

Research Article

Pandemic COVID-19's Impact on Education Sector in Goa

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ABSTRACT

Education is one of the most important social sectors of human resource development. This sector is the second one most hit by the Pandemic, the first one being the health sector. Education sector in the small state of Goa has been very badly hit by the onset of the pandemic since the second week of March 2020. The precautionary measures to protect the students from the spread of the disease was the first step initiated by the State Government and ordered closure of all educational institutions from the third week of March, 2020. Thereafter, various rounds of central government ordered Lock down and ever-increasing incidences of the positive cases in the State from the second week of June has forced the Students of all the levels except SSC or X Students to remain confined at home. The High School (SSC) students were allowed to appear the examinations in very highly controlled and closely monitored conditions. The teachers were assigned non-academic, quasi-academic or semi academic pandemic related surveys, monitoring of relief work during the countrywide lockdown period. The summer vacation coincided with the lock down period. After the reopening of the educational institutions in a phased manner, teachers have reported to institutions but devoid of students.

The study is based on the News Items and Government Reports appearing from time to time and the circulars and notifications issued by education regulatory authorities in Goa using simple exploratory and descriptive methods. Observation by the authors and feedback received from students' community has also been used.

The formalities of teaching and learning are going on across the state at all levels of education in the state by innovative as well as state sponsored mandatory methods using various platforms of Learning Management System (LMS). Different methods of LMS are being experimented such as Google meet, Zoom meeting, Microsoft 365, etc. notwithstanding the limitation of affordability, accessibility and feasibility for the students. The outcome will be known only after the stake holder's realization and experience in the long run. The worst affected students are the ones, who had terminal years such as high school (SSC), higher secondary school (HSSC), Graduating (Degree courses), Post Graduating and Research Degree (Ph. D.) aspiring candidates who are stranded at their career's 'traffic islands' (cross road) or 'Cloud of Earning' (aspiration for jobs) for themselves and their dependents. The situation is far beyond human control now and the future looks uncertain for most of the stakeholders of education not only in the state but all over the world. Moreover, UGC and the Universities across the country are trying their best to save the essence of the Degrees to the pass outs during the pandemic. Time will test the acceptance of these measures in the long run and sustainability of educational development.

Keywords: Cloud of earning, Lock down, Mandatory methods, Pandemic, Stake holders, Traffic islands

INTRODUCTION

Education sector in the small state of Goa has been very badly hit by the onset of the pandemic since the second week of March 2020. The precautionary measures to protect the students from the spread of the disease was the first step initiated by the State Government and ordered closure of all educational institutions from the third week of March, 2020. Thereafter, various rounds of central government ordered Lock down and ever-increasing incidences of the positive cases in the State from the second week of June has forced the Students of all the levels except SSC or X Students to remain confined at home. The SSC students were allowed to appear the examinations in very highly controlled and closely monitored condition. The teachers were assigned non-academic or semi academic pandemic related survey, monitoring of relief work during the countrywide lockdown period. The summer vacation coincided with the lock down period. After the reopening of the educational institutions in a phased manner, teachers have reported to institutions but devoid of students.

Choice and Rational of the Topic

Goa is one of the most economically prosperous states of India. It has always exhibited good quality education from the ancient days to the present. Goa had also a very good formal education system due to its long colonial role from 1510 to 1961. Many

education seekers, even today flow in to Goa from various parts of India towards achieving better educational attainment through IIT, NIT, NIO, NCOAR-NCAPOLR, BIT's Pilani-Goa Campus, GMC, GIM, Goa University, etc. These institutions cater various higher educational needs of competitive students from India and glorify the education sectors of Goa. These institutions are in addition to the well knit educational net work of school, college, professional education of the state government. The role played by all the institutions for educational contributions cannot be overlooked in any measure. The study has focused primarily on the educational scenario and its limitations due to the pandemic COVID-19. The study has also underlined the steps taken by the educational regulators and authorities to provide temporary relief for educational gains during this unprecedented situation to provide solace to the family and the society. The emergency measures taken by the authorities as the care taker of the whole system is regarded both positive and negative depending on the impact on the students, their family members and the teaching community in the State. The study has highlighted on the impact in all related sectors of education. Since this research attempt is primarily concentrating on current scenario of education in Goa based on secondary data, it is not a substantial study carried out in the state; this study has been carried out to provide a knowledge base only for the current educational scenario.

