

Hybrid Education Program in Indian Schools -Pros & Cons

By

***Corresponding Author: Moothedath Sindhu**

Assistant Professor Department Of Commerce, M S Ramaiah College of Arts,Science & Commerce

E-mail: sindhuprashanthgk@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper is about the pros and cons of the Hybrid education system in India. Under the E-learning system, there were online, offline, hybrid, and blended classes. It explores various technologies used in India for E-learning and the pros and cons of the Hybrid education system. It explains how hybrid systems work in rural and urban, the Govt's role in implementing and functioning e-learning systems. Practical difficulties in implementing the hybrid system. The necessity for the involvement of local bodies and NGOs. How it worked in Anganwadis. The necessity of Parent's orientation. Teachers, students, and parents face problems with technical awareness and gadgets. The report suggests that in a country like India, to educate all students, there should be a collaborative effort from not only the government, from NGOs, Local bodies, and associations of private and Govt schools. The non-availability of the network is not only one issue. The geographical features, tribal locations, and safety of children for the working parents when the student attends the online class while parents are at their workplace. The paper explores the psychological impact on teachers, parents, and students under a hybrid education system. It tells about the multi work a teacher should bear under a hybrid system. It talks about the policy reformation on assessments and results under hybrid systems. Valuation standards have to be reviewed promptly rather than giving exemption from writing the examination.

Keywords: Anganwadis, Cloud Computing, E-Learning, NGOs, Hybrid Education System, Learning disabilities, Local Bodies, New Education Policy-2020, Parent-Teacher Orientation, Policy reformation, Pandemic,

Introduction

Students were encouraged to value the harmony between nature and humans. Following the principles of the Vedas and Upanishads, teaching and learning encompassed all facets of life through satisfying obligations to oneself, one's family, and one's society. The emphasis in the educational system was on both academic and physical growth. The old educational system strongly emphasised teaching students values like humility, truthfulness, discipline, self-reliance, and respect for all living things. Most education was given in ashrams, gurukuls, temples, and homes- Prashanth Gupta, Shradha group of Institutions.

In this paper, it is going to discuss the Pros and cons of the hybrid education system in India. During pandemic Covid-19, we could continue education functioning only because of the existence of virtual mode. Lockdown became the reason for the entry of Online learning, Hybrid learning, Blended learning, Flipped learning As per Oxford, the term hybrid means a thing made by combining two different elements.

The hybrid education system, clubbing both physical and virtual modes imparting education.

Online learning: E-learning is the acquisition of knowledge and skills through electronic technologies, such as local and wide area networks and computer and Internet-based courseware.

Offline/Traditional learning: Students will gather at the schools/educational institutions, and the teacher will impart their knowledge.

Hybrid classes: Some students attend the classes in person, while some attend virtually. It mainly depends on the students choosing how they wish to attend the classes. Hybrid classes came into existence during the second wave of Covid-19 in India. After considering the practical difficulties of the distance of travelling, migrants could not return from their native, etc.

As per India today, a study by Azim Premji Foundation showed that 60% of Indian students couldn't access online learning opportunities. The lockdown during the Pandemic put a pause on learning and teaching in India.

This shows our poor technical side.

Schooling is the second pace of socialisation for a child. Children who had completed three years in June 2019, supposed to join for nursery or kindergarten, started their learning through virtual mode.

Even though India came up with numerous online learning platforms, it faced issues with the complicated technological difficulties encountered during the online course. They have divided online learning into synchronous learning, synchronous study, and self-paced independent study. Distributing tasks to students and requiring timely submission. Government-owned MOOCs (NPTEL, Swayam) are already available in HEIs and have grown in significance and relevance over the past several years. As a result, these systems are now being mandated everywhere to reduce "connection-loss" between teachers and students during a period of "social distancing." The numerous large chain category schools and schools without such amenities have been discussed. However, this has not discussed the significance of giving faculty development programs, parent orientation, and student counselling prior to implementing hybrid systems. (Alok Kumar, Pramod Pathak-2020).

