



## Issues and Challenges of Rural Students for E-Learning During Covid

MS. DEEPIKA MALHOTRA  
Assistant professor,  
(Physical Education)  
SCERT (DIET), DELHI

DR. D.S. YADAV  
Assistant professor,  
(Physical Education)  
SCERT (DIET), DELHI

### Abstract:

*As a result of the covid-19 pandemic, online learning, often known as e-learning, has emerged as a critical component of education. When it comes to the rural areas, India's technology and human preparedness are questionable, and the country's objective of transitioning to online learning is no less troublesome. During the covid-19 outbreak, this paper investigates the benefits of e-learning in rural areas, as well as the difficulties associated with it. A descriptive survey method is used in this investigation. A questionnaire that was created by the researcher is used to collect information. Approximately 50 government high schools in India are being investigated as part of the study. According to research, rural schools have a significant challenge when it comes to implementing e-learning since they lack the means and competence to do it effectively.*

**Keywords:** *Issues, Challenges, Rural, Covid, Students, Online Learning etc.*

### 1. Introduction

The COVID-19 disease, which has spread across the world, has impacted every aspect of human life. Many educational institutions throughout the world have been compelled to shut their doors for a period of time as a result of COVID19. As of now, videoconferencing is the primary mode of delivery for online learning. Instead of being presented in person, lectures, courses, and other types of teaching are offered to students using videoconferencing technology. Online education is nothing new in industrialised nations, and it is becoming more popular. As a result of their inclusion in the curriculum, students are already familiar with a range of online learning tools like Moodle, Blackboard, and other similar platforms. Online education, on the other hand, is unusual in developing countries such as Cambodia, and there are a number of hurdles that must be solved before it can be effectively adopted. Prior to the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, blended learning had been implemented at a number of Cambodian universities, but it was not a frequently utilised mode of instruction in the country. Everything has changed as a result of the implementation of COVID-19. In order to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, schools and universities were obliged to close, resulting in a move away from the traditional classroom model and toward one based online. A tough period was experienced by students, teachers, school officials, and even parents in adjusting to the shift. Countries, educational institutions, and student populations all have their own set of issues to contend with. Although the adoption of online learning has presented considerable challenges in a country with few resources, including technology and human resources, the adoption of online learning has presented significant challenges, particularly in Cambodia's rural areas. Here, we'll look at some of the many terminologies used to describe online learning, discuss some of the challenges Cambodia is facing as it transitions to online education, and provide some suggestions on how to make online education even more effective.

### ***1.1 Variations of online learning***

As technology and online learning continue to improve, a slew of new terminology associated with online learning have been established throughout time. E-learning, on-line learning, distance learning, blended learning, and hybrid learning are all instances of this kind of learning. Students' interactions with teachers and students are similar in each of these categories, but the way they engage with technology in education is distinct in each of these contexts. We did a review of the literature in order to determine the definitions, attributes, and differences between these concepts.

### ***1.2 Challenges associated with online learning***

Because of the COVID-19 outbreak, many physical activities, including educational activities, have been suspended across the world. As a result, educational institutions have little choice but to shift their focus toward online learning. Despite the fact that online learning has been around for quite some time, the sudden shift to this mode of instruction has presented significant challenges for educational institutions all over the world, particularly in countries like Cambodia where limited resources have made it difficult for teachers and students to prepare for this new mode of instruction. A number of special challenges have emerged as a consequence of the fast digital transformation of instructional activities during the COVID-19 pandemic, as Adedoyin and Soykan (2020) explain in their paper. Technology infrastructure and digital proficiency, socioeconomic determinants (e.g., educational inequality), assessment and monitoring, harsh workload, and compatibility are only a few of the most important concerns facing the area of education at the moment (some subjects such as sports sciences require physical interactions).

## **2. Literature Review**

**Barrot, Jessie & Llenares (2021)** The educational system has lately been plagued by a health crisis of unprecedented proportions, which has shattered the basic underpinnings of the institution as a result. Given the present uncertainties, it is necessary to conduct a comprehensive investigation of students' online learning experiences during the COVID-19 outbreak. Despite the fact that countless studies have been conducted on this subject, there is still a lack of understanding of the barriers that students confront and the specific methods that they use to overcome these hurdles. As a consequence, our study is attempting to close the gap in knowledge. According to the findings of the study's mixed-methods approach, college students experience a broad variety of online learning barriers. The lack of technological knowledge and proficiency was the least of their worries. The COVID-19 pandemic, researchers discovered, had the greatest impact on student well-being and the quality of their educational experience, according to their findings. Students most often used strategies were resource management and utilisation, help-seeking, technical aptitude enhancement, time management, and control of the learning environment. The ramifications of this finding for classroom practise, policymaking, and future research are discussed in further detail below.

