

A Study on Inequalities in Education created due to Rural-Urban Divide and class position with special reference to Assam

Dr. Moyuri Sarma^a, MS. Kasturi Das^b

^aAssistant Professor, Department of Education, Gauhati University

^bResearch Scholar, Department of Education, Gauhati University

Email-^amoyurisarma89@gmail.com, ^bkasturydas26@gmail.com

Article History: Received: 11 January 2021; Revised: 12 February 2021; Accepted: 27 March 2021; Published online: 28 April 2021

Abstract: The conceptualized term of rural – urban divide exaggerates the gap of inequality in the sense of education, income distribution, quality of life, modern amenities and technological advancement. In India inequalities in education and learning achievement is increasing gradually due to rural-urban divide paradigm. At present, the world is witnessing an unprecedented human health pandemic COVID-19 which compels us to rethink in all aspects of human life including educational facilities. During COVID-19 imbalance and inequalities are clearly manifested in terms of unequal access to visual learning and online facilities in rural areas. Most of the students in rural areas are affected and deprived of attending online classes due to no accessibility of technology. Socio-economic condition and source of livelihood of rural households are shaken due to the COVID-19 pandemic and it exerts negative impact on children's education and mental health as well in comparison to the urban areas. Specially in Assam, it is clearly visible that education and learning process are jeopardized and students committed suicide due to lack of android mobile for e-learning. This rural- urban divide intensifies the inequalities in education and learning process. In the present research work the investigators attempts to highlight the inequalities in education due to rural-urban divide. Descriptive survey method has been applied and purposive sampling technique was used while selecting sample for collecting data. The analysis has been done on the basis of descriptive statistics.

Keywords: education, inequalities, rural-urban divide, class position

1. Introduction

The conceptualized term of rural urban divide exaggerates the gap of equality in the sense of education, income distribution, quality of live, modern amenities and technological advancement. In India inequalities in education and learning achievement is increasing gradually due to rural urban divide. Presently, the world is witnessing an unprecedented human health Pandemic COVID-19 which compels us to rethink in all aspects of human life including educational facilities. During covid-19, imbalances and inequalities are clearly manifested in terms of unequal access to virtual learning and online facilities in rural areas. UNESCO estimates that over 87% of the worlds' student's population is currently unable to attend school or university. In India 42 percent families in urban areas have access to the internet facilities whereas in rural India only 15 percent families have access to the internet.¹ Most of the students of rural areas are affected and deprived of taking online learning due to non-accessibility of technology. According to a UNESCO report, overall, about 40 percent of low and lower middle-income countries have not supported learners at risk of exclusive during COVID-19 pandemic, such as those living in remote areas, the poor, linguistic minorities and learners with disabilities.² Socio economic conditions and livelihood sources of rural households are harshly affected due to the covid-19 pandemic and it exerts negative impact on children's education and mental health. In India and especially, in Assam it is clearly visible that education and learning process are jeopardized and students committed suicide due to lack of android for e-learning. This rural-urban divide intensifies the inequalities in education and learning process.

2. Review of related literature:

Following are the review of related literature which are directly or indirectly related to the inequalities in education created due to rural-urban divide and class position-

Tilak (1992) made a study to find out rural-urban inequalities in education. It is found that the private cost of education in urban areas is more than double to the cost in rural areas. The tendency to spend less on education on the part of the rural parents can be easily understood in terms of their relatively weaker economic positions, as reflected by the age-earning profiles.³

Jain (2020) in his article highlighted that Maharashtra state government started rolling out e-learning content to students from both government and aided schools for grades I to IX, but most of the students belongs to economically backward families are not able to get benefit of that because of their parent's poverty.⁴

Kapoor and Yadav (2020) made a study on how corona virus accentuates inequalities? According to their study in India poor are the most vulnerable to the pandemic and its after affects. The access to education is more challenging for child from poorer house holds. For majority of Indians, Digital learning is still not available option.⁵

3. Significance of the study:

During this pandemic, differential dichotomy of development in the sense of quality life and educational facilities is rising in rural areas than urban areas. In the remote areas of Assam, there is a necessity to investigate on inequalities in receiving online education, accessibility of technology for virtual learning, and so on and so forth. The investigators have tried to highlight the inequalities in education due to rural- urban divide.