OBJECTIVES

The following are the broad objectives of the study

1. To analyse the impediments to smooth educational attainment in Goa due to the pandemic COVID-19.
2. To understand the difficulties faced by the students, teachers, management, University and the regulatory bodies in running the affairs of the educational system.
3. To study the status of teachers in the society and their authority in the current situation.
4. To foresee the problems to be faced by the students due to the current covid-19 pandemic.

DATABASE AND METHODOLOGY

The study is based on the News Items and Government Reports appearing from time to time and the circulars and notifications issued by education regulatory authorities in Goa using simple exploratory and descriptive methods. Observation by the authors and feedback received from students' community has also been used. The study was carried out primarily based on secondary data, which has been obtained through:

- Government and non - governmental publications.
 - Research contributions through series of Webinars, on line courses, journals and articles.
 - Reference books and magazines.
 - Web based information including social and public media documents and
 - Newspapers and news bulletins by various channels in India.
- a) Web Documents: Many scholarly research papers and articles that are available in pdf format on the internet have been referred.
- b) Miscellaneous sources like the newspapers, magazines, etc. were reviewed, which helped to gather relevant information for proceeding with this study.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON EDUCATION

The urge and necessities for education to gain knowledge and skill has increased all over the world after the Second World War more particularly with the increase in the pace of economic activities, urbanisation, mechanization and modernization. There are many factors contributing to the decision of the people to seek education, which include economic, social, cultural as well as psychological factors. While seeking educational attainment, it always aims for the purpose of employment or hike in social status. Thus, the people seek education with a hope to earn their livelihood and look after their families.

Education is considered as a universal step towards enhancement in social and economic development. In rural areas of developing economies, there is limitation for attaining educational qualification; hence people migrate to urban areas to fill the gap despite under employment, low income and poverty. Urban areas have the opportunities or awareness of the same elsewhere. Hence, they are blessed with better opportunities. There was a kind of gender bias in educational attainment in developing countries till the turn of this century, which is disappearing slowly all over the world. The analysis of education patterns is often explained in the context of India's historical, institutional and socio-cultural norms that characterizes women playing secondary fiddle to economic and social roles to those of men.

Those who have better education and skill have the high probability to get employment in the urban organized sector, while those who do not have basic education and skills get opportunity in the expanded informal sector, such as domestic helpers, hotels and construction activities, etc. Improved communication facilities of transportation in the form of railway, road and air connectivity, good network communication and resultant

changes in attitudes and values have also promoted educational migration. There are several demographic factors that determine the educational attainment of a person. Age of the students, family size, parent's education, etc. is the main determining factors in the educational in migration to Goa. The state's safe environment is an added attraction for the out - station students education in Goa, especially the female students from outside states. It is generally observed that people having low level of education and from poorer section motivate their children to achieve educational success.

Profile of Goa

Goa, the 25th state of the union is located on the west coast of India. The smallest state in India, Goa covers an area of 3,702 km². Situated on the western coast of India; Goa shares its northern boundary with Maharashtra. Karnataka covers the eastern and southern boundary of the state. Panaji is the capital city of the state of Goa. One of the major tourist destinations in India, Goa also houses some of the best educational institutes of the nation. The scenario of education here is comparatively better than many other states of the nation.

Physiographically, it is divided into three parts, i.e., the coastal plains, the midland plateau region and the ghat section of the Sahyadri. Though many ruled Goa, it was the impact of Portuguese that influenced the socio- cultural life of the people. The Portuguese conquered Goa in the year 1510. Goa was under the yoke of the Portuguese for nearly 450 years. It was only on 19th December 1961, that Goa was liberated from the Portuguese rule. Since then it has shown great progress and development in almost all fields of activity. In fact, Goa is having a high standard of living, high level of urbanization, high overall literacy (87 percent), socio-cultural development and is listed among the developed states of the country.

