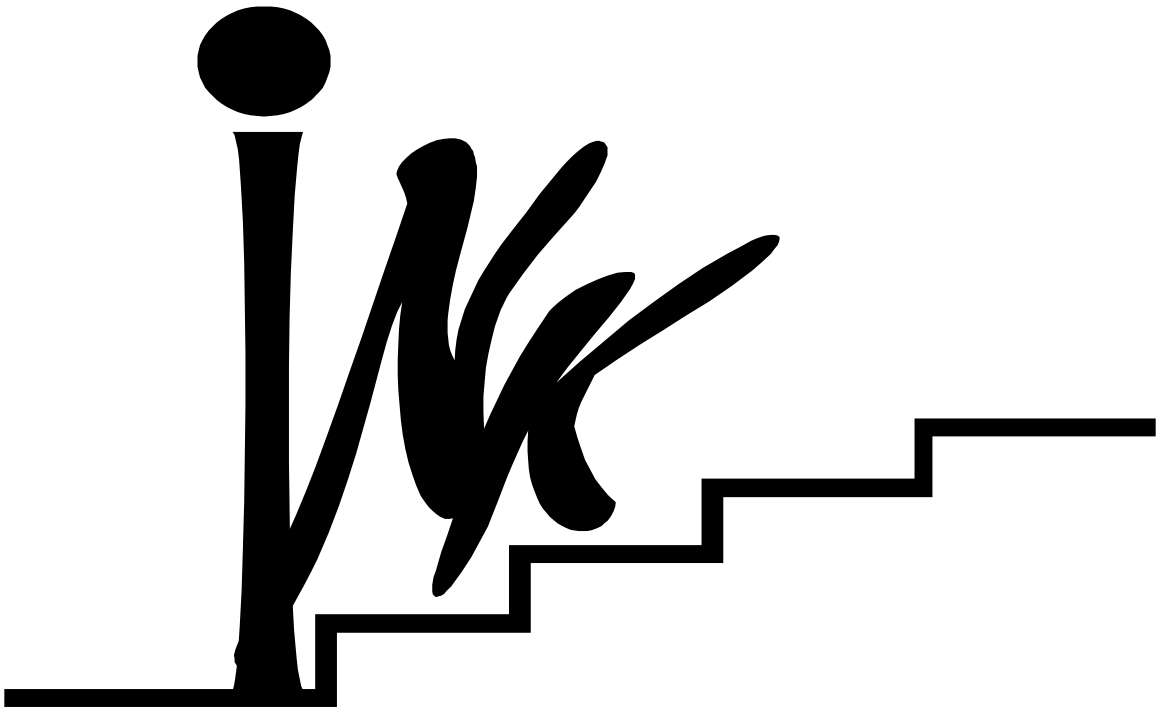




Journal of the Department of Commerce

SHRI SHIKSHAYATAN COLLEGE



Journal of the Department of Commerce

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FOREWORD

Today, humanity is going through a global crisis. The covid-19 scenario has touched all lives – young and old, in all possible ways – physically and mentally, economically and socially and possibly in more ways that could be accounted for. The current pandemic has augmented the revolutionary change towards digitization.

We feel immensely pleased to publish our first digital edition of INK, the departmental journal of Commerce (Morning). INK contains articles on relevant socio-economic issues – contributed both by students and faculty members of the department.

There are articles that focus on the issues surfaced for reasons of the pandemic and the new ways of survival to beat the current crisis. The articles depict how the online grocery stores have impacted individual's lives in the covid situation, a critical analysis of the off-line and on-line education mode of education, the enhanced importance of OTTs and how increased screen-time effects emotional well-being of the young members of the society. There are also articles of economic importance such as digital currency and how the government should focus on public works programs for economic growth through human capital formation.

We hope our readers would enjoy the current edition of INK and remain our constant source of inspiration.

We are thankful to Dr Aditi Dey, our Principal, Dr. Papiya Chaudhury, In-charge (Commerce, Morning and Business Administration) and Dr. Rumpa Chakraborty, Head of the Department (Commerce, Morning) for providing us with all the support in making this publication possible.

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IMPACT OF ONLINE GROCERY STORES DURING THE CURRENT SCENARIO

Monideepa Bose, Roll No: 431, Semester 6

Supervised by : Smt. Sutapa Roy, Faculty, Shri Shikshayatan College

INTRODUCTION

The concept of online grocery selling first took place more than thirty years ago, when in 1989 Thomas Parkinson, with no idea of what he was doing, started accepting online orders for groceries for his company Peapod. Little did he know that his initiative will blow up in the years to come? Boxes are the pioneer of sending groceries via online mode in the recent years which made revenue of \$243.6 million. In the Indian market, the online grocery shopping started to take a shape around the year 2011, when the online grocery sale segment started to get fame with the increasing availability of internet connectivity, rise of mobile devices like smart phones, tablets, laptops etc, and growing popularity of mobile/internet shopping globally acted as a catalyst for rapid adoption to online grocery shopping and thus holding a potential for the future.

E-commerce has been one of the fastest growing industries in recent years. With the advent of pandemic, the Indian e-commerce sector saw a galloping rise from 26% in the end quarter of 2019 to 36% at the last quarter of 2020 and with the second wave of COVID hitting the nation and the subsequent lockdown, e-commerce sector in India experienced a 39% rise already in the first quarter itself. It is predicted that due to the current scenario of COVID, the e-commerce industry will see a rise to 84% in the upcoming four years. Online grocery and online fashion shopping helped in this fast growth rate of the Indian e-commerce sector during this new normal age that we are living in. If we focus on to the contribution of e-grocery or online groceries, few of the many reasons that led to their surge in demand during a global pandemic are contactless delivery, lockdown, not having to go out, delivery at doorstep, help balance the work from home- life ratio and so on. The pandemic played a significant role in helping gain popularity of online grocery shopping even among people who were skeptical about it earlier. The pandemic made us realize how not only big branded names of online grocery stores like grofers, big basket, Amazon pantry has consistently been on the rise, but it is also paving way for new players in the online grocery market thus subsequently helping in the overall growth of e-commerce sector thereby contributing to the GDP during the pandemic time.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Ray & Moitra (2012) studied whether the products available online are worth purchasing and whether or not the convenience of online shopping has an impact on consumer preferences.

Chandini & Nagendra (2016) through their research work studied the demographic profile of online respondents and the factors that influence the return policy while purchasing online groceries.

Budhiraja & Mittal (2016) set the objectives of their research to study the intentions of online grocery shoppers.

Jayasree (2017) the objectives set by this research paper was to predict the future prospects of online grocery shops and an overview of the existing players in the market.

Kavitha (2017) in her research work, she stated the objectives to learn about whether the quality affects buying behaviour from online grocery stores and whether consumers are aware of the availability of online grocery store options.

Kaur & Shukla (2017) evaluated the technical barriers that a consumer faces while shopping online, the important fact or swchich facilitate online grocery shopping and whether or not the customer sage profile have an impact to wards shopping online groceries.

Li & Ohlsson (2017) examined the factors that can influence the intention behind online grocery shopping and also evaluated the factors determining the online grocery purchase instead of offline.

Rajesh (2019) analyses the factors like product choice, price, quality, and delivery services etc. affecting purchase behaviour. In her research she also studied the demographics of the people using online grocery stores. Annadate & Mude (2020)'s project studies the consumer's perception to wards sales, discounts, offers etc. while shopping groceries online and consumers attitude towards online grocery shopping which is influenced by perceived cost, convenience and likewise.

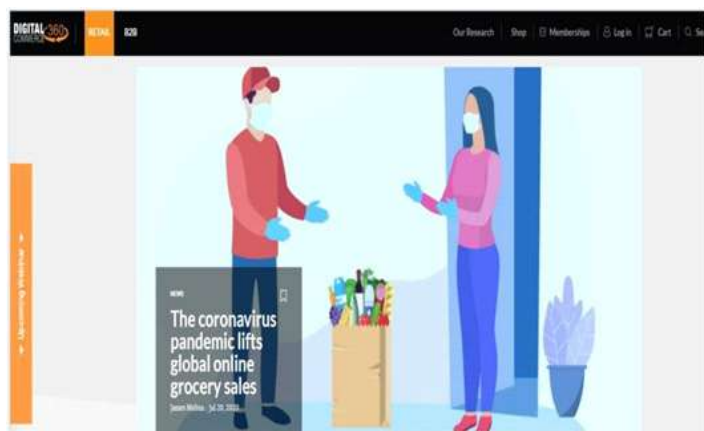
Grashuis, Skevas & Segovia (2020) did their research on the grocery shopping preferences during the COVID-19 pandemic.

GLOBAL AND NATIONAL SCENARIO

Global Scenario :

The global structure of online grocery shopping and online grocery stores is running in billions of dollars. The online grocery market is predicted to reach USD 550.7 Billion by the year 2027. The country and its people who helped a tonne to make the market reach billions are the US, China, Japan, Canada and Germany.

While the US currently holds 28.77% of the global online market, the following countries are supposed to reach this stage by the year 2027. China to expand its online grocery sale by 20.5%. Japan to increase by 11.4% and Canada and Germany to expand their market by 14% and 12.5% each respectively. The USA accounted for \$6.5 Billion in April of 2020 and \$8.4 Billion by April 2021.

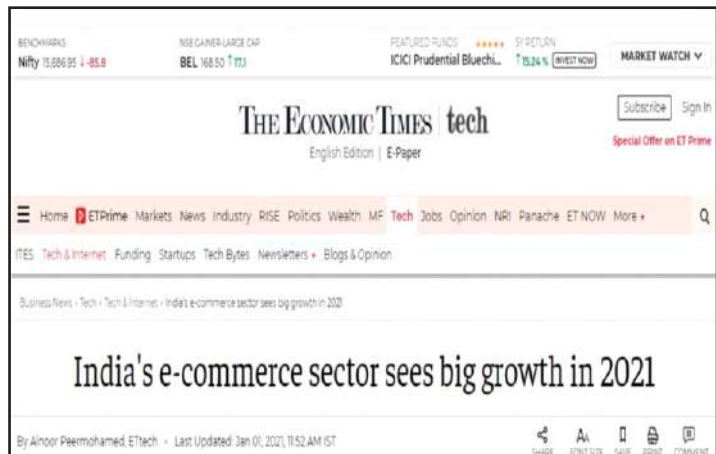


Prime grocery retailers list includes the following three retailers :

- Ahold Delhaize is a Netherlands based grocery chain, which acquired Fresh direct and showed a growth in sales by 188.3% in the US.
- Albertsons Cos. Inc., a grocery chain reported that its digital sales surged by 28.2% in the last quarter of 2020 as compared to the same quarter of 2019. The company also forecasted that the company will have identical sales growth by 6.0%-7.5% in the year 2021, while the actual sales growth is at 9.4%-10.9% as of quarter one.
- Walmart, which is the US's biggest grocer, saw a \$341 Billion sales in 2020 and a growth by 8.7% as of 2021.