It is the need of the hour to focus on the unequal gap of development especially in the rural area.

4. Objectives of the study:

The objectives of the study are-

1. To examine the inequalities in receiving proper educational facilities during COVID -19 pandemic.
2. To enquire the socio-economic position of the rural households.

5. Design of the study:

The study is based on the following line of action-

Method :- The study has been conducted on the basis of descriptive survey method.

Sources of data :- The data has been collected from two sources -

- a) Primary source- Personal and telephonic interview with students and parents
- b) Secondary Source- Information are collected from various reports prepared by national and international agencies on COVID-19 pandemic, authentic websites, some journals etc.

Tool:- A self structured interview schedule has been used as a tool for data collection.

Population:- The population of the study comprises of all the students studying in class IX and X standard and their parents who belongs to below poverty line.

Mode of Sampling: The researcher has applied purposive sampling technique for collecting information from the respondents. In the present study, the researcher has chosen 30 students and 30 parents as respondents for sample survey.

6. Delimitation of the study:

1. The study is delimited to the Hajo developmental block of Kamrup District, Assam.
2. Students studying in class IX and X and their parents (daily wage earner) have been taken as sample.

7. Analysis and inter pretantion of data:

After collection of the data, a systematic analysis and interpretation has been done according to the objectives of the study-

Objective 1: -. To examine the inequalities in receiving proper educational facilities during COVID-19 pandemic

Table 1 Inequalities In Education

SL. NO	PARAMETERS	RESPONSE (%)		TOTAL
		Yes	No	
1	Getting education in well-defined regular	0(0%)	30(100%)	30(100%)

	mode			
2	Learning through online or digital platform	4(14%)	26(86%)	30(100%)
3	Facilities of e-learning through internet access	2(7%)	28(93%)	30(100%)
4	Availability of digital technology or internet	3(10%)	27(90%)	30(100%)
5	Lack of Android mobile causes educational deprivation	22(72%)	8(28%)	30(100%)

Source: Personal and telephonic interview with students.

From the TABLE 1 it is observed that 100% respondents view that they are not able to get education in a well-defined regular mode. It has extensively affected the learning processes during the pandemic situation in the study area. 86% respondents never experienced any form of learning through digital platform. Further, 93% respondents expressed that there are no facilities of e-learning through internet accessibility during the covid-19. It creates hindrances in academic activities of students in the study area. 90% respondents are of the view that there is no availability of digital technology or internet. Furthermore, 91% respondents said that lack of android mobile handsets causes learning and educational deprivation and it leads to educational imbalance. It is clear from the table that due to rural-urban divide; inequalities are prevalent in education; teaching and learning and it hampers educational proficiency of the students. Therefore, Government needs to pay adequate attention in providing digital facilities in the rural areas of Kamrup District, Assam.

OBJECTIVE 2: -To enquire the socio-economic position of the rural households

TABLE 2 Socio-Economic Position Of Rural Households

Sl.No.	Parameters	Response (%)		Total
		Yes	No	
1	Lack of income facilities create hardship during Lockdown	28(95%)	2(5%)	30(100%)
2	Joblessness rises during covid-19	29(97%)	1(3%)	30(100%)
3	Deteriorating the economic stability of the family	28(94%)	2(6%)	30(100%)
4	Facing trouble to feed the family	26(88%)	4(12%)	30(100%)
5	Family’s financial crisis exerts impact on children’s education and mental health	27(90%)	3(10%)	30(100%)
6	Emphasis on continuation of children’s education	14(45%)	16(55%)	30(100%)
7	Financial aid from government	5(18%)	25(82%)	30(100%)
8	Interest to engage children in household earning activities instead of education	16(52%)	14(48%)	30(100%)

Source: Personal and telephonic interview with parents.

