**“ONLINE EDUCATION”**

Education is empowering and redefining. For hundreds of millions of students, education is not just learning but also discipline, development, creativity and curiosity. Owing to the corona virus pandemic, education is in the crisis moment. In this situation, Online education has come to the rescue. However, there are quite a few advantages and disadvantages of online education.

Online education allows us to learn more and provides access to multiple learning options and resources. It offers flexibility to study. So, a student can now learn anything, anywhere, anytime and at any pace he desires. It is also more affordable and helps in cutting down the expenses of daily commute. Due to this pandemic, the digital penetration in rural India is tremendous. As per economic survey, the percentage of school students owing smartphone has increased from 36.5% in 2018 to 61.8% in 2020. As a result, there will be reduction in the digital divide between rural and urban. It also reduces gender, age, income inequalities in the educational outcomes.

As all the things have pros and cons, the same goes for online education. Teachers and students are totally unprepared for this switching to online education. They lack digital skills. Many parts of our country has no internet availability and device accessibility. It is also evident that online education lacks social cohesion. It also a struggle for parents to constantly check on their children.

To overcome the challenges, Government has come up with the encouraging initiatives like PM eVIDYA which enables equitable access to online education for students and teachers. It also launched a teacher training program SAMAGRA SIKSHYA ABHIYAN to impart digital skills in teachers. It also issued PRAGYATA guidelines on online education. To provide psychological support to the students, MANDODARPAN has been included in the ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT.

In this way, Online education opens up a lot of possibilities for the students and teachers alike. Yet, it may also widen inequalities in the socio-economic fabric of India. Hence the government must strive to reduce this gap and formulate policies which are inclusive. Good vision, sincere efforts and time will show India the way forward.