National Scenario :

Coming back to the Indian or our national grocery market synopsis, we see that Southern India dominates the overall online grocery market with a 36.4% share in 2020. The Indian online grocery market was at \$2.9 Billion as of 2020, and as calculated by CGR, it is expected to grow by 37.1% within the year 2028. The items that form the majority of the demand from online grocery stores are staples and cooking essentials like flours, lentils, pulses etc. They accounted for 37.6% shares in the rising demand. Dairy and breakfast product demands have increased by 37.6% in the year 2021. The second wave has helped the Indian online grocers to acquire more and more customers. The other reasons that make people choose online over regular grocery stores are same day delivery, low delivery fees, cash back offers, return policy and so on. The noticeable trend observed in online grocery shopping is the preference toward digital payment options over cash transactions.



The substantial retailers of online groceries in India are

- Amazon India Pvt. Ltd.,
- Godrej's Nature Basket,
- Grofers India Pvt. Ltd.,
- Spencer's (online retail),
- Big Basket Pvt. Ltd.

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the common grievances faced by online grocery shoppers,
2. To identify the items mostly bought through online grocery stores (besides groceries) during the COVID-19 pandemic,
3. To study the number of people who were forced by the COVID-19 pandemic to shift from offline grocery shopping to online grocery stores,
4. To examine whether or not digital payment option makes it easier to shop groceries online,
5. To analyze the benefit of online grocery stores for the senior citizens.

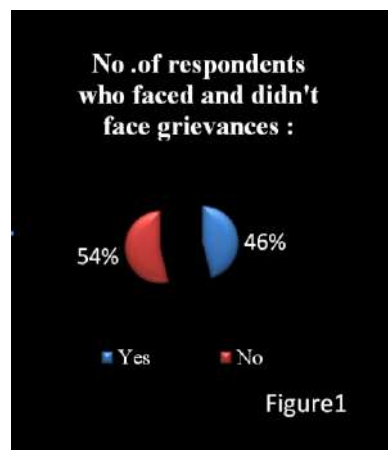
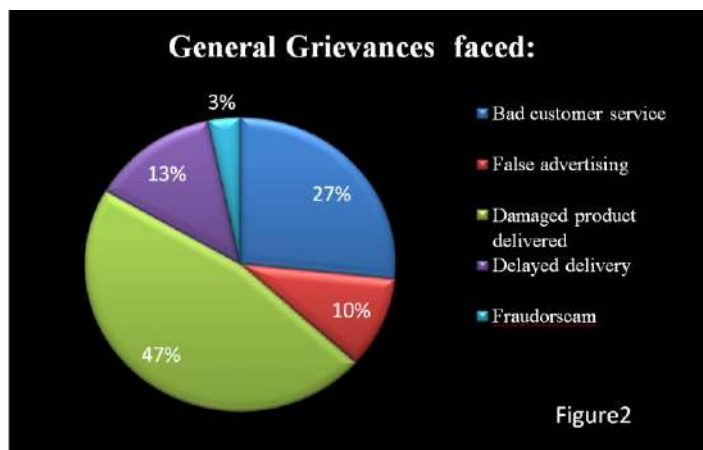
METHODOLOGY

This is a quantitative research paper done with the help of primary data source. There are 65 respondents interviewed for the study. Primary Data has been used for the study. Questionnaire has been used for collecting responses. The study has been conducted from 03-05-2021 to 20-05-2021. Statistical tools used-The statistical tools used for analysis and findings are percentage analysis, pie chart, bar diagrams and Line graphs. All the graphs are generated via MS Excel.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Grievances faced:

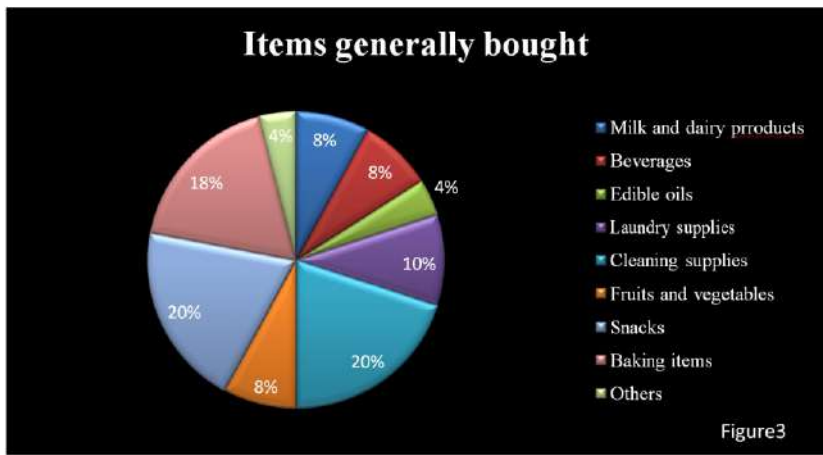
Among 65 respondents, who were interviewed 46% of the people, i.e. 30 respondents faced some sort of bad experiences while shopping their groceries online and the rest 54%, those who are online grocery shoppers had a smooth experience so far.



The common area of grievances that the 30 respondents among the 65 faced while shopping groceries via online mode i.e. 47 % (14) of them had the complaint of receiving damaged products delivered. Followed by bad customer service at 27 % (8). At 13 % (4) ranks third, d

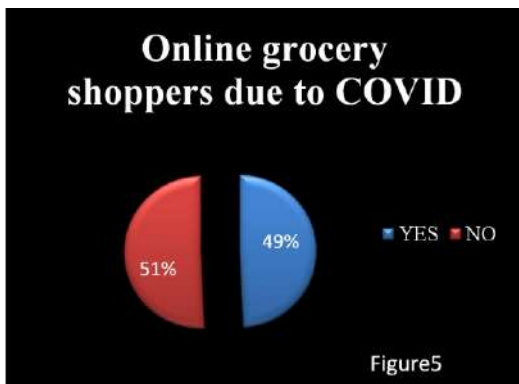
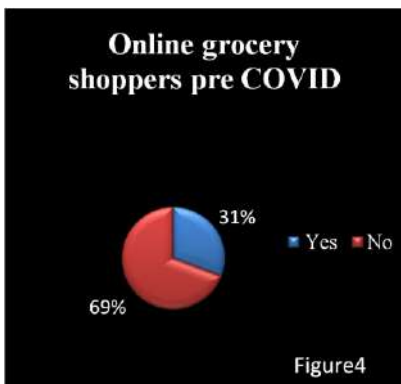
elayed delivery of products. Next comes at 10% (3), false advertising by the online grocery retails / stores. The lowest which is at 3% (1) is fraud/ scam experience while shopping groceries online.

Items generally purchased :



Among 65 respondents, 15 of them chose of not shopping their monthly groceries online. However from the rest 50 respondents, we concluded that the most bought items are cleaning tools and snacks. Both at 20% (10). Cleaning tools like sanitization items, soaps and others are an absolute necessary while following the pandemic protocols. While the rising demand for snacks is also acceptable considering it makes the lockdown more bearable. Baking items which is at 18% (9) comes second at this analysis looking at the rising hobbies of baking among the millennial. Laundry supplies are at 10% (5). Perishable items and lower shelf life items, all are at 8% (4) which includes fruits and vegetables, milk and dairy products and beverages. Edible oil is at 4% (2) considering the fact they are more convenient to buy from nearest grocery outlet and the rest 4% (2) is for other items bought.

Shift due to pandemic :



As per figure 4 among the 65 respondents surveyed, only 31% (20) responded of shopping online groceries pre-pandemic. And the rest 69% (45) responded NO when asked if they shopped online before COVID.

Figure 5 is a pie chart representation showing respondents who shifted to the online grocery stores as forced by the present COVID pandemic. The number of respondents who shifted are 32(49%) among 65 respondents.

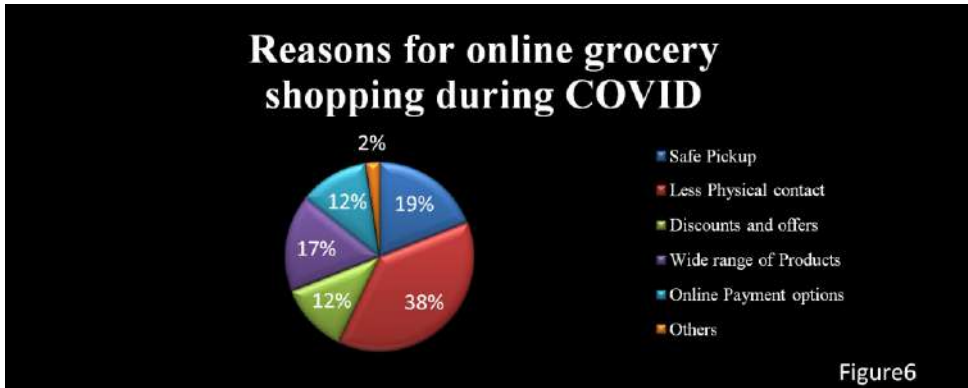


Figure 6 shows the percentage analysis on the basis of reasons for going for online grocery stores over traditional grocery shopping. The leading cause for choosing the former shopping option is less physical contact which is at 38% (16). Next comes the option of safe pickup of goods, 19 % (8), as it reduces the need to go to crowded grocery stores. The reason of wide range of products closely follows at 17% (7) and no fear of hoarding by other customers. Discounts and offers at 12% (5) help saves money and also online payment is at 12% (5) due to the presence of digital payment option. Not all grocery outlets (especially local ones) have the option for digital cash or card payments. At 2% (1) are other reasons for choosing online grocery over traditional ones.

