

Pandemic Impact on Education in Namakkal Districts

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Abstract

To begin with, education is critical for humans. Knowledge, according to J.M. Clark (1957), is the only production instrument that is not subject to diminishing returns. Indeed, education alleviates poverty, unemployment promotes social inclusion and creates a safe environment, and the world has shrunk as a result of knowledge loss. The spread of COVID-19 has rendered the entire global clock inoperable. As a result, the existence of the entire human race in a sustained environment is in doubt. The entire world has been focused on finding solutions and a cooperative, proactive approach to resolving the COVID-19 pandemic in endemic areas. Both the central and state governments introduced a flurry of new programmes during COVID-19. During COVID-19, both the Central and State governments launch several programmes that will not be known for a long time. As a result, the study will consider the Tamil Nadu government's recently introduced higher education development programmes for COVID-19. In light of this, the Tamil Nadu government has been maintaining a suitable atmosphere for offering excellent education in Tamil Nadu from 2019 to 2022. When compared to other states, the Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) is 51.4 percent, compared to the national average of 27.1 percent. Tamil Nadu has risen to the first place in higher education in India. Women's GER is 51%, compared to a national figure of 27.3 percent, while vulnerable societies' Scheduled Tribe men and women are 43.8 and 37.7 percent, respectively. Is it possible for higher education to maintain its first-place ranking among Indian states after COVID-19? The study seeks to determine whether free laptops, free education (up to postgraduate level in Government Arts and Science Colleges), financial assistance to economically disadvantaged sections, Chief Minister Relief Fund, and free SIM cards for students of Government Colleges, Government Aided Colleges, and students who receive scholarships in Self-financing Colleges are provided with 2 GB data per day to attend online classes during the pandemic. How many teachers are aware of online learning? How far has online education employing educational tools benefited both students and faculty (both teaching and non-teaching)? How effective is online lecturing, comprehension, and testing? With the unexpected global lockdown during COVID-19, education had a good opportunity to pave the road for global links through a coalition of connected institutions. Because the cost of ICT is prohibitively high for disadvantaged groups, authorities must address these issues in a way that benefits their future.

Keywords-Unexpected global lockdown, entire global clock, amicable precocious measure, attend online classes

Introduction

At the outset, education has a key role in human beings. J.M. Clark (1957), rightly points out that Knowledge is the only instrument of production that is not subject to diminishing returns. Development of education reduces poverty, unemployment, social inclusiveness, hazardous environment, etc., and the world has shrinkage due to the winning of knowledge. The entire global clock was blocked due to the spreading of COVID-19. As a result, the survival of human beings was questionable to sustain in the environment. The entire world was to be ready to prepare how to resolve the COVID-19 pandemic to endemic situations.

Teachers in the twenty-first century must be technologically savvy since they will be dealing with highly clever and competent students who can operate any gadget of the recently established globe. The curriculum transaction will be effective only if the teaching lessons are combined with proper media that may aid in easy comprehension and retention among the students. Blogs, Wikipedia, social networking sites, and other new media (Pratisha, 2016).

Teachers are regarded as the most important agents of societal change. They are the architects of a nation. To be able to fulfill such a great responsibility, the teacher must become aware of his own talents and flaws in order to educate to the best of his ability in accordance with national ideals. Teaching is a light that reveals manhood the right path to go (Ampili & Sandhya, 2015). Teaching should be designed to make students more thinking sensitive, self-sufficient, and knowledgeable (Yoganandan & Vetrivelan, 2017). These powerful variables must be primary movers in the modernization of higher education, bringing considerable advancements in teaching-learning methodologies (Jaya & Baskar, 2015).

During the COVID-19 Epidemic, the Central and State governments launched several programmes that would have been impossible to detect in such a short period of time. As a result, the study considers the Tamil Nadu government's higher education enhancement programme during COVID-19.

Origin of the Research Problem

Whether the students and staff member got benefited or not? The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) was 51.4 per cent as against the national average of 27.1, as compared to other states Tamil Nadu attained the first position in higher education in India. Women GER was 51 per cent as against of national value of 27.3 per cent, further it continued vulnerable societies Scheduled Tribe men and women are 43.8 per cent and 37.7 per cent respectively. The inclusiveness of higher education would be possible to continue in first position among the states of India after COVID-19. The study was an attempt to know whether free laptop, free education (in Government Arts and Science Colleges up to postgraduate level), financial assistant to economically weaker sections, Chief minister relief fund, free SIM cards for Government College Autonomous who availed scholarship in Self financing Autonomous Colleges with 2 GB data per day to attend online classes during the pandemic resulted in sustainable educational growth in students.

