

# CHAPTER- 05

## ASSESSMENT OF DIGITAL EDUCATION & SKILL TRAINING CENTRE FOR COVID-19 AFFECTED FAMILIES- SCOPE AND CHALLENGES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PANIPECH KALAKAR BASTI OF JAIPUR DISTRICT IN RAJASTHAN

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### INTRODUCTION

Children today have grown up surrounded by digital technology from the moment of their birth. Despite this pervasive exposure, there exists an uneven distribution of digital readiness among today's youth, marked by various digital divides within society that impact their digital futures. It is imperative for schools and educational systems to undergo a comprehensive digital transformation to align with the needs of the younger generation and their increasingly digitalized future. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic compelled schools and educational

institutions to abruptly engage in such a transformation. This study explores the digital shift prompted by the pandemic in the fundamental education of young individuals, highlighting the emergence and reinforcement of various digital divides and identifying potential barriers encountered during this process. The argument posits that information management research should place greater emphasis on children, their digitally infused daily lives, and their foundational education as significant areas of concern [1].

The abrupt closure of schools has resulted in a significant absence of crucial social interaction for students, a factor deemed essential for enhanced learning and overall development. Although many schools have transitioned to online classes, this has introduced a challenging routine for parents who are also engaged in remote work from home. Parents now bear the responsibility of overseeing their children's education alongside managing their own professional commitments, creating a complex and demanding situation [2].

Digital inequalities encompass variations in both the actual access to technology and disparities in digital literacy. Digital literacy refers to individuals' capacity, knowledge, motivation, and competence in accessing, processing, engaging, and comprehending information to derive benefits from digital technologies, including computers, the internet, mobile devices, and applications. These differences in access and digital literacy are intricately interwoven with social, economic, cultural, and global contexts. Importantly, digital inequalities pose heightened risks to socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, exposing them to the virus and the manifold socio-economic consequences of the ongoing pandemic. Despite their significant impact on the spread of the epidemic, addressing digital

inequalities is not currently receiving adequate attention from decision-makers [3].

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

1. To assess the status of educational opportunities for families impacted by COVID-19.
2. To examine the quality of education.
3. To evaluate the extent and difficulties in accessing education for families affected by COVID-19.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study focused on four areas within Jaipur District, namely Panipech, Jaising Pura, Ghirdharipura, and Sanjay Nagar. The sample size included 30 students participating in digital E-Learning and 30 women participating in a skill training batch. Among the women participants, 26 were identified as seasonal labourers, and 2 were involved in retail business. All 30 respondents were residents of Jaipur but hailed from different villages. The study spanned a duration of 3 months, during which primary data was collected from the participants through personal interviews and focused group discussions conducted at the training center and in the field. Additionally, information about the region was obtained from reputable websites and Google. The analysis of the gathered data was carried out using MS Excel. The data collection process involved in-depth interviews with families affected by COVID-19 and the use of an observation checklist.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Analysis of the current status of the Skill Learning Training project in Panipech Kalakar Basti reveals several

noteworthy observations. The digital education program has particularly benefited board students, aiding them in covering their chapters through this innovative learning approach. Surprisingly, over 60% of the total enrolled students lack internet access, yet they have significantly benefited from the program, engaging in regular online classes.

A substantial transformation is observed among the trainees, as 98% of them were initially involved in daily wage labor, but after just three months of enrolment, 76% became self-employed. This underscores the program's effectiveness in providing tangible skills and fostering entrepreneurship among participants. Furthermore, the project has empowered 90% of women who were previously housewives, as they enrolled in stitching courses and subsequently became vital contributors to household income. The analysis of student distribution reveals that 27% of the participants were board students, while 73% were non-board students. In terms of gender, the respondents consisted of 9 females and 21 males. Regarding internet accessibility, 3 students had internet facilities, 11 had partial access, and 16 had no internet access, relying solely on the Digital Education Centre for e-learning.

Upon completion of the skill training program, trainees engaged in various livelihood opportunities. Two individuals ventured into the vegetable shop business, three into Kirana shops, 16 found employment in garment stitching factories, and nine pursued toy making, enhancing their livelihood prospects. This analysis underscores the positive impact of the Skill Learning Training project in Panipech Kalakar Basti, highlighting its efficacy in empowering individuals with skills and positively transforming their socioeconomic status.

## **CONCLUSION**

The education sector in India faced significant challenges during the COVID-19 lockdown, but it also presented various opportunities. To address the crisis, the Indian government and education stakeholders explored the potential of Open and Distance Learning through the adoption of digital technologies.

However, it was acknowledged that India is not fully equipped to ensure widespread access to education through digital platforms, leading to potential disadvantages for students without privileges. The focus was emphasized on leveraging digital technology to create a favourable environment for millions of young students, necessitating educational institutions to strengthen their knowledge and Information Technology infrastructure. It was deemed crucial to prepare for situations similar to the COVID-19 crisis.

While acknowledging the benefits of online learning during the pandemic, there was a call for continued efforts to maximize the utilization of online platforms. The suggestion was made to develop creative strategies to ensure sustainable access to learning for all children during the pandemic. The statement concluded by proposing a detailed statistical study to explore the impact of COVID-19 on India's education system.

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