Payment methods :

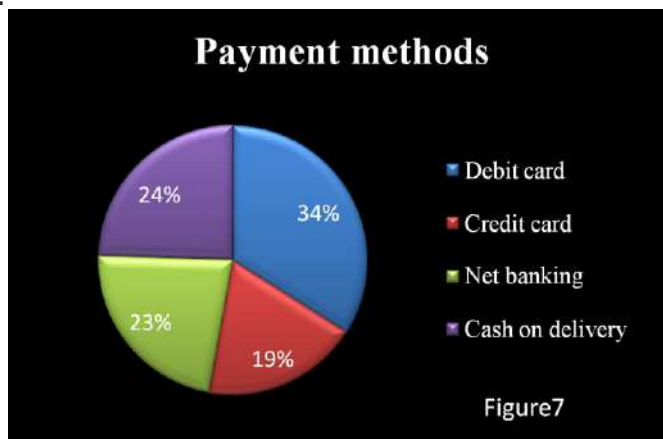
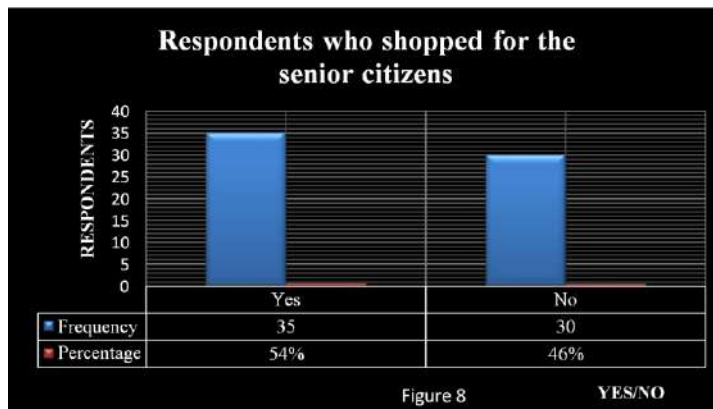
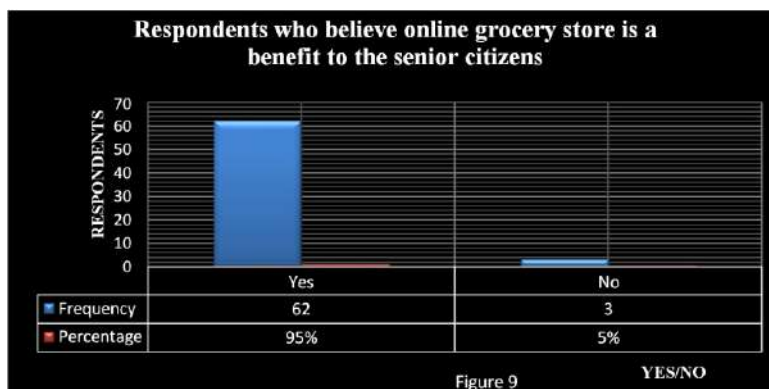


Figure 7 shows the number of respondents who opt for various cashless transaction and cash transaction. 76% (40) chose one or the other option available for online transaction. From the 76%, 34% of the respondents selected debit card, 19% selected credit card and 19% chose other net banking options. The rest 24% selected cash on delivery (COD) as their convenient way of payment while shopping groceries online. However these responses came from 53 respondents among the 65 people surveys. The rest selected N/A, indicating they do not shop online groceries.

Benefits to senior citizens :



The number of respondents who assisted in purchasing / purchase online groceries for their old neighbors or relatives. The later included seniors who are unable to use the mobile application for grocery stores and those who are at high risk of catching the virus, if they go out for grocery shopping.



The number of respondents who believes that online grocery stores can be a benefit to the senior citizens.

In figure 8 and 9, among 65 respondents, 35 (54%) helped purchasing online groceries for their senior neighbors / relatives. And 62 (95%) of the respondents are positive that online groceries can help the seniors.

Findings :

- The majority of the respondents are female. 62% are female and 38% are males,
- 19-30 is the majority of respondent's age group, which is 82%,
- Most of the respondents, i.e. 31% have an annual income of around 10 lakhs and above,
- 74% of the respondents are students,
- majority of the respondents (29) buy their monthly groceries for 3 to 5 times,
- the same 29 respondents spend Rs. 3,001 to Rs. 5,000 on groceries a month,
- 58% shop from their local groceries generally and the rest from online, departmental or other sources.
- 48% choose their preferred grocery destination because it is convenient to them,
- Grofers and Amazon pantry are the most used online grocery applications,
- 20 of the respondents are very unlikely to pay a higher price at online stores for the same product available at regular groceries,
- 21 of the respondents are likely to pay a lower price at online stores for the same product available at regular groceries,
- 19 of the respondents are likely to pay the same price at online stores for the same product available at regular groceries,
- 19 of the respondents are likely to pay a delivery fee at online stores for the same product available at regular groceries,
- Majority of the respondents, which is 91% believe that online grocery stores can help reduce risk during COVID,
- 58% of the respondents had a positive take on online groceries taking over traditional ones,
- 45 of the respondents rated their overall experience with online groceries 6 or more,
- 46% of the respondents said of facing grievances
- Among the respondents who faced grievances, 47% faced on the area of receiving damaged / destroyed products,
- 20% of the respondent opted for buying cleaning tools and snacks. It is followed closely by baking items at 18%,
- Only 31% of the respondents used to shop their groceries online pre-COVID,
- 49% of the respondents shifted due to COVID,
- 38% selected online grocery shopping over regular ones due to less physical exchanges,
- 76% of the respondents prefer digital payment options,

- 4% of the respondents either shopped for the senior citizens or assisted them in purchasing groceries from online grocery stores and
- 95% of the respondents are of the opinion that online grocery stores can help the seniors of the nation.

Overall experience rating of online grocery stores :



From the 65 respondents, 15 of them are not online grocery shoppers, thus they skipped the question. Among the rest 50 of them, 3 of the respondents rated 4 or less, 2 of them rated 5 and the rest 45 and also the majority rated their experience at 6 or more. The respondents were asked to rate from the scale 1 to 10.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion :

The most advantages of online grocery stores as per the respondents are:

- Diverse/wide range of product availability,
- easy access due to easy website designs,
- No crowded place thus no physical contact with strangers,
- Convenient to buy from and can be accessed anywhere and anytime,
- Definitely reduce the risks of catching the virus, if not totally eliminate,
- Time saving thus useful for people working from home,
- Big benefit to the elderly,
- The option of viewing purchase history helps and saves time during reordering the next time,

- Pocket friendly due to discounted price over traditional stores,
- Good customer services and return policies,
- Helpful for people who are infected with the virus and isolating themselves.

Recommendations :

While most of the customers, i.e. respondents online grocery stores were satisfied with the services received, few of them had a suggestion to come up with. Some of them are :

- Online grocery stores need to speedup with their delivery speed and the packaging quality can have scope for improvement,
- More fresh and perishable products like milk products, fruits and vegetables etc. need to be delivered at their best quality,
- Online grocery stores also need to crosscheck the expiry dates of the products they are delivering to the end buyers,
- Delivery charges should be reduced as it makes are as on ably priced product expensive,
- Website designs should also be senior citizen friendly so that they can access it with out any guidance incase of urgency,
- Online grocery stores need to reach even the remotest of places and not only focus on 2-tier cities.

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THE NEW EDUCATION NORM

Akanksha Pattanaik, Roll 116, Semester 2

In these rapidly changing world everyone needs everything to be efficient, effective and accurate! These three words have become the mool mantra for every millennial youngster and if these three words could be amalgamated into one, the word would definitely be TECHNOLOGY.

Technology has made our lives easier, hassle free, amenable and ofcourse faster. Hence edu-technology is the only way one could see the dawn of our future in these challenging times. The academic years are still on track and students are hustling with the new norm : Online Classes !

First of all What exactly is Online education ?

Online education is an amenable instructional delivery process that includes any learning that takes place via the internet. This system enables educators to communicate with students who may not be capable of enrolling in a traditional classroom course and assists students who need to work on their own schedule and at their own speed.

It refers to the type of knowledge which is imparted through the internet.

Millions of people globally are enrolled in online courses and can learn from the comfort of their homes. Online education can come in different ways; they could be educational webinars and videos on the internet or even face to face learning on the laptop with the teacher, which utilises the internet. With a stable internet connection, a student can discover learning in a whole new level.

Teachers and professors optimise the timelessness and focus of the learning curriculum while students are able to fit learning time into their hectic schedules.

However, there is a catch, one has to be extremely self-motivated. The best online students develop various approaches for staying up to date on their courses.

Advantages

- Online education enables us to learn from various mentors and teachers in different areas, increasing our knowledge and perspective. It reduces nervousness among students, as many are able to communicate more through online education than regular classes. One can learn from merely anyplace as long as they have an available internet device.
- Online education normally provides a chance to study at our own speed as there is no rush. Most online courses are usually enjoyable and more comfortable compared to attending traditional classes. It spares you the inconvenience of having to travel to a particular destination every single day.

- Online education usually is more affordable. Online education further happens to be comparatively cheaper in comparison to conventional educational approaches. Under traditional university programs, the students are required to compensate for transportation, textbooks, institutional facilities such as gyms, libraries, swimming pools, and other costs that expedite the cost of university education up. Online education, on its part, charges only for tuition and additional essential expenses. Virtual education thus offers both the wealthy and the poor an opportunity.
- It allows one to learn innovative approaches through the internet and therefore become more skilful. In online education, if there are any variations in the syllabus, updates can be done instantly compared to conventional means of education.
- Online education is flexible and adaptable since one can study at any time, even at midnight. It can help increase the grades of some people as compared to standard traditional education. Some people learn more through online education.
- There is no need to wait for office hours to speak to the instructor; you can immediately access them through chat or email. There is considerably a large amount of educational information on the internet. Online education can also help one to be in the mix of a diverse group of people from varied educational, social, cultural and philosophical backgrounds. The subject matter is always available on the internet, unlike traditional education.

The advantages that online education brings to students are immense and indisputable. Pursuing an online course is an excellent option in education, particularly when traditional learning situations have many obstacles, such as commuting or distance.

Disadvantages

Online education offers extensive benefits to students by giving a manageable schedule, student enhancement and augmented education access and choice . However, as everything has two sides, online education also has some fundamental disadvantages that impact student life exponentially.

- Online education has made us all lazy and paid back. The recorded lectures feature has made us neglect learning. The zeal to learn is what we as students are lacking today. An institution has a strong impact on every student life. They inspire and shape the young leaders of tomorrow. But due to online classes , students have lost all connect with the institution itself.
- Teachers and college administration on the other hand burden us with assignments as no other project activity is possible and therefore a student is jacked up with assignments, deadlines and notes which give them zero self study and low social life.
- Using the computer too much can make the students prone to plagiarism. It can also cause vision problems as we sit near the laptop almost the whole day. Online education may also hinder physical development. Online education can be quite complicated for a person to be accountable for their own learning without someone to drive them to do something constructive.

- The most important disadvantage of Online education is that it detaches you from your classmates. One might need to put in extra time in some cases to understand the learning process. It is easier to cheat in an online exam than when in a class and hence may not be advisable during exams. Online education also gives one a lot of autonomy which may be critical for our learning. There are a number of distractions on the internet through adverts, and this might interrupt our learning. Online education also has significantly less self-assessment which makes learning less distinctive.

To conclude,

Online education has both advantages and shortcomings, but it is an excellent method of learning that can help develop a student's performance. Online classes have made education available but actual learning is still miles away.