T. Mayai (2020) study reveals that the COVID-19 lockdown period human capital weekend especially education attainment of 2 million school-age children learning opportunities deprived. Further notified that the economic recovery from COVID-19 would require a coordinated strategy that addresses specter specific challenges. Especially women enterprises and small firms could be rejuvenated through targeted interventions.

Daly, Buckman and Seitelman views in similar of Cody Parkinson (2020) study has found that during COVID-19 inequalities were developed further notified that access to education is not equal and that greater access to higher education may ensure better economic resiliency in the future for the country and its people.

Ketan K Sha (2020) study indicates that while entering of online classless, everyone has private and adequate space at home, peaceful surroundings unlimited access to high-speed broadband, an army of latest electronic gadgets, mastery over hardware and software, and complete peace of mind. In fact, this luxury is available to less than 0.01 per cent of Indians.

N. Rajagopal (2020) study has indicated that Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) is calculated as 0.123 about 27.9 per cent of the total population includes the multidimensional poor. The percentage of people susceptible to multidimensional poverty is 19.3 per cent. The share of deprivation dimension to total multidimensional

poverty in terms of health, education and standard of living is 31.9 per cent 23.4 per cent 44.8 per cent respectively. The impact of the pandemic will be severe on MPI. It is important at this stage to mobilize more resources and continue all supportive measures in terms of the public distribution system, regular immunization programmes, safety network for the poor, etc, that may minimize the affect of deprivation indicators on MPI.

Andrew P. Kelly and Rooney (2020) study emphasizes the few institutions had good options, the pandemic compelled leaders to reconsider the old playbook. Further notified that the institutions provided opportunity to do so for ensuring better position to respond to their structural challenges that the industry is required to continue to face with or without the threat of COVID-19

Objectives

1. To critically study the existing level of the functional aspects of the colleges of education during Covid-19 in the following areas
 - a) Physical features
 - b) Academic aspects
 - c) Staff Quality
 - d) Student Quality
 - e) Innovations

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between the Self finance Autonomous and Government colleges of education in Tamil Nadu during COVID-19 in the availability of physical features.
2. There is no significant difference between the Self finance Autonomous and Government colleges of education in Tamil Nadu during COVID-19 of the academic aspects in the institution
3. There is no significant difference between the Self finance Autonomous and Government colleges of education in Tamil Nadu during COVID-19 in the staff quality.
4. There is no significant difference between the Self finance Autonomous and Government colleges of education in Tamil Nadu during COVID-19 in the students' quality.
5. There is no significant difference between the Self finance Autonomous and Government colleges of education in Tamil Nadu during COVID-19 in the innovations carried out for the attainment of outcomes specified.

Methods and Materials:

The research work was carried out collecting information through semi-structured interviews from students, parents and college professors of Namakkal district and written reports of Students and the professors were collected and analysed. Informants were selected from both the genders.

During COVID-19 students from remote villages were not able to attend classes as they were new to this mode and access to materials was not easier than the face to face physical mode classes. It was a fact that students at the verge completing the final semester of their Arts and Science stream did not have enough lectures on topics in the syllabus. Many a topic would be discussed leisurely and obviously even semester would have had many programmes both academic and non-academic, and as a result, course experts would struggle in discussing topics in the syllabus. Many colleges did not expect that students were allowed using mobile phone all of a sudden in the name of attending classes. The situation of all Arts and Science colleges in Tamil Nadu was under finding a way rather than completing tasks entailed in educating students. It was a boon for government school and college students for the laptop issued by the government at free of cost, a better tool for learning. The optimum and genuine use of the same resulted in good academic strength in all students and

course experts during COVID-19. It is an irrefutable fact that many a student realized ICT usage in their day to day learning and accomplishment in executing their preparation plan during the course of study.

Evaluation Process was done adopting many methods based on the availability of ICT tools and easy access to postal department. As per the instruction received from UGC and University, all the Arts and Science colleges planned for the conduction of tests at first and gradually involved them in writing online examination. When students were informed about online test at first they struggled a lot in finding ways and means of writing test. Many a student did not have mobile phone with applications accessibility nor computer to receive and respond. Before COVID-19, there were one or more browsing centres in towns nearer to villages but during pandemic no computer internet centre was functioning. It was a main hurdle, students found. Provided, many parents had to seek the help of either neighbors or relatives who had ICT tools.

Parents found it difficult to support their children to continue their studies because their financial position during pandemic was not good to afford mobile phone even. Not only did parents have financial problem but also they could not purchase phones as shops were closed. Many a student had provision to access ICT tools but parents had to face problem differently. Internet was another problem. Parents had to let their children to the places where internet connectivity and network was available. College students sought the help of their classmates for clarification in subjects discussed but parents had a major issue in their mind thinking of their female children and the way they behaved while they were talking over phone. It created damages in the relationship between parents and children too.