Historical Development of Education in Goa

Goa has made tremendous improvement in the literacy level, and there exists a close co-relation between the levels of literacy and the progress and development of the educational system in Goa, which is the main instrument of social change and the main agency for the development of human resources. In recent years, there has been a movement towards homogeneity in the levels of literacy. The regional contrasts have almost diminished as the areas of high level of literacy have expanded significantly, shrinking the areas, which earlier recorded low levels of literacy. This was due to the allocation of funds by the state in the field of education, and the participation of the people in this mission. The achievements of literacy are an outcome of variable

attributes executed by the government and policy makers. Free education in the mother tongue, establishment of educational institutes, improved accessibility, women emancipation and infrastructural developments are the key factor.

Literacy and Education of Goa

Goa enjoys a place of pride in the country as one of the most literate states of India. The state has achieved 87.40 per cent literacy as per the 2011 population census. The education system of Goa is effectively streamlined in keeping with the National Policy on Education, 1986 as modified in 1992 to upgrade the quality of education at all levels. The state has already enacted the Compulsory Education Act (1995) and has enforced it from 5-9-1996 to ensure that no child in the age group of 6-14 years remains out of school. The need of the hour is to reinforce its educational policy towards bridging regional and gender gaps, reducing the drop-out rate, emphasizing skill development and vocational programmes to curb unemployment, improving quality of education, infrastructure development in schools, orientation of teachers, computer integrated education and up gradation of libraries. Goa Education Development Corporation (GEDC) has been established under Goa Education Development Corporation Act 2003, with the aim of achieving to promote and assist in the rapid and orderly establishment, growth and development of educational institutions, services and facilities in the state of Goa, in order to develop competitive, flexible and value based education system to meet the individual, institutional and socio cultural developmental needs of the people of Goa. According to the 2011 census, Goa has a literacy rate of 87%, with 90% of males and 84% of females being literate. All the schools in Goa come under the Goa Board of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education, whose syllabus is prescribed by the state education department. There are also a few schools that subscribe to the all-India ICSE syllabus or the NIOS syllabus. Most students in Goa complete their high school with English as the medium of instruction. Most primary schools, however, use Konkani and Marathi (in private, but government-aided schools). As in the case in most of India, enrolment for vernacular media has seen a fall in numbers in favour of English medium education. As per a report published in The Times of India, 84% of Goan primary schools run without administrative head. After ten years of schooling, students join a Higher Secondary School, which offers course in popular streams such as Science, Arts, Law and Commerce. A student may also opt for a course in vocational studies. Additionally, they many join three-year diploma courses. Two years of higher secondary, is followed by a professional degree programme. Goa University, the sole university in Goa, is located in Taleigao and most Goa colleges are affiliated to it.

Education System in Goa

Just like most states of India, the state government mostly manages the education system in Goa, although various institutions are private run. The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) in India, which motivates to maintain the standard and quality of education in the colleges and universities, have accredited many institutions of higher education in Goa. The Education Structure followed in Goa in hierarchical order from bottom to top is Pre Primary-Primary-Middle-Secondary-Higher Secondary-Degree-University level and so on.

Primary Education in Goa

The Directorate of Education under Government of Goa at Porvorim (headquarters) is responsible for the administration and regulation of the education in schools. This department also ensures the implementation of the Compulsory Education Act (1995) and the Right to Education Act (2005), which deals with the education of children belonging to the 6 to 14 age group. In addition, the state government also provides for a center for enhancing the creative skills of children, between the ages of 3 to 16. The activities, in the various branches of the Goa Bal Bhavan all over the state, include creative writing, performing arts such as dance and music, computer training, and creative arts such as painting and craft- making. A science park in the Panaji center helps promote interest in science through models and games. Most schools in Goa follow the state examination board, but there are private ones as well that follow the central examination boards, such as CBSE or ICSE/ISC.