IMPACT OF INCREASE IN SCREEN TIME ON THE MENTAL HEALTH OF THE YOUNGER GENERATION

Muskan Kedia, Roll No. : 03, Semester 6

Supervised by : **Smt. Tania Ghosh**, Faculty, Shri Shikshayatan College

INTRODUCTION

Humans, an evolving body of knowledge and curiosity is getting engaged to an immense and additive use of digital products from performing every day-to activity. Screen time in general is a summarized umbrella-term for the time that an individual spends in front of the screens of their electronic devices. “The Blue Screen of Death” is affecting the mind and the mental health and ability. Given the revolutionary digitalization of every activity possible, the need and want of using these devices have increased incessantly. On comparing the current and past generation, we have seen that mental sanity and health has diminished universally. According to a general survey, an average individual is currently spending more than five to six hours of the day in front of screens. The mental well-being of individuals was earlier not paid much heed since the cases of mental unrest were very few earlier as compared to the current generation. Although the word like anxiety, depression, and mental instability had come into existence right from the 14th century their prevalence and knowledge among the people have spread in recent years. When you define your screen time you include every second you spend in front of a screen be it using your mobile phone for working, scrolling social media, gaming, or watching movies and sitcoms on your television, or playing video games.

Mental health is starting to get serious more and more as the years pass by and is co-related to the con-current increase in screen time. The life of the current young generation revolves around screen. Right from playing video game to attending online classes using the mobile devices they have a constant contact of screen affecting them mentally and physically.

At the outset, people in general are very resilient to accept the fact that the usage of e-devices has hampered the mental health of people.

Good mental health means a mind free of problems like anxiety, depression, overthinking and other psychopathological symptoms. Currently the excessive screen time has inculcated a feeling of restlessness and impatience among the users. The growing existence of social media usage is not only emerging as an addiction but also a barrier to healthy mind. The Rodomontade and boastful showcasing of an individual's lifestyle on social medias induces a feeling of jealousy and reduces one's self-esteem. It not only frustrates an individual for not having means to acquire possession showcase but also makes them gloomy in general. A good mind is a good life. Having said that, the world needs to start keeping a check on their screen time.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY SCREEN TIME

Screen time has various sub groups where an individual spends time. The few medium of spending time in front of the screen are television., laptops, mobile phones etc.

CONCEPT OF MENTAL HEALTH

It is a psychological parameter pertaining to one's wellbeing. A sound mental health is a sign of a good and working brain. Only if you are in a good mental space then can you think and grow big.

The condition pertaining to bad mental health status are depression, anxiety, emotionally instable, lower esteem, panic attacks and so on so forth.

WHERE ARE WE SPENDING OUR SCREEN TIME ?

This poses as one of the prime objectives of the study. A comprehensive analysis is being made using the primary data to draw an outline of how do people spend their screen time.

1. **Working** : Approximately 5 to 7 hours is being spend by an individual who works from home. Since the primary population was based on the age group 10 to 20 limited or negligible working hours were reported by them. On the other hand, 20 percent of the working-class group who works from home on a daily basis reported a daily average of 8 to 10 hours in front of the screen. Due to paperless working and c-commerce the need of using electronic devices has become indispensable.
2. **Online classes** : In the current scenario, a students spends approximately 2 to 5 hours per day to attend online classes. This medium has found its prevalence since the birth of the Covid 19 pandemic. The hours spend for e-learning is for regular schooling, university learning and private tuitions.
3. **YouTube** : Platforms like YouTube and TikTok are quite addicting. It has been observed that majority of the individuals between the age of 15 to 30 spends at least 1 hour in such platforms.
4. **OTT Platform** : This is the most current and emerging industry. It is catering to all age group in general and young adults and adults in particular. The sheer amount of over watching in such platforms are many.
5. **Gaming** : This is quite an e-industry where the impact of the games available and accessed are huge. Cases have been reported that suicide have been attempted due to facing defeat in just a game. Such games are quite addictive dampens the mental health of an individual. The age group of 10 to 20 is most sensitive to such mediums where every game controls the power over the mind of the gamer.

LITERATURE SURVEY

- **Jean M. Twenge (2020)** observed in his work that how due to digitalization the prevalence of disease like anxiety, depression, suicidal thoughts had increased among the adolescents

residing in the United States. He brought forward a comparison how the mental health of the young generation is diminishing from the year 2000s to 2010s due to the excessive use of digital sources.

- **Xiaoyan Wu ET. AII (2016)** in their study assessed the impact of increase in screen time on the college students, resident in China. They brought to light a striking analysis that by increasing the screen time by 2 hour per day, there was a concurrent increase in the index for anxiety went up from 1.12 to 2.83, and for depression and psychopathological symptoms it changes from 1.25 to 1.93 and 1.22 to 1.83 respectively. Although the degree of impact was not found but they deduced that it had some impact on the mental health.
- **Amber Berthope ET. AII (2016)** observed that the time spent on social media had a greater impact on the increasing risk of depression and self-harm. They surveyed through questionnaires and deduced that by 30-minute increase in social media screen time the risk of self-harm would increase approximately by 15 percent. They also found that excessive use of social media had dampen the self-esteem in females by 12 percent.
- **TS Piola ET. AII (2015)** studied that due to increasing digitalization and access of internet and social media the level of physical activity performed by the youth has decreased severely. It was observed that the screen time among females were high and had a decreasing graph of physical activity undertaken by them.
- **Dr Karen Martin (August 2011)** in her work called the “Electronic Overload” surveyed and found that how the increase in the screen time can actually change the food preference of younger generation. In her work she also elucidates show the physical activities of children has been reduced by a third to 20 to 35 minutes per day and the same has been largely devoted to digital world.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

In this project, I would like to frame some inference on the following parameters :

- To observe the impact of increase in screen time on the health of the younger generation
- To confer various mediums which are used by different generation that accounts for their daily screen time.
- To discuss how the screen time would have a lasting impact on the future generation and will differ from the current scenario.
- To discuss how screen time affects the thinking and mindset of people.

METHODOLOGY :

The primary data was collected through conducting a survey using questionnaires, on the basis of which analytical inferences has been drawn. There were 178 respondents majorly based in Kolkata.

ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

1. Reduced Physical Activities

The current companion of one and all is their mobile phones. The excessive and addictive use of mobile devices for any purpose has shifted the need and will to do any physical activities. Football has been replaced with FIFA Play Station Games and Body workouts have been replaced by being a couch potato and scrolling social medias.

On comparing with the previous generations, the time invested to play outdoor sports has clearly fallen down by a great margin. This subtraction of physical activities from daily life has not only made people lazy but has also created health problem like acute back pains and other muscle pains at a very early age.

According to the survey conducted, 50.3% of the respondents replied that their physical activities have died down and the same is being somewhat replaced by their screen time.

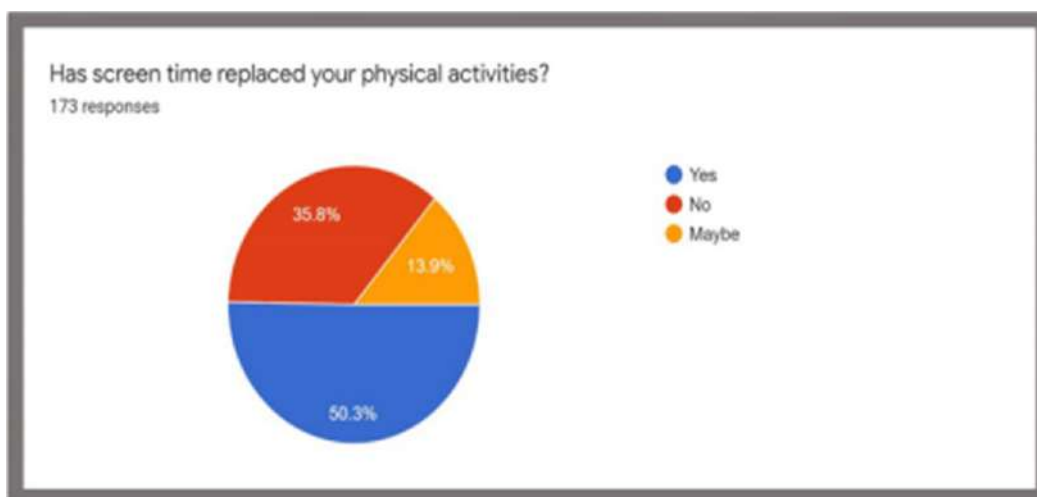


Figure 1. Representing reduction in Physical activities due to increase in screen time.

2. Academic Problems

The excessive use of electronic devices are making people and in particular students to have a laid back attitude towards their work and studies. The "Phone Addiction" phenomenon is prevalent these days. This addiction has led students to suffer from deviation from their studies. The once undivided attention is now hampered by directing their time to unwanted content consumption over the time.

On being asked that if an individual had spend hours in front the screen, what will be the activity they will be able to perform right after it.

Only 5 person per 100 respondents replied that they would be in the mental space to study anything post the long screen view.

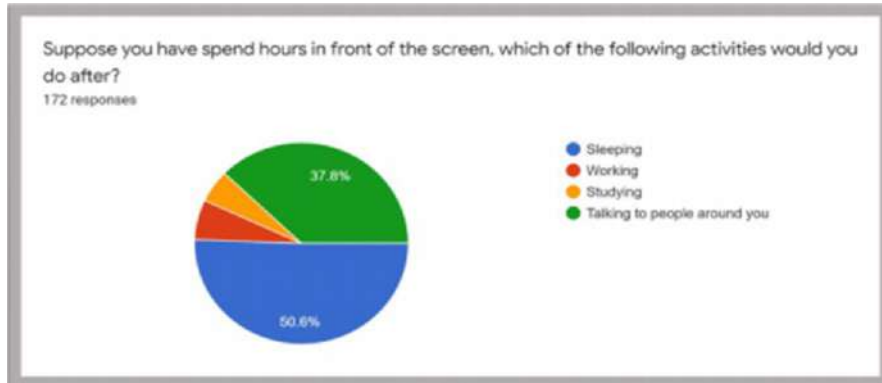


Figure 2. Collective Response depicting how post-excessive screen time the concentration is hampered.

3. Violence

Gaming is one of the most addictive aspect relating to the screen time. Cases have been recorded where young adults who had dwelled into the world of gaming were trapped in its whirlpool and had ultimately lost their lives. Suicide cases have recorded because of getting defeated in a game. Games like “Pokemon Go” and “PubgG” have been banned because of its addicting and negative nature.

4. Behavioral Change

“Humans become what they surround themselves with. What they see, watch and observe.” This human tendency of adapting and changing into what people see is one of the prime factor for any behavioral change noticed because of increase in screen time. Through The survey conducted, it was seen that more than 50 percent of the respondents, who spends more than 1 hour per day on social media platforms reported to get angry and agitated easily.

Exposure to Social medias, where anyone and everyone tries to put the better picture of the reality makes the users viewing it feel low and their self-esteem gets hampered. The regular view of people living their best lives fills the mind of the viewer with indirect frustration and jealousy. The same is vented out by them through behavioral change of being mean and rude to other people.