Some way or rather tests were over. Subject coordinators had a trouble of evaluating students' submissions and awarding marks for students, who were not able to access network and ICT tools. Having received instruction from regional office and universities, students were instructed to write model examination by sending the students question papers through e-mail. Many a student ran nook and corner in getting question papers and called their subject in charges for the question papers. Some students went to other students, who had ICT tool and accessed question papers both in email and whatsapp.

Colleges collected answer scripts from all students through postal and courier and some students visited and submitted in person but many a student did not submit their answer scripts by any means. Class in charges were instructed to contact their students and collect answer scripts in many self finance colleges. Some autonomous colleges instructed students to send the scanned copy of answer scripts through email with letter of reason for not sending written scripts (Hard Copies). It was known from the information collected from class in charges that some students were affected by Corona during examination and some of their relatives were affected by the Corona for they could not submit the hard copies of their answer scripts.

Students experienced online cum home examination of end semester at first in their education history. They could discuss answers with their fellow friends and come to conclusion before submitting the scripts. Some colleges instructed the students to send scanned copy of the scripts in a fixed time on all days of examinations and created awareness that their attendance was recorded based on the submission of answer scripts before the time stated, but there were some practical difficulties faced by both supervisors and the students due to network problem and ICT tools.

During evaluation, examiners were invited and they evaluated students' scripts. The student informants reported that marks awarded during COVID-19 was lesser than the marks scored before COVID-19. Even though they had accessed class notes and materials while they were writing examinations and had better opportunity to decide accurate answer by discussing with their fellow friends, their percent age was decreased. Parents stated that their children discussed among themselves and wrote every examination. Conducting examination through the mode was like open book examination.

College professors reported that they got enough knowledge about online class, what are the applications to be used like Google class, Google Meet, etc. Some teaching staff attended Faculty Development Programme on MOOC through online organized by Ramanujan College, Delhi. Two autonomous colleges in the district organized a Faculty Development Programme on Evaluation through Online. Evaluation was also done receiving answer scripts in PDF document. With enough knowledge gained for online mode teaching &

evaluation, professors approached the students for the 2021-22 batch odd semester classes. It was reported that the students of the senior classes were good enough in responding regular tests and submitting assignments but many a student failed in presentation in end semester examination.

Results and Discussion

The study was carried out on COVID-19 impact of assessment of self finance autonomous and government colleges on account of the physical features, academic aspects, staff quality, student quality and innovative practices in Namakkal district, Tamil Nadu.

The study found that distinctions were made for the security of physical features, academic aspects, staff quality, student quality, and innovative practices between self-financed autonomous and government colleges. The researcher discovered that the "t" value of 7.01 is greater than the significance level. As a result, hypothesis 1 was rejected, and an alternative hypothesis that distinguishes between self-financing autonomous and government colleges in a significant physical manner was proposed. Further the study notified that the mean and standard deviations between the Autonomous colleges and government colleges had significant differences in the study regions.

Further, the study notified that the mean value and standard deviations and 't' value had significant differences between the Autonomous colleges and government colleges in the study region of Namakkal district in Tamil Nadu. The study region had wide gap to create education inequality among people pursuing their degree in government colleges. Whereas all the people (Students, Parents and Course in charges) who inculcated in the use of necessary ICT tools in Autonomous institutions and students were trained as well as employment opportunity was well created easy manner.

As a result, the study discovered that the self-financing autonomous colleges of Namakkal district were superior to the government colleges in Tamil Nadu in providing better opportunities during Covid-19. Academic aspects included staff quality, student quality, and innovative practices had a similar result of Namakkal district in Tamil Nadu.

Conclusion

Students are more convenient and capable of learning and obtaining knowledge in today's educational environment. Teachers should be provided the best tools possible during and after their training, including knowledge and skills, as well as teaching methodologies, to enable them to do their jobs professionally. High-quality teaching is widely acknowledged as one of the key factors in achieving successful knowledge outcomes by developing the skills, attitudes, and values that learners need to realise their full potential as individuals as well as dynamic members of society and the workforce.

Autonomous colleges allow colleges to think freely, construct intellectually, and effectively bring in innovations offering quality enhancement programmes frequently. The status of autonomy makes an individual responsible and accountable to one's profession. Knowing the advantages of being an autonomous college, government colleges should strive to become autonomous. Autonomous colleges do meet various challenges, but most of these challenges prove to be opportunities for achievement and progress.

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