School Education in Goa

The quality of the state-run schools & low level of corruption has added to the betterment of school education in Goa. There is not much demand for private schools in Goa as people are quite happy with the performance of the government schools at all levels. There are approximately 2,153 schools in Goa which includes primary schools, middle schools, secondary schools and higher secondary schools. Most of the schools in Goa are affiliated to the state board of education. However, one can also come across schools affiliated to the CBSE and ICSE board. English is the main medium of instruction at the schools in Goa. Konkani and Portuguese are also taught in several schools of the state. Goa is multidimensional hub for education.

Higher Education

Goa University is the premier centre of higher studies in the state and most of the colleges are affiliated to it. One can also come across medical and engineering colleges

in Goa. There exist both private and government engineering colleges in the state. BITS Pilani-Goa is also a renowned institute which grants admission to the students on the basis of their performance in the all-India aptitude test conducted by the institute. Some of the college in Goa offer courses in arts, commerce, science, law, architecture, dentistry, marine engineering, hotel management, fisheries and pharmacy. The National Centre for Antarctic and Ocean Research (NCAR), Vasco-da-Gama and the National Institute of Oceanography (NIO), Dona Paula are scientific oceanographic laboratories located in Goa, offering training and opportunities for further studies and research in affiliation with universities like Goa University etc. Goa Institute of Management (GIM) established in the year 1993 is a famous B-school of the region. Goa boasts of not only a flourishing tourism but also a higher degree of education awareness and quality. The pristine ambience of the state makes it a sought after education destination to the students from India and abroad. Education is considered a part of the culture in Goa and this has helped both the genders (92.81% for males and 81.84% for females) to embrace it wholeheartedly.

Education in Goa Post COVID-19 Scenario

For all the students, the onset of the pandemic has led to devastation of career, their health and safety. The travel restriction has increased further challenges and uncertainty, with many stranded far from home. They are likely to work in the formal and informal economy, especially in the service sector. They are also more likely to be engaged in short-term and part-time work.

Various agencies have identified the following problems faced by the students in Goa:

- Many out - station students are just abandoned by their institutions in the hour of crisis, asking them to leave their campuses, denied food access from last week of March till 17th May.
- One of the biggest pressures was faced from their landlords to pay the pending rents once the lockdown is lifted.
- Out station students, particularly those from poor class have limited or no access to social protection, health care and social protection because they are generally excluded from social insurance schemes.

The onset of the epidemic related events has spread panic among the citizen and the education community in Goa from the second and third week of March, 2020. Various rounds of central government ordered and State Government executed Lock downs and ever increasing incidences of the positive cases in the State brought uncertainties in the minds and psyche of the educational communities. The worst has happened

from the second week of June, when fresh bout of the positive cases emerged in Goa that has forced the Students of all the levels except SSC or X Students to remain confined at home. The SSC students were allowed to appear the examinations in very highly controlled and closely monitored condition.

The teachers were assigned non – academic, quasi-or semi academic or peripheral academic works for example, pandemic related house hold survey, monitoring of relief work during the countrywide lockdown period, post lock down economic revival plan related survey, etc. The summer vacation coincided with the lock down period. After the reopening of the educational institutions in a phased manner, teachers have reported to institutions but devoid of students. They are kept engaged in getting training for preparation of online teaching methods to be implemented during 2020-21 academic year. Individual and team efforts are put to prepare e content to be delivered to the students through different online learning management systems (LMS).

The formalities of teaching and learning are going on across the state at all levels of education in the state by innovative as well as state sponsored mandatory methods using various platforms of Learning Management System (LMS). Different methods of LMS are being experimented such as Google meet, Zoom meeting, Microsoft 365, etc. notwithstanding the limitation of affordability, accessibility and feasibility for the students.

There are number of difficulties faced by the students as reported in all the newspapers that the students do not have the devices like Laptop, Smart phones and or the gadgets like I pad, which are essential items of having access to online learning. Internet Connectivity is an universal limitation to the students and majority of the teachers. The regulators have been putting up efforts to provide either individual or small group access to on line learning facilities. It is hoped that it gets functional for the sustainability of online teaching and learning in Goa. The outcome will be known only after the stake holder's realization in the long run.