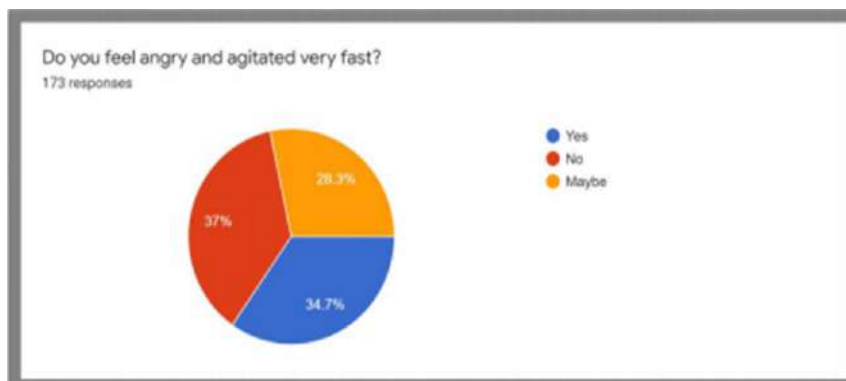


Figure 3 Response on whether the respondent get easily angry

5. Depression

The sheer spike in depression rate have been noticed since the advent of digitalization. It is one of the alarming side effect of excessive screen time usage.

The constant use of social media where generally tends to pose the better part of their lives make the viewer feel low about themselves.

Cyberbully is one of cause of depression among the well-known individuals. The comments and opinion posted online would leads an individual to question his existence at times.

According to the survey conducted, 95 of the respondents stated that often feel detached with their family.

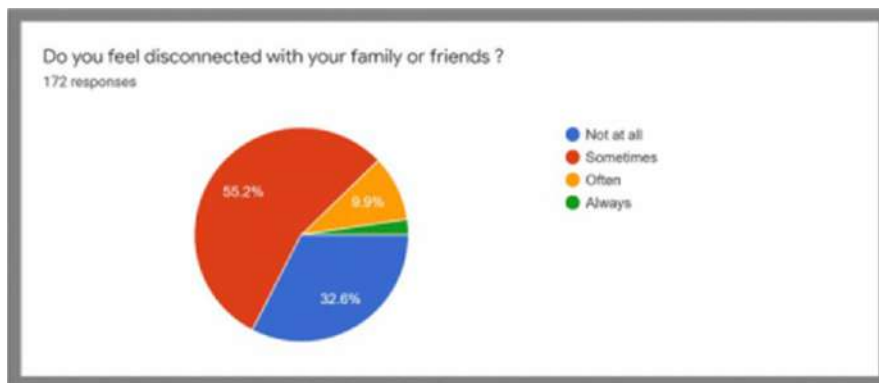


Figure 4 Response on feeling disconnected with the family

WHAT CAN BE CONSIDERED AS A HEALTHY SCREEN TIME ?

The answer to this particular question I quite subjective since due to digitalization **the want to use an electronic device** has been replaced by a **need to use the devices**.

The same question when asked to our respondent, the reply received were quite different and was scattered between different hours by different groups.

Thus, on an average the following screen time has been considered as an average screen time :

1. Based on the age

- Below 20 years : The average ideal screen time perceived by this group was 2 to 5 hours per day.
- 20 to 30 years : The average ideal screen time perceived by this age group is 0 to 3 hours.
- 30 to 40 years : The average ideal screen time perceived by this age group is 2 to 5 hours.
- 40 and above : The average ideal screen time perceived by this age group is 0 to 3 hours.

2. Based on activity

- Online Classes : Those who regularly attends online classes feels that 4 to 6 hours per day can be an average ideal screen time.

- b. Working from Home : Those who works from home replied that 5 to 7 hours per day can be an average ideal time. The reason behind the extra hours is simpl since the working from home would solely depend on your electronic devices which are linked to servers or clouds.
- c. Watching Videos : Those who spends more than hour to watch online videos on a daily basis reverted that 2 to 5 hours could be an appropriate screen time on an average.

CONCLUSION

On comparing different generation, it is quite evident that the use of electronic devices is increasing incessantly along with a simultaneous increase in the screen time per individual.

If an individual continues to increase their screen time for every new task performed then there will be a time that people would stop connecting personally and everyone would find their solace in their own virtual bubble.

If things move on this pace the mental space of our future generation would be disrupted. When the respondents were asked opinion on whether screen time affect our youth's creativity, then more than 50 percent agreed.

The ignorant behavior to not regularly check and regulate one's screen time would pose a harm on the long run both physically and mentally.

RECOMMENDATION :

1. It is advisable to regularly check and regulate one's screen time. This would not only increase self-awareness but would also alert the person through self- realization about the immense screen time.
2. The average screen time would vary depending upon the activity one perform using devices. It would be better to cut down the screen time to 3 to 4 hours per day for the younger generation.
3. Those who are working from home should take some time off from the screen to give rest to both their eyes and their mind.
4. Parents and adults of the family should regularly keep in check their wards digital exposure. Rules and boundaries must be set to give space to the children and at the same time help them not top hinder their mental sanity.

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IMPACT OF COVID 19 ON THE USE OF OTT PLATFORMS IN KOLKATA

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INTRODUCTION

Since March 2020, World faced a terrible pandemic and people had to accept their “New Normal”, nationwide lockdown introduced the concept of work from home and the working population, who in earlier hustle and bustle could not afford time to spare, had abundant time to pass. Naturally they started to look for good content and since entertainment production houses were also halted. They had to turn to over the top media service or OTT platforms for content thus increasing its demand. The paper aims to study the rise in the use of OTT platform due to lockdown.

LITERATURE REVIEW

INDIA TODAY :

According to their article, they stated *“Even as pandemic and the lockdown wreaked havoc on film theatres, OTT platforms proved a boon for both actors and audiences”* they interviewed individuals like :

- Ekta Kapoor, whose production of TV shows were halted for four months and leading to unemployment of many. Where her empire of TV shows were struggling, her OTT platform Alt Balaji flourished and hit subscribers.
- Rajendar Singh of Hans Cinemas, had decided against opening his 1,000-seater single screen in Azadpur, New Delhi. To stay afloat, Singh has instead leased the 4,000-yard property to Amazon as a storage facility. He stated *“Where are the products [films] for cinemas ? It isn't viable, running a cinema at this point of time”* Singh notes that stay-at-home orders Meant audiences are now accustomed to watching films on Platforms like Netflix and Amazon. The “new habits” won't go away so easy, he adds.
- Vikramaditya Motwane, who has directed Sacred Games and AK vs AK (both Netflix Originals), stated the rise of OTT was always in the works. “We will see a break where theatrical releases are going to end up becoming an avenue where people go in for the spectacle,” he says.

BLOOMBERG QUINT :

An article by it stated *“Netflix Inc.'s subscriptions sky-rocketed in the first half of 2020 as the Covid-19 outbreak holed people inside their houses, with almost 16 million new users signing up. And yet, the company knows the real hit from the pandemic is yet to come”* Bloomberg Quint Interviewed Reed Hasting, Co CEO of Netflix who stated *“In the long-term I think Covid is just a little blip and a historical footnote. Kind of like the 1918 pandemic that we read about today”*.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the trends around OTT adoption triggered by Covid 19 in India within Kolkata
- To study and evaluate the comparative audience preferences and choices regarding a platform
- To study and evaluate the number of subscription pre and post pandemic
- To study and evaluate the necessity of such platforms around people.

RESEARCH METHADODOLOGY

A primary survey was conducted through a google form among the residents of Kolkata during the months of May & June 2021 .200 responses were received which have been analysed to draw the conclusions.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The responses from google form were analysed and percentages were calculated to come to the following conclusions

- The surveyed showed the maximum respondents are of age 20 – 30 i.e. 59 % followed by above 40 ie 23 % then 10-20 by 14 and finally 4% response of the age 30-40.
- It is analysed that 78 % female responded and 21% male responded to such survey.
- It is interpreted that 75% of student responded, 13% of homemakers, 5% of advocate, 2% of business and teacher accordingly and service and not working consumers also responded
- In was found that 46 % subscribed post pandemic and 33 % subscribed pre pandemic and the rest did not subscribe or do not prefer to comment.
- The survey showed 53% people subscribed Netflix followed by Amazon, Disney+hotstar and some other platforms or no platforms.
- The survey showed that Amazon has the most reasonable rate by 41.5% followed by Netflix and then Disney+ hotstar and others.
- Netflix was selected by 66% people for having most good content followed by Amazon by 22% and 8 % of the Disney+ hotstar and finally others
- Netflix also got the highest votes for having the better advertising skills during the pandemic followed by amazon prime.
- Around 70% agreed that during this pandemic there was the need of sitting back and relaxing the shows offered by these platforms.
- 60% people confirmed that they would continue their subscription to OTT platform post they resume their normal lives.
- The convenience of watching OTT shows at their convenient time was considered the biggest advantage.

CONCLUSION

The survey clearly showed the the OTT Platform has seen a big boon post pandemic. Majority of the people have subscribed to some platform or other to sit back and relax and enjoy the show offered by these. Infact the users are ready to continue with the subscription post pandemic also due to the quality of content offered by them. In fact the ease of watching the show at your convenient time is also an add on for these OTT platforms. Thus we can conclude that the pandemic have indeed been a boon for OTT platform. The actors have also got work while the kinds of shows offered by these platforms showcase the creativity of Indian artists too. With the increase in subscriptions and Indian audience ready for different kinds of shows the entertainment media will surely get a boost and Indian shows will be watched globally.

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ANNEXURES

QUESTIONNAIRE

AGE

1. 10-20
2. 20-30
3. 30-40
4. Above 40

Gender

1. Male
2. Female
3. Other

Occupation

1. Student
2. Businessman
3. Service
4. Others

When did you subscribe to any online streaming platforms ?

- Pre pandemic
- Post pandemic
- I haven't subscribed yet.

If subscribed to any, which one ? *

1. Netflix
2. Amazon
3. Disney plus hotstar
4. Others

Which, do you think has popular content to influence the subscribers ?

1. Netflix 2. Amazon 3. Disney plus hotstar 4. Others

Which streaming platform has a reasonable subscription rate ?

1. Netflix 2. Amazon 3. Disney plus hotstar 4. Others

Which streaming platform has better advertising skills using pandemic ?

1. Netflix 2. Amazon 3. Disney plus hotstar 4. Others

During this pandemic have felt the need to sit back and enjoy the shows these platforms are providing ?

1. Necessarily 2. Not at all 3. Sometimes

Do you think You will continue with your OTT subscription once you get back to your normal routine.

1. Yes 2. No 3. May be

Do you think the content of OTT is better than what offered by Television.

1. Yes 2. No 3. May be

What do you think is the advantage of OTT over television.

