financial costs. According to UNESCO, the primary consequences generated through the closure of faculties were:

- Interruption of the education process
- Compromise nutrition
- The burden of teaching with a new set-up
- Parents need to facilitate their ward with virtual set-ups
- Increased drop-out rates
- Increased exposure to violence and exploitation

When the schools closed the students went on a kind of "vacation", and therefore they abandoned the daily routine: they refused to wake up at the same time, do homework, participate in extracurricular activities, etc., without knowing what will happen in the future. The long break from life that all creatures experienced may have had negative psychological effects.

The aim of the paper is to perform an analysis of the e-learning system implemented in East Singbhum District of India, during the pandemic to highlight the perception of the main actors involved in the educational process (students, teachers, and parents) of junior schools. The analysis will be based on a questionnaire.

Literature Review:

Lockdown and social distancing measures due to the COVID-19 pandemic have led to the closures of schools, training institutes, and higher education facilities in most countries. There is a paradigm shift in the way educators deliver quality education—through various online platforms. Online learning, distance, and continuing education have become a panacea for this unprecedented global pandemic, despite the challenges posed to both educators and learners.

Transitioning from traditional face-to-face learning to online learning can be an entirely different experience for the learners and the educators, which they must adapt to with little or no other alternatives available. The education system and the educators have adopted "Education in Emergency" through various online platforms and are compelled to adopt a system that they are not prepared for.

E-learning tools have played a crucial role during this pandemic, helping schools and universities facilitate student learning during the closure of universities and schools (Subedi et al., 2020). While adapting to the new changes, staff and student readiness need to be gauged and supported accordingly.

Learners with a fixed mindset find it difficult to adapt and adjust, whereas learners with a growth mindset quickly adapt to a new learning environment. There is no one-size-fits-all pedagogy for online learning.

There are a variety of subjects with varying needs. Different subjects and age groups require different approaches to online learning (Doucet et al., 2020). Online learning also allows physically challenged students with more freedom to participate in learning in the virtual environment, requiring limited movement (Basilaia & Kvavadze, 2020).

As schools have been closed to cope with the global pandemic, students, parents, and educators around the globe have felt the unexpected ripple effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. While governments, frontline workers, and health officials are doing their best to slow down the outbreak, education systems are trying to continue imparting quality education for all during these difficult times. Many students at home/living space have undergone psychological and emotional distress and have been unable to engage productively. The best practices for online homeschooling are yet to be explored (Petrie, 2020).

The use of suitable and relevant pedagogy for online education may depend on educators' and learners' expertise and exposure to information and communications technology (ICT). Some of the online platforms used so far include unified communication and collaboration platforms such as Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom, Canvas, and Blackboard, which allow teachers to create educational courses, training, and skill development programs (Petrie, 2020). They include options for workplace chat, video meetings, and file storage that keep classes organized and easy to work. They usually support sharing a variety of content like Word, PDF, Excel files, audio, videos, and many more. These also allow the tracking of student learning and assessment by using quizzes and the rubric-based assessment of submitted assignments.

The flipped classroom is a simple strategy for providing learning resources such as articles, pre-recorded videos, and YouTube links before the class. The online classroom time is then used to deepen understanding through discussion with faculty and peers (Doucet et al., 2020). This is a very effective way of encouraging skills such as problem-solving, critical thinking and self-directed learning. Virtual classroom platforms like videoconferencing (Google Hangouts Meet, Zoom, Slack, Cisco, WebEx) and customizable cloud-based learning management platforms such as Elias, Moodle, Big Blue Button and Skype are increasingly being used.

Objectives

- To understand the effects of COVID-19 on the educational system
- To identify the challenges and opportunities for junior schools due to COVID-19

Problem Statement:

The research is focusing on issues of COVID-19 in the education system and institutions. This is a very serious issue as it is not only affecting the students but also the teachers and families. Moreover, it will have far-reaching economic and societal consequences. This research is an attempt to study the effects of this pandemic on the junior school education system of the East Singhbhum district.

