



Research Article

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Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on Secondary School Education in Upcountry (A Study Based On Alton 2021)

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Abstract: *The recent outbreak of the covid-19 pandemic increased the gaps in the education sector globally. The covid-19 has affected school education worldwide. Most of the governments around the world temporally closed schools in the attempt to contain the spread of covid-19 pandemic. According to the UNESCO report, 1.6 billion children across 191 countries have been severely impact by the temporary closure of the educational institutions. Although Education is the best part of human life. According to the covid-19, government provides e – learning education system to continue the learning process for the students. Its new trend of education system for rural schools students and teachers in the upcountry area. This study focused on impact of covid-19 pandemic on secondary school education in the upcountry. This study further highlights online learning challenges and problems. There are lack of internet specialties, lack of coverage, lack of income, poverty and lack of education equipment. According to that the data collection method was interview and questionnaire, using simple random sampling method for this study. This study investigates the impact of school education system and finding the social, economy and technology obstacles for the rural area's schools in the upcountry. The findings indicate that the pandemic has had serious impact on students learning process and the rural place need to develop the communication and technology for every sectors. As well as this study provides a critical analysis and suggestions.*

Keywords: *Covid-19 Pandemic, Rural Schools, Education, E- Learning Process, Poor Coverage.*

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INTRODUCTION

Today world system based on science and technology. Modern technology before one of the part in education. However now a day's education process depending on technology. Most of the pupil facing many more challenges enables for online education in the third world. Covid-19 is an infectious disease caused by the novel coronavirus. At least 180 countries across the globe have reported confirmed cases of Covid-19 with increasing number of deaths associated with the virus. Therefore still lack of impact for social, economic, education and political sectors. Although online education system was influence in the Covid-19 pandemic period to a certain extent it has become an inevitable part of teaching and learning process of school students' education sectors in during the Covid-19.

Covid-19 posed enormous challenges on the traditional school education system. However, online education into their school education system. But, online education was not given much importance in the rural education sector in the pandemic situation. However, schools due to Covid-19 had prompted the government of Sri Lanka to promote the online mode of education as an alternative solution to continue school education activity during a crisis. Thus, online education has presently become an essential component of Sri Lanka's school education sector. There are many obstacles and challenges confronting the school

education sectors, particularly in the schools of Sri Lanka to support online education successfully. However rural students facing more problems according to the online education. Specifically those communities have not enough technology access to connect to the E-learning process. Mannikm (1997), according to this background, this study attempts to give an insight into the impact of Covid-19 on teaching and learning process of Alton Tamil Vidhyala, Upcot.

This study focused on the challenges subtended by the students in Alton school. It's one of the rural school in Sri Lanka. Here students haven't proper internet specialties to contact e – learning process. According to these problems many students left the education sector, most of the student dropout, find some work to go and lose long time for other unwanted activities.

Research Objectives

This study main objective is why that school students facing challenges to continue online education during Covid-19 pandemic. This is main objective for this study.

Sub Objectives

- identify the Covid-19 impact of education sectors
- Identify the rural school system's challenges and problem for pandemic situation.

- To find out impact of Covid-19 on student and teacher in Sri Lanka.
- To fine out the positive and negative impact of Covid-19 on education sector.

METHODOLOGY

This study focused on the problems and challenges by the school student on the Alton Tamil vidyala in Upcot. Its followed integrate method and used qualitative and quantitative method to study the problems. It's used social research method to followed simple random sample Method to selected 60 samples and collected data and Primary and secondary data collection method based in this study. This study used interview, discussion and observation method to collect the data for this research. This study concern data analysis method to all data were first entered in excel spread sheet, clean and then enter in SPSS for analysis and Associations between variables calculate to finalize the data.

Research Place

Alton T.V. school one of the rural school in Sri Lanka. This school located at Alton estate in the Hatton zonal of the central province in Sri Lanka. It was established on 1993. It was primary school however later upgraded to a secondary school last two years ago. Which initially had One to Eleven classes in this school. Students representing all religions, gender, and ethnic group across the regional are enrolled in the school. This school provide scholarship results and O - level results. It has presently 230 students and 17 teachers. It's functioning under the auspices of the semi government of Sri Lanka nation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This school haven't good qualification of the resources and teachers. Mostly plantation children are studying here. As when government closed all the education institutions in the country again 12of April 2021 and suspended all academic activities. This school also closed. However all schools started online education for the students. Alton school teachers also started the online education for these school students. However students cannot participate the proper way in the online education.