1. Content 2. Convenience of time 3. Cost 4. Other



STUDY ON CONCEPT OF THRIFT STORES

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Supervised by : **Smt. Ujjayani Saha Gupta**, Faculty, *Shri Shikshayatan College*

ABSTARCT

The Thrift store, is a sales location for used goods. These stores are often run by non- profit organization that accept donations of serviceable items and then sell them to the public at inexpensive prices. The purpose of this study is to study on concept of Thrift Stores and to find about how is it different, it's benefits to the society andto study the present condition and its future aspects in the Indian market as well to the younger generation. With this study I have introduce the concept of thrift stores, observed the opinion given the people and made a conclusion out.

BASIC INTRODUCTION TO THRIFT STORES

In every corner of the world, we can see the world changing around us. From changing of our lifestyle to the way we live, everyone is finding a new and creative ways to work. It is easier to start small and, in our homes, rather than starting a large scale. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we supported the concept of thrifting, although thrifting is not a new concept but relatively unheard in the Indian market.

So, what exactly are Thrift stores ?

A thrift store is a retail establishment run by a charitable organization to raise money. They are a type of social enterprise. Even though thrift stores have been around for over a long time, secondhand shopping have now gained popularity.

Thehistory of the Thrift Stores goes back to 1899 when Wolverhampton society for the blind set up charity shops to raise money for the society by selling goods made by the blinds.During World War I, charity bazar in Shepherd Market, London was established. However, it was during the Second World War that the thrift store became widespread with Edinburgh University Settlement opening their "thrift shop for everyone" in 1937, the Red Cross opened up its first thrift store at 17 Old Bond Street, London in 1941.

Thrift stores are widely popular in the west. Though in the last few years, we have seen a steady rise of thrift stores in India too. Although there aren't many physical stores, social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook have a lot of variety. Even though thrift stores have been around for a long time, secondhand shopping have now gained popularity, now the concept of thrifting is considered to be cool. Thrift stores provide a lot of variety in their products and have changing collection as most of their inventory is based on donations, so they provide almost unique products which might be a rare collection. Ever since the COVID-19 pandemic has started, people staying in their home are finding

new ways to optimise the time, this is where the idea of online thrift store took a rise in the country. People now have started their own thrift stores on online platforms not to forget the social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Fluera B (2003) said that traditionally Thrift shopping is conceptualised in marketing as shopping process with an economic function that take place in formal retail settings.
2. Montgomery R and Mitchell M (2010) Thrift stores are categorized as retailers who sell used items that community members and companies have donated. The profits that are made from these sales are raised for charity.
3. Guiot D and Roux D (2010) Fair prices, ethics, environmental corners, and recreational benefits have enabled the proliferation of second-hand markets. Economic motivations drive consumers who search for fair prices and bargain hunting which they are likely to find at second hand stores. Thrift stores clearly satisfies expectations other than economic advantages. In a sense, they offer finding of rare items that may not be available in markets.
4. Swanson C (2020) Many influencers have started featuring thrifting and have been encouraging their followers to adapt this as well, each purchase with the thrift stores simultaneously reduces the carbon footprint.
5. Sarma A (2020) The social media had a great hand in driving this trend.
6. Saxena T (2021) Ethical/green consumerism, affordable unique pieces, ease of buying products, limited edition products and aesthetically styled clothing gave rise to online thrift stores on platform like Instagram. It is mostly undertaken by people belonging to a younger age group and urban population.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- The objective of the study is to know more about thrift stores.
- To understand the current scenario of thrift stores
- To study why thrift stores are popular
- To find how will it benefit the economy

METHODOLOGY

This study is based on primary data that was collected through questionnaire survey by random sampling method. The analysis and findings are all on basis of how the respondents responded to the survey.

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Most of the respondents belong to the age group of 20-25 years with 85% aware of the thrift

stores. According to the responses, most of them have never purchased from a second hand stores. Since thrifting is now a popular trend, we wanted to know what exactly might be the reason for it. With the study it was found that people love the price factor of the thrift store and also the fact the money is raised for charitable purposes. The popularity can be seen mostly on the online platforms but people find offline platform more preferable. The reasons for such popularity in the online platforms is mainly due to COVID-19 and lockdown and it serves as a great career startup, and once something is trending on a social media everyone seems to follow them up. Because of its unknown scope in the future, a decision for thrift stores as a career option is still vague. On asking their opinions on young minds earning through thrift stores, most of them were in favor for this. It's beneficial for both the environment and the economy. Since the same clothes are being used again and again, the cost of manufacturing a new one gets reduced. And in this pandemic situation, where there is scarcity of jobs, this can provide a help to the unemployed. Along with earning for themselves they are also helping the ones in need giving hands on experience to them in the industry. But, there is still some who think that there is not much scope in this field and youngster should focus more on charity than earning for themselves.

SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS

This can be observed most of the people know about Thrift stores and are aware about it, and it have entered the Indian market and many of them see that as a good opportunity. Not many of them have a problem buying a used or a second-hand item unless it is safe and hygienic to use. When you can get something at a relatively lower price then obviously that's a great deal. It can be seen that mostly young generation between the age of 20-25 are more interested in the concept of thrift stores. The reason why thrift stores can be a great concept in the Indian market is mostly because of its price, the Indian population can accept this concept if they are getting a great product at a low price, definitely they would go for it. Since the inventory of the thrift stores are mostly from donations it can encourage more people to donate and also at the same time helps the needy, creating a win-win situation for all. With donations we are providing not only wide range of products but also have a uniqueness in the products. No doubt the online platform for thrift stores is now taking the toll. There has been a rise in number of online thrift stores with influencers and content creators marketing them, and social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook have encouraged the young generation even more. The thrift stores can be a great platform to raise funds as this is one of an innovative way to raise fund which can be beneficial to both donors and as well as the thrift stores. This can be a beneficial situation for all. Thrift stores can also be seen as a great career opportunity, since there are lot of job scarcity mostly because of the ongoing pandemic it becomes very hard for the young generation to find a job at this moment. It can be environment friendly as this helps in reducing resources used for manufacturing a new item, since the products are reusable. But since it is a new concept in India it might not have a great scope or advancement of growth in this field, some of may be fraud and use the name of thrift stores to earn money and instead of using it for charitable purposes they might misuse the money so there might be trust issues with the online platform for thrifting. If the authenticity of the thrift stores can be guaranteed then it might be helpful for the customers.

To conclude, thrift stores have made their entry in the Indian market and can survive the market as the young generations are very much interested in them, with its charitable purposes and price factor it can survive in the long run. Since the young generations are very much interested in following trends, thrift stores now being a trend can make many more aware about it. It can also be seen as a great career opportunity and help the generation gain knowledge about the market and business also making them do charity at the same time and doing something in the lockdown which is productive.

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HUMAN CAPITAL FORMATION THROUGH RURAL PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMMES : A THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

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The failure of economic growth to raise the levels of living of the poor population and to tackle sustained levels of unemployment and underemployment have compelled governments of the developing countries to lean increasingly towards special employment creation and large scale poverty-targeting schemes and to act as the *'employer of the last resort'* to provide non-farm employment to the poorer classes and help them tide over times of difficulty. From theoretical perspective, if conducted in continuum over time, a properly designed and efficiently planned and implemented public works scheme can generate multifarious gains in the process and impact the development process of a nation in long run through accumulation of capital and thus translates itself into an instrument for sustainable development and growth for the underdeveloped rural economies.

Human Capital – a vehicle of growth : Human capital is the stock of competencies, knowledge, social and personality attributes including creativity and cognitive abilities embodied in the ability to perform labour to produce economic value. In the context of developing countries, human capital determines not only the capacity of nations to merely catch up by adopting technologies available abroad but also innovate and implement new technologies suited to domestic production. As a result the human capital stock becomes an engine for attracting other factors such as physical capital which also contributes to the growth of per capita income. But the fact is that physical capital fails to flow to poor countries because of their relatively poor endowments of complementary human capital.

This concept challenges the neoclassical idea of homogeneous factor inputs where labour is treated as one of the factors of production. The suggestion of differentiation within the labour input in a production function can also be found in earlier discourses by way of recognizing *'acquired and useful abilities'*, *'acquisition of talent'*, *'improved dexterity'* (Smith, 1776) and in the distinction of *'labour power'* from *'labour'* (Marx, 1867). Smith (1776) linked human capital (specified as the *improvement in the productive power of labour*) with the division of labour which implicitly recognizes the differentiation embedded within labour as an input. The role of *'mental'* and *'physical'* capabilities in human beings and the use of *'muscles, nerves and brains'* were seen by Marx as *'self renewing and reproductive'* means used by men and women for living.

Perspectives on human capital as part of microeconomics built up gradually and speeded up both in the realms of economics (Becker, 1993; Myrdal, 1957; Mincer, 1958; Lucas 1988) and organizational sciences (Drucker, 1993; Bell, 1995) where the rise of the knowledge worker was predicted. Lewis (1954) emphasized *'rapid capital formation'* for development including in it

knowledge and skill and Mincer (1958), the founder of modern labour economics modeled wages as a function of human capital. Schultz (1961) had recognized the fact that '*people are important part of the wealth of nations*'. And there is nothing contrary in the idea of people '*investing in themselves*' and in the visible truth that in western nations human capital created by deliberate investment has grown faster than conventional capital.

The importance of human capital and its analogy with physical means of production only gained ground with further advancement of the literature. Nutrition, hygiene, education and guidance began to transcend the consumption needs of human beings and the emerging perspectives blurred the distinction between consumption and investment in Economics.

Education and health both in terms of quality of life and longevity (Grossman 1972) are the major constituents of human capital that concern both the commercially driven industries and the nation states in search of development and growth. Education is seen as the key instrument for human capital formation and is a strong underpinning of the developing countries' policy of spending on education for human resource development. Despite the intuitive and strong theoretical indications and some amount of empirical validation as well, deficiency of human capital in poor countries is considered as a major cause of their remaining poor. These countries are said to have a weak incentive to form human capital. While, brain drain or leakage is sometimes blamed as a reason behind poor incentive to human capital formation in some nations the hypothesis is not confirmed by empirical investigation. Time series data analysis showed that human capital led growth performed best for India (Halder, 2009).

The emergence of an Endogenous Growth Theory (Arrow, 1962; Uzawa, 1965; Paul Romer, 1986; Robert Lucas 1988; and Sergio Rebelo, 1991) which holds that economic growth is primarily the result of endogenous forces and that investment in human capital, innovation, and knowledge are significant contributors to economic growth that help nations transform raising the primacy of an open economy and the policy paradigm.