Research Methodology:

For the current research, a descriptive design has been applied for collecting the data using the questionnaire method. The study was based on a quantitative questionnaire to reach conclusions.

Sampling:

Sampling was done using the non-probability method as the researcher has chosen the sample of students and teachers from the entire population according to their own connivance. For the current research, the researcher has selected a sample of 100 teacher respondents and 30 junior school students and shared the questionnaire to gain knowledge of their opinion.

Data Collection:

The collection of data for the present research was done using the primary method as the researcher has applied descriptive design, quantitative type, and indicative approach.

Reliability and Validity of the Research:

To maintain the reliability and validity of the research, questions related to the subject matter have been asked, and eliminated the wrong responses. To improve the validity of the study, the data has been from authentic sources and managed the analysis in proper ways. The research has focused on ethical standards also.

Analysis Technique:

It Is an Important Part of The Research, And the Data Has Been Analyzed by Using the Thematic analysis method. According to this method, the researcher has done the frequency distribution and analyzed the response of respondents by developing graphs and tables. This kind of approach has helped the readers of the study (Cuervo-Cazurra et al., 2017). The thematic analysis has also improved the reliability and eliminated the biases in the study.

Research Questions:

For Students:

- How was your School delivered distance learning?
- Do you have high-speed internet at home?
- Do you have access to a device for learning online?
- Are you satisfied with the technology and software you are using for online teaching?
- How helpful your School has been in offering you the resources to teach from home?

For Teachers:

- Do you have all requisites at home to conduct online classes?
- Are you satisfied with the technology and software you are using for online teaching?
- How stressful do you find teaching remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- How were your experience teaching students from home as compared to teaching at school?

- What kind of feedback have you got so far from your students regarding online teaching?
- How important is face-to-face communication for you while teaching remotely?
- How often do you have a 1-1 discussion with your students during online sessions?
- Do your students still learn as much as they did prior to implementing remote learning?

Data Analysis:

Student's Responses:

The responses which were collected from the junior school students reveal that most of the students got an opportunity to study online during the pandemic. However, most of the students admitted that internet speed and connectivity were the major hurdle that have faced during the classes.

However, they all have an access of gadgets of their parents to attend the classes. Most of the students also admitted that there were disciplinary issues during the sessions and they also had difficulties in understanding the contents which were delivered by the teachers.

The responses which were collected from teachers are as follows.

**Q.1. Do you have all requisites at home to conduct online classes?**
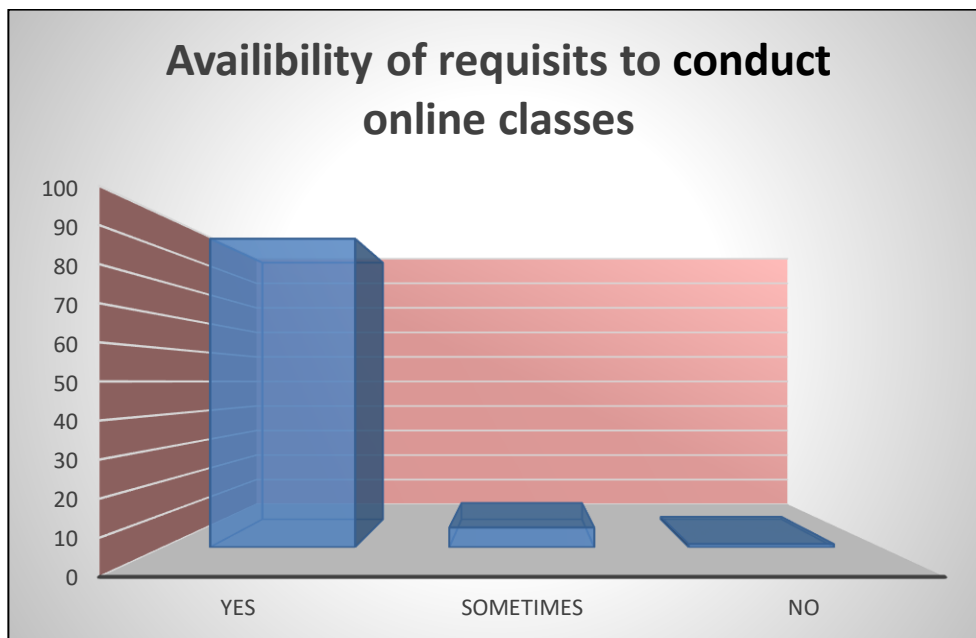
As the chart showing above 97% of the teachers have said that they had all required things to conduct online classes. Only 6% of the total respondents have said that they do not has all things all the time available and 1% of the total respondents said that he did not have all the requisites with him to conduction of online classes.