Blended teaching and learning system (BTLS) was highly recommended during the second pace of COVID-19. The paper says before recommending BTLS, the stakeholders and policymakers should take relevant implementation plans. A study on tier 1 cities like Mumbai is insufficient to conclude that BTLS is the best-recommended mode of learning and teaching. Even with sufficient internet facility, the availability of gadgets and sufficient technical knowledge about the platform is necessary both for teachers and students. The ultimate objective of E-learning is to include the entire student community in India. So the majority of students' community from rural areas has to be seriously focused on. (Dr. Sawant Danashree,2022)

As a result of Covid-19, teachers and students could enhance their technical knowledge about E-learning platforms like Zoom, Google Meet, and Cisco Web Ex. It filled the gap of continuing the education up to a certain extent. The paper focuses on students' perspectives on the sudden changes in the learning system. It included various age groups of students in their study area. The paper concluded with a note that online classes are not recommended in the long run. When considering various age groups, it is essential that a student of nursery or Anganwadi is as important as a student undergoing higher education. The small student going

for the first time to the school can visualise the online class just like playing a video game on a mobile or laptop. The paper can include the importance of the authorities' role in considering the perspective of the tiny student group seriously. (Parul Kathuria, 2021)

In its simplest form, cloud computing is the supply of computing services via the Internet ("the cloud"), including servers, storage, databases, networking, software, analytics, and intelligence. This enables speedier innovation, adaptable resources, and scale economies. Cloud computing is also widely used during the lockdown. This paper mentions the possibility of entry into a digital University in the future. The paper studied the practical difficulty of implementing the cloud system in education. The report never considered the financial background of the user. The affordability of Cloud computing is to be seriously discussed for the practicability of Cloud computing virtual platforms. It may be apt for the schools with the capacity to afford sophisticated technology. (Goel Pragati, 2015)

The paper talks about the existence of E-learning from 1999 onwards. Several CBT (Computer Based Training) systems are integrated with e-learning, including CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning), MALL (Mobile-Assisted Language Learning), NPTEL (National Programme On Technology Enhanced Learning), CSCL (Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning), and others. In 2002, India's e-learning market was in its infancy. Companies like McGraw-Hill, Digital Think, Skill Soft, and Mentergy are establishing operations in India which is encouraging for the e-learning industry. Students, teachers, self-learners, and others make up the E learners. These e-learning platforms are used by various e-learners, including students who are just starting their careers, people who are enhancing their abilities, and high potential employees. (Krishna Gopi A K, 2018) In India, the implementation plan for e-learning platforms in rural and urban India must be reassessed to cover the content shortage as mentioned above.

E-learning is a broader aspect than online learning. Online learning aids learners in learning irrespective of their place and time. The paper is mainly about higher education. It has mainly focussed on students of advanced studies. It is just a comparative study between online and traditional. It is recommended that education is the right for all. If it can be available to all kinds of student community, then only can say it fulfilled the primary objective. (S Anitha, 2012)

This review paper discusses whether the COVID pandemic is a boon or bane for the education sector. The changes during the Pandemic can be treated as a boon; educators were more able to explore and learn about the latest technology in E-learning. Digital tools like open board software, screen recorder, OBS studio, and Google products like Google Classroom, G-drive, Google-jam boards, drawings, Google hangouts, Google Slides, and Sheets have made it easier to quickly transition to an online mode of instruction and have given teachers an alternative to a physical teaching approach. Increase in online activity. Digital literacy is increasing. Adoption of new assessment methodology; curriculum revision. Improved information and knowledge exchange. The utilisation of digital resources and electronic notes. Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs) are incredibly beneficial in such tense circumstances.

It states about the ill side of e-learning, the severe consequences like the harmful wavelengths of mobile Internet, etc. The impact on mental, physical, and social well-being. Internet access in rural areas, less student-teacher engagement, changes to the wavelength of digital instruments, and cost-cutting staff have all affected the curriculum. The curb we can find here is it has not considered the tiny students' group and giving orientation to their parents. (Gaur Archana, 2022)

The study report's primary objective is how theoretical and conceptual frameworks can be integrated. Even though this mainly concerns engineering studies, we can correlate the content with numerical subjects like Accountancy, Mathematics, etc. This method aims to promote hybrid learning, a contextual, transformative, collaborative, and situated learning approach that may be useful in dealing with practical/numerical subjects. The practical constraints in this report are the practical difficulties like the affordability and reachability of technology in the Indian scenario. (A Jamison, 2014)

The article talks about the optimum speed and proper Access to the Internet for smooth accomplishment in the online class by the students. It also talks about the flexibility factor in connecting the teaching mode in virtual classes. The hybrid learning model also promotes an independent and self-reliant way of learning where students are free to read their material at their own pace and time with the added benefit of going over the information or instructions once more if necessary.