The Rural Public Works Programmes (RPWPs) : RPWPs are short-term labour intensive work-fare that provides work and wages to the unskilled labourers for creating rural infrastructure. Through RPWPs the government brings the local people together for rural development at public cost – something that private industries have little interest to do. In comparison to the profit oriented private sector, the State with its proficiency in general administration, its position in international forums and its links to wide ranges of specialized developments and applications, is more equipped for development programming. The State can therefore design and amend the instrument of RPWPs with a broader outlook for people's welfare. Although the PWP were meant mostly to respond to crises such as war, drought and famine (e.g. *English Poor Laws, America's New Deal programmes* etc.), they evolved into mainstream policy instruments for employment creation and poverty alleviation since the seventies, and gained popularity among many developing nations towards the end of the twentieth century. Some of the well-known examples in this context are Brazil's *Bolsa Familia*, Mexico's *Oportunidades*, Argentina's *Trabajar* followed by the *Plan Jefes y Jefas* and India's *Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act*.

RPWPs in India : India has a long history of poverty alleviation programmes that include both self-employment schemes and Public Works Programmes (PWP), particularly targeted for the rural population. The role of State in employment generation preceded the advent of modern democracy as income support and welfare for the distressed existed even in ancient India as is evident from the contemporary literatures, Kautilya's Arthashastra (written in 4th century), 'Sukraniti' (a 8th century treatise on justice system, written by the Sanskrit scholar Sukracharya) to name a few (Bhattacharya, 1970). During the colonial period there was not much concern about social security for the people at large. In the latter half of 19th century about 25 major famines occurred across India killing more than 30 million people. It is believed by many that apart from uneven rainfall British economic policies were responsible for the recurring famines.¹ Fearing public agitation raging beyond control, famine commissions came up with relief provisions.² Direct relief was given to the old and the infirm and work to the able-bodied by engaging them in public works for canal building and irrigation projects.

Post-independence the issue of poverty removal has always played a significant role in India's electoral battles³ claiming large sums of public money, but the achievements fell far short of their goals. Many of the rural poverty alleviation programmes implemented in India since the 1970s were of the RPWP category and with continual effect although under different names for being associated with different ruling political regimes. Finally in the year 2006, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) – a universal rural employment programme legitimizing people's 'right to work' and aiming to fulfill the Millennium Development Goals (laid down by UNO in the year 2000), was launched which is presently the largest work-fare in the world in terms of encompassing the number of households within its ambit.

RPWPs for Growth and Human Capital Formation : Keynesian theory of demand-led employment growth is the underlying economic principle; nevertheless RPWPs embody many of the tenets of different development theories. Besides short term income gains which directly relieves the rural households of their liquidity constraints ensuring better food security and improved quality of life, there are long term indirect benefits too, derivable from the schemes' output through the spill-over effects. RPWP can also be designed to diversify agriculture towards more commercial activities and by diverting efforts to effective land and water management, RPWP can promote mitigation of and adaptation to global warming.

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1. The policies relate to the seizure and conversion of local farmland into foreign owned plantations, restrictions on internal trade, heavy taxation of Indians, inflationary measures and substantial exports of staple crops from India to Britain (Sen, 1982; Bhatia, 1985).
 2. In face of recurring major famines during the British Raj in India in the later half of 19th century which killed millions of people and fear of mass outrage beyond control, famine commissions came up with direct relief to be provided to the old and infirm and work to the able-bodied through public works in a series of canal building and irrigation projects. It is generally believed that those famines were outcome of both uneven rainfall and discriminatory British economic policies effecting conversion of local farmland into foreign-owned plantations, restrictions on internal trade, heavy taxation of Indians, substantial export of staple crops to Britain and so on (Sen 1982; Bhatia 1985).
 3. The 'Garibi Hatao' or 'remove poverty' slogan of the then Prime Minister in 1971 parliamentary election of India is in the annals.

By Keynesian prescriptions, additional income generation from PWP should have multiplier impact on demand for consumer goods leading to capital formation (both physical and human) in industries. On one hand, additional wage incomes of rural households attributable to such non-farm employment, can generate private investible surplus funds to promote other market-based economic activities; for example, the earnings from the programme may enable the farmer to increase productivity through purchase of improved seeds, fertilizer, acquire or reduce distress sale of live-stocks and machineries and even sending children to school. On the other hand, the assets created in the form of roads, water bodies, land quality, drainage and housing could stimulate productivity and facilitate further production in other sectors of the economy or give rise to new sectors leading to further income generation through the multiplier effect.

The assets could be machines embedding latest technologies just as procured by investing industries but unlike them, meant for collective use in the local economy. These machines could help productivity enhancement by precision, efficiency and information use. Other assets created could potentially improve food security, the standard of rural life, inculcate softer skills, empower women and protect the environment – all leading to higher level of welfare. Thus the objective of implementing RPWP moves much beyond assurance of minimal earning from unskilled work for the needy households.

The provision of RPWPs could stimulate a process of higher productivity in conventional sectors of the economy or give rise to new sectors leading to further income generation through normal market based processes. Similarly, household incomes earned from rural work could reach a minimal level to be reinvested in other market-based economic activities.

RPWPs also could help to maintain and even appreciate human capital by employing those who would otherwise be unemployed and by offering them training and education (Techerneva and Wray, 2005). Investment in social infrastructure (such as school buildings, health centers) creates higher quality jobs and human resources in addition to meeting the basic needs of a rural community. Well-planned designs and implementation of RPWPs for long-term sustainable gains call for capacity building initiatives to acquire greater skill and knowledge from implementing agencies. If the public goods created by the programme are of low quality, it can undermine long-term productivity and resource sustainability.

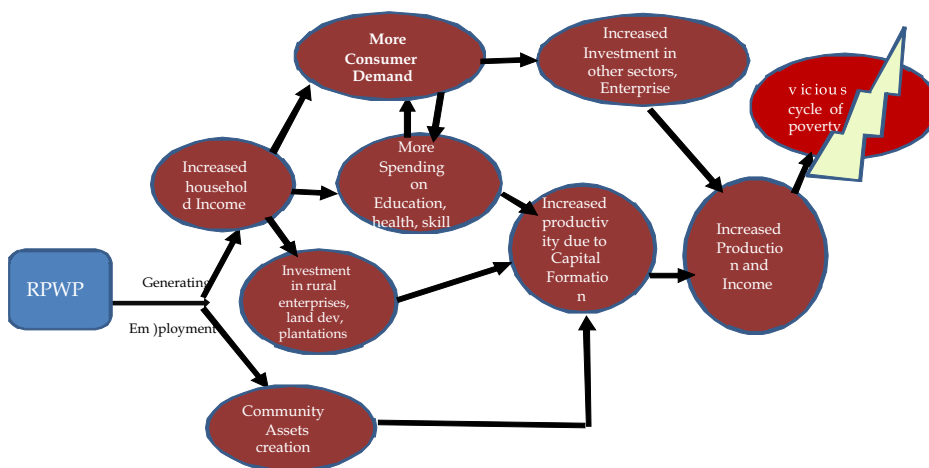
RPWPs can also be seen as potential instruments for creating human capital as well through on-the job skill acquisition and exposure to latest technology and practices if planned and designed appropriately. On job training can have a more direct effect on well directed human capital formation. As a potentially strong instrument for creating human capital from the most backward and unskilled sections RPWP, however can merit public investment for social and human capital creation in which the long-term and even inter-generational benefits may not attract correct valuation by market. For skill-intensive work, qualified supervisors and requisite training are however important inputs. As a variant, RPWP participants could be treated as apprentice trainees with scholarship rather than short term employees. RPWP then becomes potentially enabling for human capital creation which in turn has other ramifications.

It may be noted that RPWPs not only can make use of modern information technology but can also serve as a guard against labour-displacing technologies that is harmful to society in the presence of low skilled labour reserves. It is a means to greater sectoral and inter-personal equality, and can correct deficiencies in other elements of human development not captured by growth, especially if women, are made prime beneficiaries.

Contrasting unskilled manual work-based rural public assets with low technology against organized and planned infrastructure building in urban sectors is disagreeable to many. The skill-based approach to PWP could improve the quality of rural assets, making way for a more thriving rural economy and help in overcoming the urban bias. On the other hand, urban administration is said to benefit from reduced migration of distressed migration adding to unemployment and civic problems. Not only do the superior assets help to build up rural economic strength and specialization, the knowledge created can spill over to enrich enterprise and private industries. Both impacts can over time help in attainment of excellence and comparative advantage.

It appears from the discussion, that RPWPs are desirable policy interventions for a developing economy for poverty alleviation and economic development. For a targeted initiative like RPWP to rise above a 'safety-net' status and to be 'inclusive growth' consistent, the income generating potential of the programme has to be seen in a dynamic perspective. Even while working through usual capital accumulation, RPWPs would circumvent the Marxian foreboding over exploitation, surplus extraction and the over-production crisis because in principle it is driven by people's desires and their ownership of assets, voluntary community participation and a welfare-minded government. In short, ideal designing of the schemes in coherence with theoretical reflections can potentially help the beneficiaries break away from vicious cycle of poverty and promote development through the routes charted in the diagram below :

Dynamics of MGNREGA Impact



A few evidence based studies (Anderson and Leiserson, 1980; Ravallion, 1990; White, 1991; Reardon, 1997) however suggest that rural non-farm income does reduce poverty of the rural households in '*depth and severity*'; yet researchers have mixed opinions over its impact on income inequality. Knight and Song (1993), Reardon (1997), Evans and Ngau (1999) found strong positive correlation between household income and share of non-farm income and described the latter to be inequality enhancing for the rural economy. White (1991) concluded that supplementary non-farm employment is crucial for rural households but it does not appear to be an '*engine of growth*' by way of '*dynamising the rural sector to create higher income necessary for further diversification.*'

Conclusion :

From the theoretical perspective therefore it may be argued that the RPWPs, if effectively designed, planned and implemented, can facilitate further market-based productive activities through enterprise and job-creation. As households increasingly gain access to free market employment, their incomes would increase which will in turn diminish the need for participation in these state sponsored workfare. It is also to be noted that the success of a RPWP lies entirely with the motivation, integrity and efficiency of the ruling government and its stability through electoral challenges. RPWPs as public investment can be sustainable as a solution for development if only the employment becomes productive employment and not disguised unemployment and if it helps human resources to rise to levels of human dignity of acquiring capability and strength in the market.

Despite the manifold benefits to development process via, physical and human capital creation, human capability and welfare generation, ecological benefits, elimination of rural disguised unemployment and inequality, the worst fear that linger is of a possibility of misuse as a bootstrap development method by any autocratic government that builds assets by extracting cheap labour from impoverished citizens (a lesson from the Soviet downfall). On the other hand, private sector and the international community too stand to gain from a happy and capable rural community with greater buying power. While RPWP seems to have immeasurable potentials as a development instrument beyond 'ditch digging' and time is opportune for more debate and consultation among State, private sector and civil society stake-holders, the motivation for its effective incentive driven operation would ideally be, to draw the surplus labour from rural sector essentially to integrate it with the market by building both human and physical capacity.