Q.2.Are you satisfied with the technology and software you are using for online teaching?
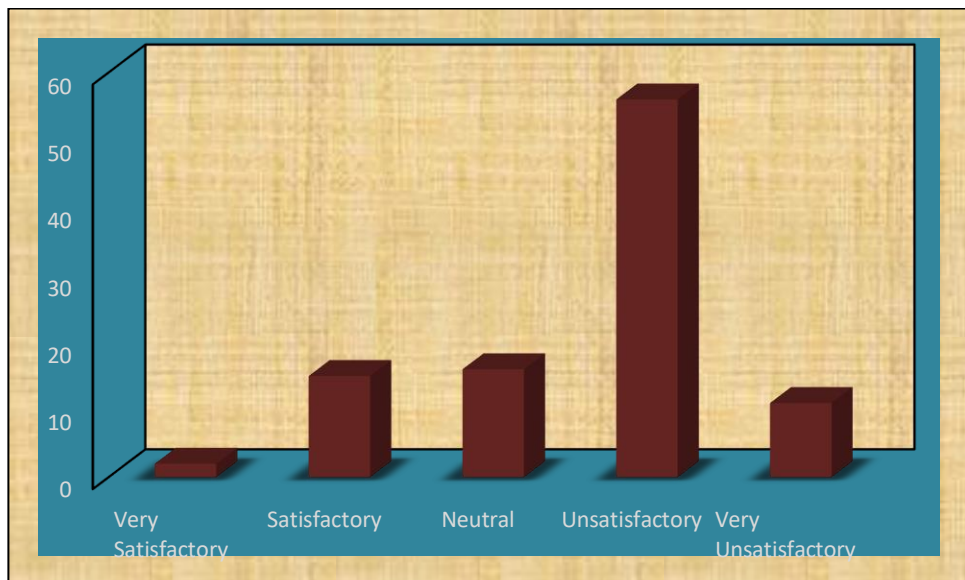
The above diagram shows 56% of the total population was not satisfied with the availability of software and technology for the conduction of online classes and 11% was highly dissatisfied. However, 16% were neutral and 15% were satisfied. As overall interpretation we can say the availability of technology was not satisfactory for conducting classes and effective classroom atmosphere.

Q.3 How stressful do you find teaching remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic?
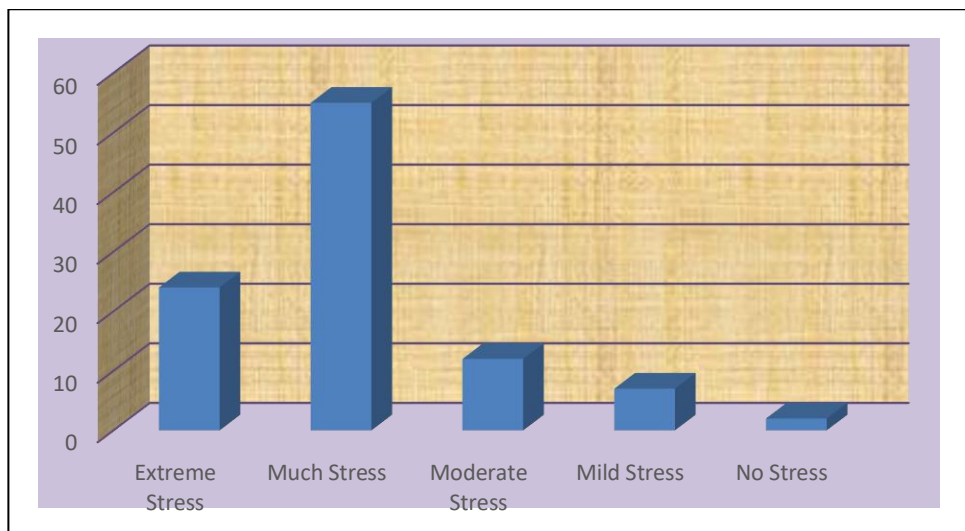
The above graph explains 24% of the total respondents feels that the teaching remotely was very stressful for them and 55% percent also admits that it was much stressful. 10% says the stress was moderate.