As mentioned earlier, this article did not emphasise the tiny student group, where parental orientation is much more needed.

(B W Education, 2021)

Objectives

The paper thoroughly observes, what the impact of E-Learning is during lock down due to COVID-19. It has the following objectives to conduct the study.

- To get an insight into the pros and cons of the Hybrid Education system in India.
- To find out the various hindrances to implement Hybrid Education system in India.
- To provide suggestions which help to implement the Hybrid Education system in India.

Education System in India

India is planning for the Universalisation of education by 2025. The Education Ministry is working for NEP-2020 for an overall reconstruction in the education sector. ((News18, n.d.)

The 5+3+3+4 structure under NEP-2020 is a significant highlight. The lockdown during the Pandemic affected the education sector very seriously also. There was an ambiguity with many India Schools on how to continue education from April 2019 onwards; there, it started the complete lock down. Later some private schools came up with the idea of continuing online education. Later on, it was adopted by Govt schools too. It was a trial and error method by the school and teachers. Many teachers lagged in technical knowledge, non-availability of gadgets, especially in rural areas, and lack of internet facilities. Along with teachers, students also faced lots of difficulties. Cases reported that some students committed suicide because they could not access online classes, especially in tribal zones. The Govt, by providing recorded telecasts in Doordarshan up to a certain extent, helped students learn about those who could not afford electronic gadgets. There was no system in India for conducting examinations online. For that Govt has decided to give promotions even without conducting the examinations. This created a significant impact on students with high-order thinking skills. They weren't able to showcase their potential.

During the Second phase of COVID-19, Govt allowed schools to function by following the COVID protocols. Hybrid classes came into existence during this time. Students who were

unable to travel were allowed to attend the Hybrid classes. This helped the continual function of education. Rotational attendance was also part of Hybrid Classes.

Benefits of Hybrid Learning

Flexibility

It was a boon for students to choose their option whether to attend physical or virtual classes. The time of travelling was considerably reduced. They were able to get rid of the anxiety of interacting with society during the Pandemic. Even though there were network issues, with the help of their peers, they were attending physical class and could cope with their class work. The students who were affected by COVID also were able to attend the class under this system.

Increased Access to learn:

Under the offline class system, most students depended on the teacher and the school library as resources. But when they moved to a hybrid class apart from the resource described above, students were able to use much more e-resources. They became self-reliant in doing their assignments with the help of various websites and digital resources.

Better use of Teaching resources:

From the teacher's perspective, they were booked using e-resources for teaching. For example, in google classroom, students were allowed to update their doubts rather than giving spot doubts clearance. Later, when the teacher was convenient, I could clarify the same. They saved time by copying and pasting the content rather than writing the entire content on the blackboard. It was convenient for a teacher to insert charts, graphs, and pictures in an online class. It was easier for them to show the required website to the students than to explain it verbally.

Reduce Absenteeism:

Usually, students become absent in class if they are sick, for attending any family function, travelling, etc. The hybrid or online class system helps the students ensure their attendance by attending the class online.

Time with Family and Friends:

In situations when the presence of a student is required in the family or with friends, the hybrid class system was a boon for them. During the Pandemic, some students got the responsibility of taking care of their sick family members, and they were able to perform both the tasks, i.e., attending class and taking care of their family members.

More tolerant environment:

Students gained adaptation skills through the usage of e-learning platforms. It is a great advantage for students that they have upgraded their knowledge to a higher degree in online classes. Even with practical difficulties, they managed to overcome and accomplish their tasks.

Understanding concepts Quickly:

There was a provision to show video; play recorded audio in the online classrooms. For a demonstration, it was easy to show the video and make the students understand concepts easily compared to verbal explanation. It was beneficial for hardcore concepts.

Disadvantages of hybrid classes

Limited Internet access:

In a developing country like India, it was tough to access the Internet, especially for rural students. People were unable to afford the high-speed broadband packages. The geographic constraints also were another limitation for accessibility to the Internet.

Lack of motivation:

Under the hybrid system, the students in the physical classroom could get timely face-to-face results from their teacher. On the other hand, the online attendees lacked timely face-to-face motivation from their teachers. This created a psychological impact on online attendees. Teachers were also ambiguous about their understandability.