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EDUCATION BEYOND FACE TO FACE MODE : OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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The outbreak of global pandemic novel corona virus (Covid-19) has led to closures of various schools, colleges and universities around the world. India is no exception according to recent report by UNESCO, over one and a half billion school & college students were stuck at home in the midst of the ongoing pandemic, representing close to 90% of the global student population (c. 1.38 bn students) at a point in March 2020. In this scenario, advancement in technology, both computational as well as telecommunication, are enabling schools worldwide to bring remote learning opportunities to students.

A learning system based on formalized teaching but with use of electronic resources is known as e-learning. E-learning is not a new concept, such platforms have been used by many institutes over the years to offer distance educations to many students. Advancement of technology over the years has helped students to study online from distant places. It has also helped to overcome the challenges of traditional methods of teaching-learning process. Some researchers view e-learning as a delivery of teaching materials by via electronic media such as internet, intranet, satellite broadcast, audio/video tape interactive TV and CD ROM (Engelbrecht, 2005). E-learning can also be seen as an internet based learning which utilizes web based communications, collaborations, knowledge transfers and training to add value to individuals and organizations they work within (Kelly & Bauer, 2004)

With the outbreak of novel corona virus and shutting down of educational institutes, online education has gained tremendous importance. Online education which once was limited to few is now a part of almost every student's academic life.

Advantages of on-line education

The major advantage of e-learning is easy access of study resources from any time in any place. The user groups of modern times are digital citizens, they obtain, process and transfer information digitally and this suits for education system too. Clark and Mayor (2008,2011). End-users can undergo learning or teaching process at their place in convenient time and also it does not have any restriction of time. (James, 2002).

E-learning in higher education is molded with flexibility, Agility, Geographical liberation which in turn gives the self-sufficiency to the students pursuing Higher education through E-learning. (Brown & Charlier, 2012). E-learning also provides an extensive customization of learning opportunities that

suffice the need of students. It gives learners an equal opportunity to education irrespective of circumstances to fulfill their objectives. Even the different student groups around the world can connect through use of technology (Faraj Allahi & Zarif Sanayei, 2009).

E-learning helps to reduce the fretfulness among students due to fear of lagging behind. It also motivates through various assessments and tasks, instant feedback, which encourage the focus, performance, self- confidence, habit of life-long learning and reduce stress (Clark & Mayer, 2008).

Limitations of Online education

Though e-learning has gained importance during modern times but it has certain limitations. To avail online education, student group should have availability of computers or similar electronic devices with good internet connection. These basic things may not be available to many individuals in developing or under- developed countries which may be lead to neglect of certain group of students from having equal opportunity to e-learning.

The next challenge is of operation of the computers or knowledge of related technology. Due to lack of knowledge and awareness about the courses and services offered through e-learning (Hodavand,2008). Most of the courses are offered in English which may be a barrier to many students studying in their regional languages (Asmal,2003).

While digital forms of learning have the potential to enable students to pursue independent learning, conventional and digital forms of education should not be considered mutually exclusive. Online learning needs to be understood as one strand in a complex tapestry of curricular communication that may still assign an important central role to direct human engagement and social learning.

Conclusion

The different countries are at different levels in their covid-19 infection rates but worldwide most of the countries have adopted online learning to continue the process of learning. Online education with online admissions to various institutions has been a great relief to worried students and parents during these pandemic. There has been a significant transformation in the process by many educational institutions. There have already been successful transitions amongst many universities. For example, Zhejiang University managed to get more than 5,000 courses online just two weeks into the transition using “Ding Talk ZJU”. The Imperial College London started offering a course on the science of corona virus, which is now the most enrolled class launched in 2020 on Coursera. Many teachers across the world have now started believing that they are able to reach out to more students more efficiently and effectively through chat groups, video meetings, voting and document sharing, especially during this pandemic. It can be said that traditional offline learning and e-learning can go hand by hand.

In countries like India, majority of the student's population without reliable internet access or technology struggle to participate in digital learning. Internet access is disproportional across the

country and is evidenced by the Ministry of Statistics report on Key Indicators of Household and Social Consumption on Education in India (2017-18) report. Again, according to Internet and Mobile Association of India report, on the national level, fewer women (33%) have access to internet compared to men (67%) is an area of concern.

This study concludes that students have very good ability to make use of the various tools and technologies that enable one to participate in e-learning with ease. It is indicated that good technological background is needed for students to be successful at e-learning , because they need to have some level of comfort using these devices and internet facilities(Lee & Witta, 2001).

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VIRTUAL CURRENCY – AN OVERVIEW

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“The Future of money is Digital Currency.” – Bill Gates

The advancement in the world of digitalization has revolutionized the monetary and payments system. The digital wallets although have become quite friendly to users but digital currency still has a way to go. A digital currency lacks the basic features of a fiat currency. Just like a fiat currency offers the benefit of medium of exchange, a unit of account and store of value, the digital currency currently can only be considered for store of value. The fintech industry with their rapid development in infrastructure has boosted the economy of digital currency. The digital currency alternatively referred to as virtual currency or cryptocurrency has emerged as a parallel currency to fiat currencies for some countries. In 2014 report on virtual currencies, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF 2014), an inter-governmental body established in 1989 by a Group of Seven (G-7) Summit in Paris, defined digital currency as a digital representation of value that can be digitally traded while functioning as a medium of exchange, unit of account and a store of value, but has no legal tender status and functions only by agreement within the community of users of the virtual currency. These can be termed as independent currency too which in the words of *Bruner Mier* should possess two characteristics- i) the payment instruments are denominated in the same unit of account & ii) each payment instrument within the currency is convertible into any other. Cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin, Ethereum, Litecoin, Ripple, etc. are denominated in their own unit of account and thus comes within the purview of independent currency. Basically, working with the Blockchain technology, these virtual currencies eliminate the intermediary in the transaction process unlike the digital wallets or digital money. Blockchain is a peer-to-peer network; the word 'blockchain' is made up of two separate terms, 'block' and 'chain'. A block being referred to a collection of data or data records, and chain being referred to a public database of these blocks, stored as a list. These lists are linked using cryptography, making it the most essential and fundamental requirement for creating a blockchain. Blockchain is a growing list of records, and the blocks get appended to the list with time. Cryptography on a separate note is a method of developing techniques and protocols to prevent a third party from accessing and gaining knowledge of the data from the private messages during a communication process. Cryptography is also made up of two ancient greek terms, 'Kryptos' meaning 'hidden' and 'Graphein' meaning 'write'. The FATF report defined 'Cryptocurrency' to mean a math-based, decentralised convertible virtual currency protected by cryptography by relying on public and private keys to transfer value from one person to another and signed cryptographically each time it is transferred.

According to Jan lansky (2016), a cryptocurrency is a system that meets six conditions :

1. The system does not require a central authority; its state is maintained through distributed consensus.
2. The system keeps an overview of cryptocurrency units and their ownership.
3. The system defines whether new cryptocurrency units can be created. If new cryptocurrency units can be created, the system defines the circumstances of their origin and how to determine the ownership of these new units.
4. Ownership of cryptocurrency units can be proved exclusively cryptographically.
5. The system allows transactions to be performed in which ownership of the cryptographic units is changed. A transaction statement can only be issued by an entity proving the current ownership of these units.
6. If two different instructions for changing the ownership of the same cryptographic units are simultaneously entered, the system performs at most one of them.

There are several benefits of Blockchain technology. Being decentralized in nature, they are less prone to corruption and manipulation. At the same time these transactions are less expensive and faster unlike the fiat currency transactions or digital payment systems. And the most important of these are that the payments are validated 24/7.

Taking a glance at the cryptocurrency market, Bitcoin alone accounts for 46% share of the market.

In a study conducted by the Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON) Committee, European Union (2019), if studied from a macroeconomic point of view, cryptocurrencies could pose a risk to monetary and financial stability. On the other hand , from a microeconomic perspective, they imply a risk to investors, who could lose all their money. However, nowadays, the small size of digital currency schemes makes it unlikely to pose real risks to financial stability. Risks to monetary stability could, in theory, emerge if a digital currency were to achieve widespread usage, but this is extremely unlikely.

But again the absence of a regulatory body creates concern among users regarding its viability and security. In the words of RBI, payments by Virtual Currencies, such as Bitcoins, take place on a peer-to-peer basis without an authorised central agency which regulates such payments. As such, there is no established framework for recourse to customer problems / disputes / charge backs etc. The Senate Economics Review Committee (SERC) (2015) examined the unique challenges that digital currencies have created for regulators, including how to maintain the integrity of the financial system while creating a regulatory environment that encourages innovation. But still the legal status of the cryptocurrencies vary substantially across countries. Where some countries like Iran , Bolivia , North Macedonia have imposed an absolute ban on them, on the other hand there are others who have imposed restrictions or even allowed their usage and trading in them. According to the Library of

Congress, an "absolute ban" on trading or using cryptocurrencies applies in eight countries: Algeria, Bolivia, Egypt, Iraq, Morocco, Nepal, Pakistan, and the United Arab Emirates. The Central Bank of Egypt issued a warning in January 2018 against the trading of cryptocurrencies, such as bitcoin, due to the extremely high risk associated with such currencies. The Central Bank also asserted that commerce within the Arab Republic of Egypt is confined only to the official paper currencies approved by the Bank. In India, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued a "Statement on Developmental and Regulatory Policies" on April 5, 2018, which directed the entities regulated by RBI (i) not to deal with or provide services to any individual or business entities dealing with or settling virtual currencies and (ii) to exit the relationship, if they already have one, with such individuals/ business entities, dealing with or settling virtual currencies. Following the said Statement, RBI also issued a circular dated April 6, 2018 directing the entities regulated by RBI (i) not to deal in virtual currencies nor to provide services for facilitating any person or entity in dealing with or settling virtual currencies and (ii) to exit the relationship with such persons or entities, if they were already providing such services to them. The said statement and circular was challenged by the 'Internet and Mobile Association of India' and a few companies which run online crypto assets exchange platforms, the shareholders/founders of these companies and a few individual crypto assets traders. Then March 4, 2020 established a new ray of hope for the petitioners when the Supreme Court of India lifted the ban on cryptocurrency transactions imposed by the Reserve Bank of India, which restricted banks and financial institutions from providing access to the banking services to those engaged in transactions in crypto assets. The trading, till now, was only limited to crypto-to-crypto as against crypto-to-Indian Rupee currencies which is now permissible. In response to that Nischal Shetty, founder of a cryptocurrency startup, WazirX, said. "RBI's circular that was banning the cryptocurrency has been termed as unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. This means, all cryptocurrency exchanges can have bank accounts to allow traders to sell their bitcoin (BTC) for Indian rupee".

Hence its time for the investors and exchanges of cryptocurrencies to bask in this new ray of light and determine the future of virtual currencies in our country.

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