Table 2 displays the socio-economic positions of rural households during the pandemic. 95% respondents expressed that due to lack of income generation opportunities, they face hardship in running their families. 97% respondents are of view that covid-19 pandemic narrows down the job opportunities and affects in increasing joblessness to a large extent in the study area. Further, 94% respondents said that economic stability of family is deteriorating due to loss of workforce. 88% respondents reveal that they are facing trouble to feed their family members. It amounts to human food crisis in the study area which poses threat to the basic fundamental right to life. Furthermore, 90% respondents viewed that children’s education and mental health are largely affected due to family’s economic crisis. Children are getting unexpected hardship their studies learning and inclusive mental

growth. 45% respondents said that they put emphasis on their children's education in future as being practised earlier. 82% respondents revealed that they did not receive any type of financial aids from the government. Furthermore, 56% respondents showed their interest to engage their children in household earning activities instead of sending to school.

Thus, it is distinct from the above analysis that socio-economic positions of rural households are drowning due to the pandemic in the study area.

8. Major findings of the study:

The findings of the study were arranged as under-

1. All the respondents are not able to get education in a well-defined regular mode in the study area.
2. Only 14% respondents can avail the facility of online learning. 86% respondents never had the online or digital learning experience.
3. 93% respondents did not receive e-learning facilities through internet accessibility in the study area during covid-19.
4. Most of the respondents expressed that there is no required facility for digital technology or internet in the study area.
5. 91% respondents said that lack of android mobile handsets hampers education and learning process.
6. Majority of respondents expressed their concern on lack of income generation facilities for which they find it hard to run their lives.
7. 97% respondents said that amid Pandemic, joblessness raises in the study area.
8. Most of the respondents suffered from economic instability and deteriorating condition of their families.
9. 88% respondents are facing trouble to feed their family members during pandemic.
10. 90% respondents revealed that family's economic crisis creates hindrances in the way of their children's academic as well as moral life.
11. Only 45% respondents put emphasis on supporting their children's education in future as before in the study area.
12. Most of the respondents did not get any type of financial aids from the government side during covid-19.
13. 52% respondents expressed interest to engage their children in household earning activities instead of education.

9. Suggestions:

After consideration of the findings revealed from the study, the following suggestions can be recommended to reduce and remove inequalities in education and to restore equal class position of rural households-

1. Educational imbalance between rural and urban students should be reduced through equal provision in the sense of quality educational life.
2. The school authority and government departments should concentrate on imparting education through blended learning method during pandemic.
3. Government should facilitate the provision of digital technology in the rural areas to avail the internet access.
4. Government through local educational and social authority make available of android mobile to needy one for getting online e-learning.
5. In Rural socially devoted academic organisations should take initiative to arrange digital online community educational centre for those students who are deprived of benefits of e-learning by following the covid-19 protocols.
6. Students should be encouraged to boost up their morale to readjust with learning activities amid COVID-19 pandemic.
7. The government should provide all kinds of material and financial aids to needy jobless people.
8. Non- government organisations and government should make available of required goods to those families which are in food crisis.
9. All modern amenities should be generated at the rural level.
10. Strategic planning and policy should be taken at the national and local level to decrease the rural-urban divide.

10. Conclusion:

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the unequal gap between rural and urban area is transparent in the context of education, livelihood, and facilities. Rural urban dichotomy intensifies the level of inequalities and imbalances in all-round development of rural human life, educational and learning opportunities.

It can be summarized that a time –oriented mechanism should be taken to amplify equality in rural and urban areas.

References

1. UNESCO Report(2020):Over 154 cr. Students hit by Schools, Colleges Closer due to Covid-19; Girls to be Worst hit.m.economictimes.com
2. Apte,J.(2020): The Challenge of (online) Education in India During The Covid-19 Pandemic.
3. <https://www.statecraft.co.in>article>
4. Kalita, B.(2020):Education Strategies Adopted during COVID-19 Are Not Inclusive: UNESCO Report.
5. <https://www.ndtv.com>
6. Tilak, Dr. J.B.G.(1992): Rural –Urban Inequalities in Education. Centre for Multi-Disciplinary Development Research. pp 1-46.
7. Jain,S.(2020): Corona Virus Crisis’ Impact On Rural India Exposes Inequality and Pitfalls in Access to Education .
8. <https://www.firstpost.com>india>
9. Kapoor,A. &Yadav, C.(2020): How Corona virus Accentuates Inequality. <economictimes.indiatimes.com>.