Workload:

Under this system, the workload for teachers and students increased. Since there was not a proper system for assessments and assignments, a teacher had to work on preparing the question papers and assignments in two separate ways. Students using only less storage capacity mobiles for learning had to put their most effort into type, saving, and submitting their assignments and assessments. We struggled a lot during the Pandemic.

Lack of technical knowledge:

There was no proper system for faculty development for online classes for teachers before implementing the online class system. It worked with the trial and error method. In the same way, students also faced many issues with clarifying their doubts about online classroom requirements. This affected the proper smooth functioning of the hybrid classroom also. Some schools in rural India still follow the documentation manually. So for teachers from such schools, keeping digital records made much discomfort. They faced problems with the usage of online teaching platforms and operations.

Credibility:

Since there was no face-to-face interaction or supervision, the assignments submitted by the students were exactly taken from the websites. The students did not even make an effort to understand the concepts. Many of the projects submitted by the students were copied from their peers. So under this, credibility output by the students was a significant issue.

Lack of Gadgets:

Considering the students' economic background, even though the authorities provided e-classes, they could not afford the expenditure to buy mobiles, laptops, desktops, or TV. Some schools that wanted to implement the system failed due to the incapability of affording the expenditure to install a projector, mike, or laptop in their schools.

Poor focus on Kindergarten Students:

During these times, the authorities focused more on high schools and higher education. Since education is suitable for all levels of the student community, there is no proper system for the tiny student group. Even without seeing their school premise, they continued schooling for two years. Hybrid systems also were not practically possible for them.

Lack of proper parental orientation:

To create a quality new generation, parents and teachers have equal roles. So in any online or hybrid class, there was no system for parent orientation. This created a lot of

ambiguity for parents on how to continue their children's education, especially for students going to school for the first time.

Lack of uniform system for assessment and evaluation:

Both online and offline attendees will think that during assessment and evaluation, the other group will enjoy benefits mutually. The hybrid classes failed to establish a standard and uniform system for evaluation.

Suggestions

Irrespective of any reason, it is essential that the education sector in a country has to be given prime importance. Timely reformation is very much needed in the education sector to enable students to meet their future needs.

Research areas should give prime importance and find out why students are migrating abroad for studies and utilising their potential for a foreign country.

- Hybrid education should be promoted to enable students to continue their studies while working.
- Along with internet accessibility, verification and infrastructural reformation are also to be overviewed.
- 0% interest loan system to be provided for students who need financial aid for attending the online class.
- Like the COVID vaccination drive, a local body and NGO collaborative efforts should be taken to make the accessibility of education all over India.
- E-literacy programs should be conducted for teachers as well as students.
- There should be a separate teaching and learning system for children with learning disabilities.
- Make sure of compulsory parental involvement in future learning and teaching systems.
- Anganwadi children are also part of the student community; at least one desktop or laptop should be given to each Anganwadi and should provide necessary support and guidance for the usage of digital awareness.

Conclusion

Like any other sector, the education sector has also been severely affected by the impact of lockdown during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Even though "Necessity is the mother of invention." There should be proper provisions to be implemented considering any unforeseen occurrence. India, with its best effort to overcome the negative impact of COVID-19. There should be necessary reformation from the administrative level. A country should never wait for any unforeseen disaster for a change in the education sector. Like NEP-2020, there should be a separate council for timely review. The changes should happen every year to meet the changes in advanced technologies. A development like infrastructure and electrification of rural India should give prime importance.

Students in rural areas not only depend on school for education but also expect mid-day meals and books from the schools. That area is also to be considered. The changes during the Pandemic made it difficult for an adaptation. The financial crisis faced by their family is also a hindrance to the smooth flow of their education. It has been observed that there was a

considerable number of absenteeism in the online class during the second wave of COVID-19. The sudden increase in the death rate during that time made the students mentally upset.

Most of the students lost their loved ones. The same happened with teachers also.

The vaccination drive started almost at the end of the second wave and the beginning of the third wave. The authorities took the initiative to accomplish the task of a 100% vaccination drive. The Government has done this with the help of local bodies, Educational institutions, and NGOs. The involvement of Students' voluntary organisations like NSS, NCC, etc., have provided commendable service.

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