School teachers and students are following online teaching and learning method. Although there were many difficulties involved in the teaching and learning process via online, the school took tenable measures to implement the online education system. However the Scholarship students (grade five student) and O - level students are waiting for the final examination. Education ministry have had hard times to grapple with an unprecedented direction of covid-19 to carry on their teaching and learning activities, administrative duties and the new challenges of online learning.

The pandemic forced administered of school education sectors, particularly the schools in Sri Lanka to mobilize students and staff to cope with a new turn of events and come up with constructive and innovative ideas to address those challenges working in collaboration with various stakeholders of schools. Like principal, teachers and students in the system. The following theory based studies method only. Here cannot continue practical studies. Therefore they cannot cover practical vice subjects on the time.

The following sub – topics shed light on the impact and challenges to the teaching and learning process of Alton school during the Covid-19 pandemic.

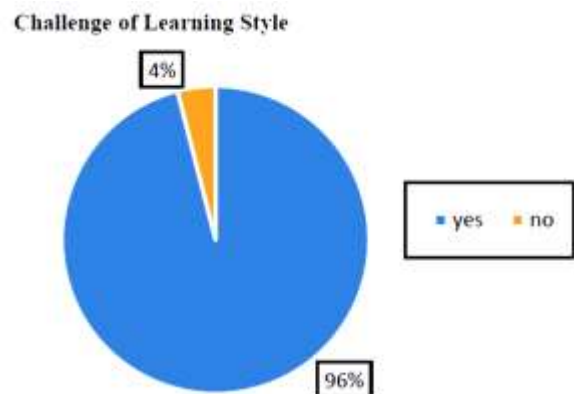


Figure 1. Challenges of Learning Style
Source: Students Survey (2021)

E-learning is very different from the ordinary classroom style teacher student learning environment as the broken here. Is to motivate the student to learn by himself using provided resources and study materials via. The online route by the e learning product provider in contrast classroom environment where the teacher. Motivate the student to learn using the available for class room system. As it is be noted that the self – learning style is not flow that. Most of the students haven't smart phone to contact the class. As they don't know right information to use the device to participate the class to get the knowledge. The online education system is new one for the students and teachers. They can't participate to nice way. Because of the reason they practice school class room system. Now a days they facing google class rooms. Its make trouble for them. The results of the study showed 96% students statements its "online learning system no need for us. We want school studies" like that.

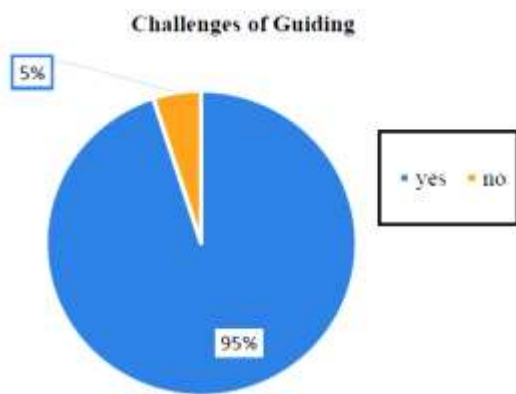


Figure 2. Challenges of Guiding
Source: Students Survey (2021)

When they started to learning on online. Every time students and teachers in home. That environment make some noise to continue those studies. Therefore home not suitable place to studies. Students or teachers need to refer notes or books, they haven't that specialties for them houses. Students don't know to join the class, teacher can be given instructions only for the student. But teacher cannot do help for practically. These are the major challenges for e – learning studies. According to the data collection of discussion method 89% students and teachers facing this kind of challenging in the research area.

E - Learning environment, in the absence of the learning level, understanding level, memory retention and recall level and other measurable factors relating to delivery and receipt of education, development of courses will be difficult as the courses designer needs. Students don't know about LMS system, as they haven't enough resource to contact with e learning system, they haven't any body to teach about how to use the technology device to contact the google class, they don't know how to submit the assignment they don't know how to shift the online examination its major issues for rural school students. The results of the study showed 96% students are facing this problem in the research area.

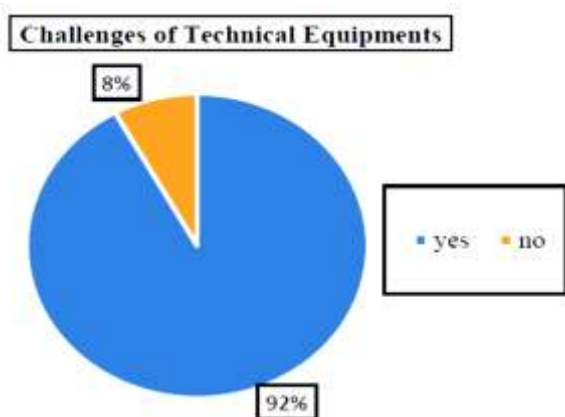


Figure 3. Challenges of Technical Equipment
Source: Students Survey (2021)

Being that e learning products are radically different than traditional methods of education, there will be a need for prior instruction for the students and teachers who will be using the products. It is important for the teacher to familiarize himself or herself with the product so that can help his students in understanding the study. Thoroughly, so that they can learn that most from it. This knowledge cannot be drilled into everyone easily as it. According to the results of the study showed e - learning system 92% students not understand the subjects.