Only 7% said that the stress level was mild and 2% believes that there was no stress during pandemic while teachers were supposed to teach remotely. As an overall interpretation, we can say teaching from home and ensuring a quality teaching-learning process was difficult for teachers and stressful as well.

**Q. 4. How were your experience teaching students from home as compared to teaching at school?**
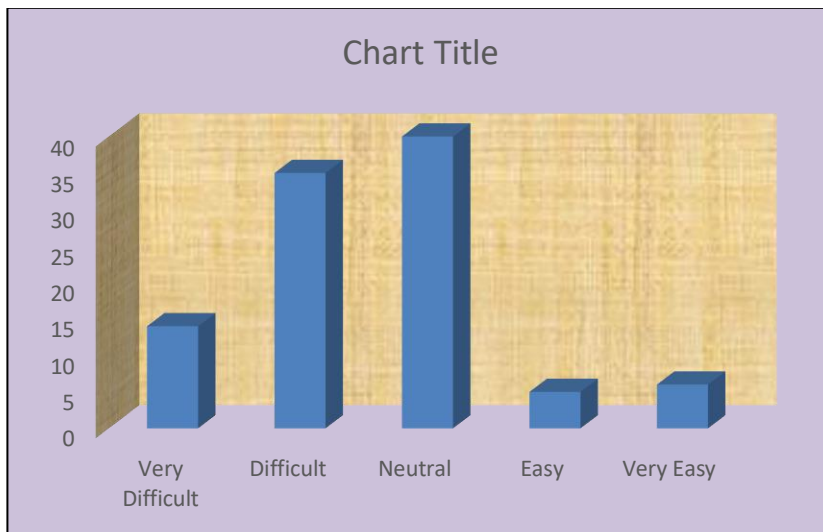
In response of the above question 40% was neutral, 35% believed that it was difficult and another 14% was find it very difficult. 5% said it was easy and another 6% of the respondents said it was very easy. As the mean is 3.4, we can interpret that the difficulty level was moderate.

**Q.5. What kind of feedback have you got so far from your students?**
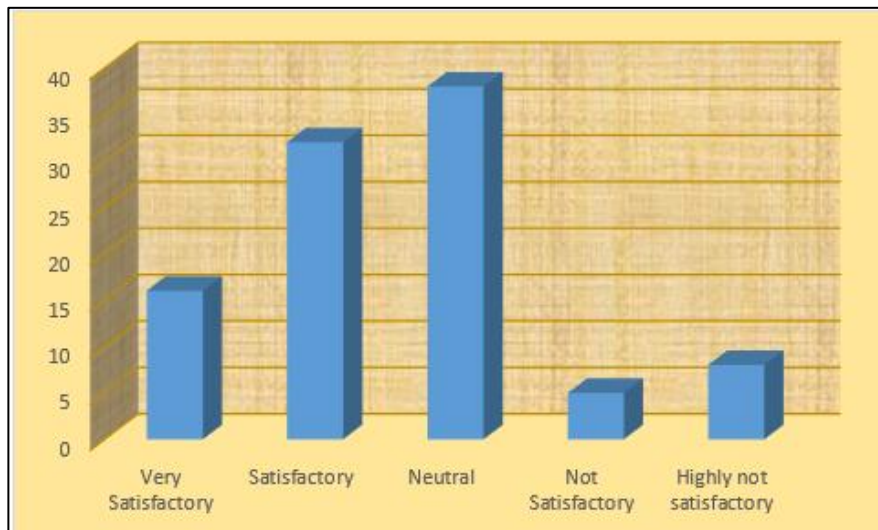
In response of the above question 38% was neutral, 32% believed that it was satisfactory and another 16% was find it very satisfactory. Only 5% said it was highly unsatisfactory and another 8% of the respondents said it was not satisfactory. As the mean is 3.6 we can interpret that the feedback was neither very good nor so bad.