The worst effected students are the ones, who had terminal years such as SSC, HSSC, Graduating, Post Graduating and Research Degree aspiring candidates who are stranded at their career's 'traffic islands' or 'Cloud of Earning' for themselves and their dependents. As per the guidelines of MHRD, the State Government is attempting to address the problems of the children upto HSSC in providing a legitimate and sustainable educational certificate of their terminal classes, X and XII. Similarly, following UGC guidelines, Directorate of Higher Education, Govt. of Goa and Goa University have been trying to maintain the sanctity of teaching and learning by doing their best to protect the long term interest of the students conducting terminal examinations using feasible on line modes. The situation is far beyond human control now and future

looks uncertain for most of the stake holders of education not only in the state but all over the world.

CONCLUSION

Literacy, as an instrument of socio – economic change, plays a pivotal role in the states developmental scenario and Goa can be rightly proud of its improvement in the field of literacy and education. One can infer that Goa is a small state compared to other Indian states. Hence, planning and execution of any policy is comparatively easy. However, this tiny state can become a trendsetter and the model of Goa can be applied to other states at the District level where people’s participation plays a very important role. The SSC students were allowed to appear the examinations in very highly controlled and closely monitored condition. Results are awaited. The HSSC students could get their terminal examination result. After the reopening of the educational institutions in a phased manner, teachers have reported to institutions but devoid of students. The formalities of teaching and learning are going on across the state at all levels of education in the state by innovative as well as state sponsored mandatory methods using various platforms of Learning Management System (LMS). The outcome will be known only after the stake holder’s realization in the long run. The worst effected students are the ones, who had terminal years such as SSC, HSSC, Graduating, Post Graduating and Research Degree aspiring candidates who are stranded at their career’s ‘traffic islands’ or ‘Cloud of Earning’ for themselves and their dependents. The situation is far beyond human control now and future looks uncertain for most of the stake holders of education not only in the state but all over the world. Moreover, UGC and the Universities across the country are trying their best to save the essence of the Degrees to the pass outs during the pandemic. However, Time will test the acceptance of these Figure 1 measures in the long run and sustainability of educational development in Table 1 to 4.

Figure 1: Educational institutions at school level in Goa (%)

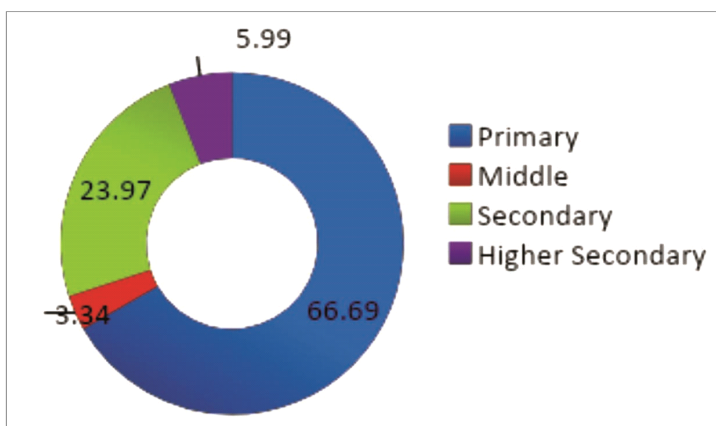


Table 1: Type of Educational Institution, Students and Teachers-Pupil Ratio in Goa

Level of Education	No. of Schools	No. of Students	No. of Teachers	Teacher-Pupil Ratio
Primary	1157	98227	3773	1:26
Middle	58	71510	2969	1:24
Secondary	416	71189	3527	1:20
Higher Secondary	104	36891	1923	1:19

Table 2: Type of Schools according to Management in Goa, 2018

S.No.	Type	Total Number of Schools
1.	Government Primary Schools	753
2.	Aided and Unaided primary Schools	404
3.	Government Middle Schools	42
4.	Aided and Unaided Middle Schools	16
5.	Government High Schools	78
6.	Aided and Unaided High Schools	338
7.	Government Higher Secondary Schools	9
8.	Aided and Unaided Higher Secondary Schools	95
Total Govt. Schools		882
Total Aided and Unaided Schools		853
Grand Total		1735