Most of the teacher and student cannot used electronical Learning materials relevant the rural area. Now Students were uploaded through the school Moodle based learning management system (LMS) and login accounts for teachers and students were also provided. Several steps were taken to improve communication between teachers and students using e learning process. Most of the students were able to communicate with their teachers and mentors through online tutorials were also provided to develop teachers' online teaching knowledge. However rural area school teachers and students when used this kind of device for online education. They haven't any idea about use the learning management system to the online and also faced coverage problems.

Although the schools faced several challenges in terms of implementing online education, the initiatives of the school in dealing with education during a crisis situation were significant. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, the school was not thoroughly adopted e learning using learning management system. Which stored all the learning materials uploaded by classes of the school. As the school remained closed for five months continuously due to lockdown enforced by the government, it was forced to turn to online learning using various online platforms. Like a zoom, Microsoft teams, and google meet to ensure that students completed their syllabus on time. Before the outbreak of the Covid-19, school students we not involved in online learning according to the online.

FINDINGS

- School students faced more social and economic challenges in paying attention to online learning system.
- 85% of the students faced poverty in the covid- 19 pandemic situation.
- 45% of student faced lack of power problem in the research area.
- 95% of students faced lack of place to study. (they have 2 rooms only in the line houses)
- 80 % of students get stress to study at home.
- 93% of students noted the online education system very difficult to study.

- 7% of students noted that the online education system saves time and money. Its helps students to organize themselves to study.
- 80% of the students said that online learning enabled them to improve their knowledge by engaging in mutual discussions. Many students pointed out that although student felt lonely during the Covid-19.
- 90% of students noted that they faced difficulties in paying full attention to online learning. some student pointed out that they had struggled with e – learning due to the factors such as a sudden change in learning patterns, they economic status, loneliness at home, their lifestyle and lack of it skill
- One student mentioned that “*online education was that the best method to study. This method helped us to carry out our understanding successfully. The teachers not hitting and scolding us*”.
- One student mentioned that, “*I haven’t smart phone, therefore I can’t join online education. I don’t know how to learn*”.
- Internet connectivity was one of the most critical problems faced this school students during the Covid-19. 98% students mentioned this problem.
- Students who lived in backward and rural areas. They did not have proper internet facilities. Most viable technological and communication equipment was required for students.
- Accessing too well – equipped tele communication equipment for students in poverty was a really challenges task. Thus lack of devices such as laptop, desktop and smart phones during the lockdown of Covid-19 ensured that students could not continue education via online.
- Financial difficulties on the part of students and their parents. More importantly, with more number of families and individual were alarmed and panic over the outbreak of Covid-19. 75% students were not in a good mood to continue their studies online.
- Most of the families had limited or no access to the internet. Such a situation contributed to a lack of accessibility to e - learning by students.
- 45% students lived in far – flung area that did not even access to the internet connections and lack of coverage. This had posed a tremendous challenges to continue their online education.
- 4G connection is required to get the best online delivery. 80% Students in many rural area faced several difficulties in getting 4g connectivity. In the absence of consistent online connectivity.

Recommendations

- Providing vaccination for all the students and teachers.
- Providing ICT facilities for remote areas in Sri Lanka.
- Training teachers to run online classes and consider students access to technology

- Putting strategies in place to ensure children return to school when they reopen the school.
- Understanding students ‘family background and providing appropriate counselling and support for pupil and parents.
- Parents should engaging students’ education.
- Supporting through both online and off line learning method.
- Provide to digital infrastructure for rural school’s students to participate e – learning process.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has discussed, the Covid-19 has had a very broad impact on people life in the world. Many countries effect this impact of Covid-19 pandemic. The Covid-19 has had an impact of education sector. Which due to the nature of the sector, relies on the physical presence of the teachers and students in the schools. The lockdown enforced to reduce the Covid-19 has had an effect on this sector as students are being taught, via the online by the teachers who are adjusting themselves to this new paradigm. Issues relating to the changed situation. Most of the rural area haven’t quality of communication and technology to continue the study. When the students start to study on online they facing more challenges and problems according to the internet connectivity for Covid-19 pandemic situation. However, students and teachers should understand is difficult situation to make some alternative to continue to education process. It can be make better future to them.

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