**Dwivedi, Shri (2021)** In this day and age, everyone wants to be educated, and the government is making every effort to make education free and mandatory for everyone. However, the COVID-19 has changed the overall situation, allowing people to work from home while students take classes online. However, the government is also making every effort to make education free and mandatory for everyone in this country. In this essay, we will explore education for all and online learning in COVID-19, as well as the obstacles faced by rural students, as well as government-sponsored programmes and digital platforms, as well as their various advantages and disadvantages.

**Jena, Pravat (2020)** Following the Covid-19 epidemic, it has been recommended that people isolate themselves socially. It has made it necessary for many people to remain inside, which may result in mental stress. As a result, online learning may be critical in maintaining people's attention and reducing stress. In the middle of a pandemic, online schooling is the only alternative that makes sense.

Teaching from the comfort of one's own home is possible with the use of virtual classrooms, which are equipped with all of the necessary materials. Students are forced to stay at home due to pandemics for extended periods of time, causing disruptions in the teaching-learning process. According to this research, online learning has a number of advantages during times of crisis, such as when employees are away from their jobs or when pandemics strike. Therefore, we've highlighted a few online learning tools and techniques that may be used to keep things moving ahead in the right direction. The ambitions of the Indian government for online education are explored in detail. An examination of the pros and downsides of adopting an online learning platform is also included in this article. During the lockdown, the attitudes of students and instructors of the Online Learning system are crystal evident.

**Sathishkumar, V. & Radha (2020)** The pandemic problem raised by COVID-19 compelled all educational institutions throughout the globe, including schools, colleges, and universities, to embrace e-learning as an essential component of their curriculum. In the aftermath of this horrific tragedy, offline teaching has been thrown for a complete loop. Students profit from e-learning since it is a very effective teaching method. Student opinions about e-learning have been gathered via the use of Google forms from students all around the nation and throughout the globe, including students from schools, colleges, and universities, according to the researchers. This course will be geared for students who are already familiar with web-based technology. The identification of ways for improving students' capacity to study on their own is also aided by this method. The participants in this study were selected using stratified selection, with a total sample size of 175 people. The results of the study show that students' excitement for using E-learning tools, as well as their academic performance, is mirrored in their behaviour. Following the findings of this study, it can be concluded that online learning has gained popularity among students all across the world, particularly during the lockdown caused by the COVID-19 virus.

**Hyseni Duraku, Zamira & Hoxha (2020)** The closure of educational institutions throughout the world as a precautionary measure against COVID-19 has had a severe influence on global educational systems. The quality of the experience for students, instructors, and administrators, as well as their knowledge and skill sets, are all considered to be influenced by a wide variety of factors in online education. These findings are given in this chapter, which also examines the impact of COVID-19 on education and the well-being of teachers, parents, and children. 13 parents and 11 teachers from pre-university public institutions in 14 towns throughout seven regions of Kosovo engaged in semi-structured interviews, which were conducted by the researchers. According to the results of the study, students, parents, and instructors have raised concern about the assessment of COVID-19, the inadequacies of remote learning, and the overload of students in the course. Educational opportunities for improving educational quality, as well as opportunities to increase the support of teachers, parents, and families, are discussed, as is practical guidance for those involved in the field of education.

### 3. Objectives of the study

- A rural pandemic e-learning experiment is being conducted to see how successful it is.
- E-learning in rural locations during the covid-19 epidemic is a difficulty.

### 4. Methodology

For this study, the researchers adopt a descriptive survey approach. Using a simple random selection approach, the researchers picked 50 headmasters of government high schools in rural India as the study's sample. E-learning in public schools in the United States is studied using a questionnaire developed by the researcher. E-mail is used to distribute the surveys to the sample. The obtained data is next processed and analysed.

#### 4.1 Questionnaire for e-learning

- Is your school still offering lessons through the internet while the epidemic is going on?
- What is your school's preferred online learning platform?
- In your school, are all instructors able to use e-learning tools (smart phones, laptops, and the Internet)?
- Access to e-learning tools (such as smartphones, laptop computers, and internet connections) is expected for all students at your school.
- Do all of your students take online classes?
- What are the difficulties that your institution faces while offering lessons through the internet?
- How do you like to learn?

### 5. Results

#### 5.1 Objective 1

A rural pandemic e-learning experiment is being conducted to see how successful it is

##### 5.1.1 Conducting Online Classes

**Table 1 This table shows the schools that offer online courses**

Responses	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	10	20
No	40	80
Total	50	100

Just 20 percent of colleges are delivering online courses throughout the pandemic, according to Table 1, while the remaining 80 percent of institutions are not offering online lessons. A substantial influence on the educational process is shown by the fact that many schools are closing their doors to students and teachers during the outbreak.