Source: Directorate of Education, Educational Statistics at a Glance, 2018-2019, Porvorim-Goa, 2018

Table 3: Types of Colleges and Number of Students Enrolled in Goa, 2012

College Type	No. of Colleges	No. of students enrolled
Government	19	10710
Aided	15	13114
Unaided	9	2063

Table 4: Enrolment at Various Levels of Higher Education in Goa, 2012

Course	Male	Female	Total
Ph.D.	49	61	110
M.Phil.	0	2	2
Post Graduate	12571	9347	21918
Undergraduate	14103	18011	32114
PG Diploma	400	161	561
Diploma	2176	950	3126
Certificate	6	17	23

Source: AISHE, 2011-12 (Provisional), Government of India, MHRD, DHE, New Delhi, 2013

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Appendix-I: List of Colleges and Number of Students Enrolled in Goa, 2018-19

S.No.	Name of the College	No. of Students
1.	V. M. S. Institute of International Hosp. Edn	181
2.	Rosary College, Navelim	1782
3.	Don Bosco College of Engineering	1157
4.	Agnel Institute of T & D, Assagao	788
5.	M. E. S. College, Vasco	1557
6.	D. M. C. College, Assagao	1500
7.	S. S. Dempo College, Cujira	1382
8.	Gomantak Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya	240
9.	Government College, Khandola	1150
10.	V. M. Salgaonkar College of Law	181
11.	Mallikarjun College, Canacona	517
12.	P. C. C. Engineering College, Verna	1038
13.	Fr. Agnel College, Pilar	104
14.	St. Xavier College, Mapusa	3000
15.	Narayan Zantye College, Bicholim	600
16.	Nirmala Institute of Education	360
17.	Carmel College, Nuvem	850
18.	Don Bosco College, Panjim	575
19.	P. Chowgule College, Margao	1550
20.	National Hydrographic School, Vasco	35

Pandemic COVID-19's Impact on Education Sector in Goa

Appendix-I contd....

S.No.	Name of the College	No. of Students
21.	Institute of Nursing Education	456
22.	Vrundavan Institute of Nursing	196
23.	Goa College of Pharmacy	480
24.	G. V. M's Dr. D. V. College of Edn	198
25.	Kamaxidevi Homeopathic College	200
26.	Goa Medical College & Hospital	1010
27.	P.E.S's R&T B. College of Pharmacy	310
28.	Government College, Borda	337
29.	Dempe College, Miramar	900
30.	Government College, Sanquelim	1549
31.	Rayeshwar Institute of Engg & IT	562
32.	Vidya Prabodhini College, Porvorim	750
33.	P. E. S. College of Education	200
34.	Government College, Quepem	1500
35.	Swami Brahmanand Mahavidyalayam	50
36.	Goa Dental College & Hospital	249
37.	S. C. College (Saraswat), Mapusa	800
38.	C. E. S. College, Cuncolim	560
39.	Goa College of Architecture, Altinho	200
40.	Goa College of Home Science	140
41.	Ganpat Parsekar College, Harmal	334
42.	Don Bosco College of Agriculture	162
43.	P. E. S. R. S. N. College, Farmagudi	1196
44.	V. V. M's Shree Damodar College	1229
45.	Goa College of Art, Altinho	200
46.	G. R. Kare College of Law, Margao	400
47.	Goa College of Hosp & Culinary Edn	100
48.	Institute of Psychiatry & Human Behaviour	20
49.	Goa College of Engineering	2020
50.	S. G. G. M. Goa Multi-Faculty College	480
51.	St. Joseph Vaz College, Cortalim	66
52.	Goa College of Music, Altinho	140
53.	Government College, Pernem	557
54.	Mandrem College, Mandrem	120
55.	G. V. M's G. G. P. R College, Ponda	832
56.	Swami Vivekananda Vidyaprasarak College, Borim	168
57.	R. C. P. R. School of Agriculture	63

Source: Swachhatam Mahavidyalaya Samman, 2018-2019, Goa University, December 2018