Q.6 How important is face-to-face communication for you while teaching remotely?
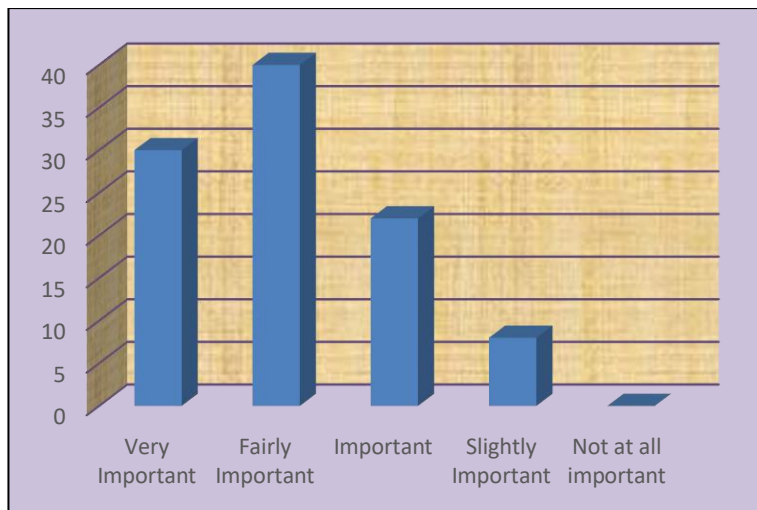

30% of the total respondents feels that it is very important to communicate face to face and another 40% also believes that it is important to communicate face-to-face for effective class room teaching while teaching to junior students. 22% of the respondents has a belief that it has a moderate level of importance and a very few i.e 8% believes that it's slightly important. Therefore, as an overall interpretation, we can say all the teachers believe that face-to-face interaction is very important for an effective teaching-learning process.

Q.7. How often do you have a one-to-one discussion with your students during online sessions?
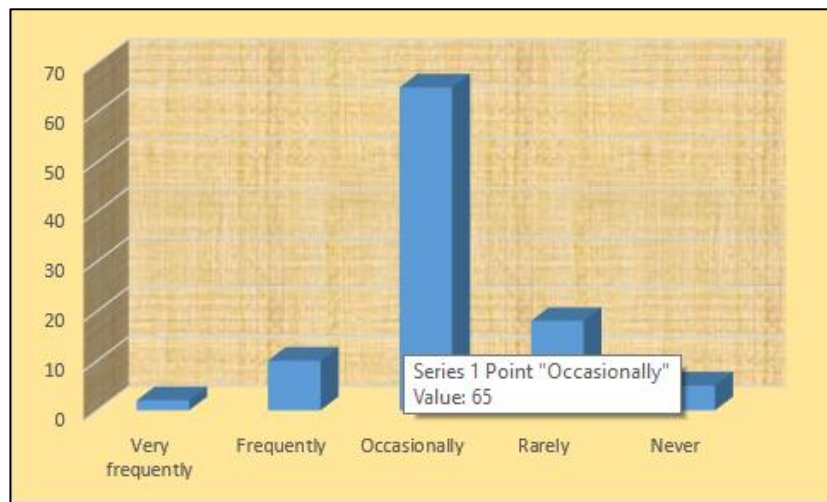
The graph indicates 65% of the total respondents interacted with the students one to one occasionally. 18% says rarely the scheduled any interaction session one to one for students and 5% says they never do so during pandemic while the mode of teaching was online. However, 10% teaches said they interacted one to one frequently and another 2% said they did so very frequently.