##### 5.1.2 Online learning platforms

**Table 2 A list of online learning systems utilised by schools**

Responses	No. of respondents	Percentage
Whatsapp	10	20
Other sources	0	0
Total	10	20

According to Table 2, 20 percent of schools are utilising WhatsApp to conduct online courses, and this figure is increasing. All schools that provide online courses use WhatsApp as their primary mode of communication; none of these institutions use well-known platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, or Skype for their online classrooms, as they should.

##### 5.1.3 Access to e-learning Resources

**Table 3 e-learning tools available to instructors in schools**

Responses	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	0	0
No	50	50
Total	50	100

As shown in Table No. 3, none of the institutions claims that all of its teachers have access to e-learning technologies. In no school are teachers who have access to e-learning resources such as smart phones, computers, and the internet available to them.

**Table 4 E-learning materials are shown on a table for students in schools**

Responses	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	0	0
No	50	100
Total	50	100

In accordance with the findings in Table 4, no school claims that all of its students have access to e-learning resources. Smart phones, computers, and internet connections are examples of e-learning technologies that are not accessible to all students in every school.

#### 5.1.4 Attending Online Classes

**Table 5 Student participation in online courses**

Responses	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	0	0
No	50	50
Total	50	100

Interestingly, no school asserts that 100 percent of its students are enrolled in online programmes, as seen in Table 5.

#### 5.1.5 Challenges in Conducting Online Classes

**Table 6 Table illustrating the difficulties schools confront while teaching online**

Responses	No. of respondents	Percentage
Lack of e-learning resources	50	100
Lack of co-operation of teachers	10	20
Lack of co-operation of students	5	10
Lack of ICT skilled teachers	30	60
Other difficulties	10	20

A lack of e-learning resources, according to the data in Table 6, is the most common obstacle to offering online courses. Other obstacles include a lack of teacher cooperation, student disengagement (10 percent), a lack of ICT expertise (60 percent), and a variety of other issues (see Table 7). Table 6: Findings from the survey infact, as many educational institutions recognise, the scarcity of e-learning resources is more visible than any other challenge that schools face while delivering online programmes.

### 5.1.6 Preference of Teaching-learning Mode

**Table 7 Schools' preferred teaching-learning modality**

Responses	No. of respondents	Percentage
Online learning	0	0
Traditional learning	40	80
Blended Learning	10	20
Total	50	100

80% of schools favour conventional teaching-learning methods, whereas only 20% choose integrated learning methods (see table no. 7). Online learning is not recommended by any school.

### 5.2 Objective 2

E-learning in rural locations during the covid-19 epidemic is a difficulty:

The schools' difficulties in conducting online courses are well-known:

- **Lack of e-learning resources:** It is very difficult for rural schools to implement e-learning since they lack fundamental e-learning tools like smart phones, computers, and the internet.
- 100% of rural schools' instructors and pupils will only have access to online learning materials in the distant future.
- **Lack of co-operation of teachers:** Online lessons are sometimes hampered by a lack of cooperation among the school's professors, according to several institutions. Online lessons will be a waste of time if the instructors aren't committed.
- **Lack of co-operation of students:** Students' lack of cooperation has been cited as a problem by several colleges when it comes to online education.
- **Lack of ICT skilled teachers:** It's difficult for schools in remote locations to find faculty who are proficient in information and communications technology (ICT). Taking courses online, however, has exacerbated this problem. Online education in rural India cannot succeed unless this issue is addressed.

## 6. Conclusion

The Covid-19 outbreak has resulted in a spike in the number of students enrolled in online courses. It is a wonderful move taken by the relevant authorities to employ online education to overcome the challenges faced by educational institutions during the epidemic, but its implementation in rural India is a significant challenge for schools. It is possible that rural education may be pushed in the wrong direction rather than forward as a consequence of this. As a consequence, comprehensive research and collaboration between the federal and state governments must be conducted in order to assist rural schools.

### 6.1 Findings

In the research, the results are as follows:

- Why E-learning does not work in rural regions at all.
- During the epidemic, just 20% of schools in rural regions are offering online education.
- It is common for all colleges that provide online courses to do so using WhatsApp.
- E-learning materials aren't available to every instructor at every school.
- There is no one school in which all pupils have access to e-learning tools.
- There has never been a school where 100% of pupils have attended online courses.



- It is difficult for schools to offer online courses because they lack the necessary e-learning tools.
- There isn't a single school that prefers the online teaching and learning style.

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