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Digitalization of education during Covid-19 pandemic

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Abstract

The spread of pandemic Covid-19 has severely affected every aspect of human life including the education. The extended lockdown period for the Covid-19 pandemic has forced the schools, colleges and other educational institutions to shut down which has hampered the educational system all over the country. This situation has challenged the educational system across the country and forced the teachers to shift to an online mode of teaching overnight. As the digital learning process has become more prevalent in the world due to Covid-19 pandemic, it is important to know about its significance and its limitations in the present era. The purpose of this paper is to understand the main concept of digital learning and to emphasize the impact of digital learning on the education system of the country. Some fruitful strategies and suggestions are also pointed out for the academic institutions to deal with the challenges associated with the digital learning effectively and make the students more successful in a digital learning environment during this pandemic situation.

Keywords: Covid-19, digital learning, education

Introduction

On March 11, 2020, World Health Organization (WHO) declared Covid-19 as a pandemic (WHO, 2020) ^[13]. In all the phases of lockdown starting from lockdown 1.0 to lockdown 5.0, the educational institutions throughout the country have never got any relaxation to start their educational activities. Thus the pandemic Covid-19 impacted significantly on the education sector (Sahu, 2020) ^[10]. Nearly 1.6 billion students in 194 countries were impacted by the institutions being shut down. So in the sphere of education, shifting to online classes was the only option left for the students as well as the teachers so that the learning of the students would not be disrupted. This crisis has accelerated the development of a digital learning environment. The teachers were urged to provide the study materials in the form of PPT, PDFs, etc. The government is also recognizing the increasing importance of digital learning during this crisis. The use of digital media enables a vast number of students to access the materials online and this promotes the learning process. Despite of many advantages of digital learning there are some challenges faced by the students during this pandemic. Educational units are also struggling to find various alternatives to deal with this challenging situation. Thus the present study aims to understand the concept of digital learning and highlights the problems faced by the students amidst the Covid-19 pandemic. It also includes some suggestions for the academic institutions to deal with the challenges associated with the digital learning.

Concept of digital learning

Digital learning also known as 'online learning' is the learning which is facilitated by technology. It can be defined as the use of computer and use of internet technology to access the educational process outside of a traditional classroom. It is often referred to as "Technology Enhanced Learning" (TEL) or e-learning. It contains many features such as whiteboards, chat rooms, discussion forum, polls etc. that allows the instructor and the students to interact with each other in order to achieve the educational goals. Some of the digital learning tools are Google Meet, Zoom, Skype, and Microsoft Teams etc. that help the learners to study at home. Digital learning is considered as a new method of teaching rather than a face-to face teaching. It helps to offer and share materials in all kinds of formats such as PDFs, e-mails, slideshow, chat forums etc. In an online learning environment, the teachers and pupils do not meet physically unlike traditional classroom where the teachers and pupils

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Do economic development and disaster adaptation measures reduce the impact of natural disasters? A district-level analysis, Odisha, India

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Prakash Kumar Sahoo⁵ · Tapaswini Nayak⁶

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Abstract

Natural disasters are a regular phenomenon in Odisha due to its unique geo-climatic conditions. Frequent occurrences of natural disasters affect different aspects of human life and cause huge damage to private and public property. We examine the effects of economic development, basic disaster adaptation measures, and exposure to disaster on disaster fatalities due to floods, heat-wave, and lightning. We use district-level panel data for 30 districts in Odisha over the period 1999–2011. The FE Poisson estimates suggest that economic development (proxied by per capita income) is not adequate to minimize fatalities from natural disasters. The results further confirm that better disaster adaptation measures such as better medical facilities, adequate road infrastructure, higher primary enrolment, village electrification, forest cover, and financial accessibility help in mitigating disaster fatalities to some extent. In addition, the estimates indicate that disaster-specific exposures such as high incidences of floods, excessive rainfall during monsoon, high temperature, and humidity lead to an increase in disaster fatalities. In sum, our results conclude that adequate disaster adaptation measures and better disaster management policies are essential to mitigate fatalities from natural disasters in the districts of Odisha, India.

Keywords Disaster fatalities · Economic development · Disaster adaptation · Count model · Odisha · India

JEL Classification O10 · C54

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Chapter

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Abstract

Coal is the cheapest source of energy, so the economic importance of coal is critical for an emerging economy like India. Although the benefit of coal is enjoyed by the entire nation, the environmental externalities and adverse health impacts are highly confined to the mining neighbourhood only. Moreover, mining regions in India are mostly located in the vast tracts of remote forests and inhabited by marginalized tribal people.

In this study, we examine whether the high concentration of ambient air pollution in the largest coal mining (open cast) region of Odisha triggers the vulnerabilities of respiratory

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Inclusiveness of Poverty Reduction: A Study of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana

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Abstract

This study examines the inclusiveness of poverty reduction among the newly formed states of undivided Andhra Pradesh by looking into the poverty among the different socio-religious groups both in the rural and urban regions during the 2000's. The major proposition that has highlighted in this study: which socio-religious groups are more poverty ridden in the undivided Andhra Pradesh and its bifurcated states (Andhra Pradesh and Telangana)? The National Sample Survey Organisation unit level data (61st and 68th rounds) on Consumption Expenditure Survey have been used for the analysis. The result reveals that Telangana is having lower poverty level than Andhra Pradesh and records a faster reduction in poverty during 2004–2005 to 2011–2012. Andhra Pradesh constitutes around 70% of the total poor of the undivided Andhra Pradesh. This study found that most of the Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes among the social groups and Muslims among the religious groups are more vulnerable and having higher head count ratio than the state average. Although several welfare programmes and schemes have already been implemented to eradicate poverty and inequality, still it is not effective in the ground level. Based on this argument, our study suggests that the schemes should focus on different sections of the people irrespective of rural and urban sectors in both the recently bifurcated states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

JEL Codes: I 32, D 63, P 25

Keywords

Inclusiveness, poverty and inequality, socio-religious group, undivided Andhra Pradesh

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