Q. 8. Do your students still learn as much as they did prior to implementing remote learning?
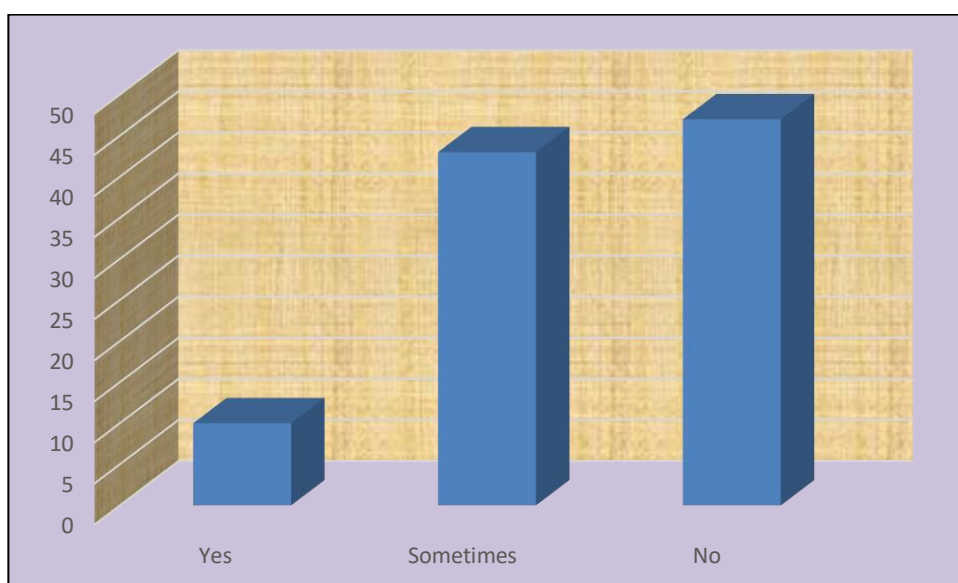
The above diagram says that only 10% teachers from the respondents believes that there was no compromise in studies during online classes but a major chunk of the respondents believes that the level of learning was compromised as 43% said that only sometimes the learning was appropriate and 47% of the respondents' fees that the students could not study as much as they would have study during offline classes.

Interpretation:

COVID-19 was a challenging year for all the people but everyone surpassed it with strength and safety. The challenge was for both the students and teachers for educating and being educated. Some say that the online teaching procedure was satisfactory whereas some say that face to face interactions is the best method for teaching. The parents also supported their children in this learning process so that their ward could learn all the things that are being taught and by this the parents also got to know about the new teaching methodology of this generation. Many students face problems in this because of lack of technology and lack of internet connectivity as in our country there are a lot of people who are below the poverty line who were even unable to afford their daily needs and were painfully managing their children to get educated and as in this time there was no other option but to getting connected to the teachers with internet with proper device was a big challenge for them.

The teaching staff also faced a big problem as they were also new to this technology and teaching process and with all this, they were managing their households.

It was a big challenge for not only the students but also for the teachers in maintaining the work life balance.

The teachers also provided one on one assistance to the students and did their best for the students to be attentive in the class and grasp as much as they could. This was a big challenge but everyone passed it with good result.

Suggestions:

As COVID 19 is still in effect, it is still possible to return to online learning. Therefore, it was crucial to research the effects of online education during a pandemic. If junior high students are ever taught online, the following recommendations might be taken into account.

- In order for students and teachers to gain competences, they must learn how to use technology through sessions with specialists.
- The school needs to create a virtual platform where students can access sessions that have been recorded and use it to get answers to their questions.
- In order for teachers to determine each student's unique learning needs, there needs to be particular interaction sessions for both parents and students.

Conclusion:

The closing of schools has interfered with student learning as well as internal and external evaluations for qualifications. The online teaching approach has taken the place of the conventional teaching method. On the one hand, online learning gives small children the chance to learn, but on the other, the innovative teaching approach comes with a number of problems. Education institutions are still juggling to make up for the lost learning while looking for solutions to the problems brought on by the lockdown. There were numerous issues faced by the schools for ensuring effective teaching-learning process.

References:

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