ASSESSING ONLINE CLASSES- IMPACT OF SCHOOL CLOSURE AND PANDEMIC IN INDIA

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BACKGROUND

- Schools in India closed down due to the ongoing Covid19 pandemic for over 20 months forcing students to access education through online means
- According to the World Bank, 1.6 millions children and youth were kept out of school in 161 countries globally
- There has been several reports indicating the learning loss caused due to the school closure amongst children globally and in India
- While the need to assess the loss in critical, it makes it difficult to do so without an existing baseline of the learning levels pre school closure
ASSESSING QUALITY OF ONLINE CLASSES

• Under this backdrop, a survey covering 1003 school going children was done by JOSH to assess the quality and access of children to online classes during the prolonged school closure of over 2 years.

• The surveyed covered children going to Government schools in Trilokpuri area. The surveyed was conducted on children from a sample of 10 Govt schools from where a sample 10% of children were interviewed. The children were randomly selected across the different classes. The total number of students interviewed were 1003 children.
RESULTS:

- Of the 1003 students interviewed 43% children were unable to access to online classes.

- Of the children who were not being able to take the online classes:
  - 35% children were from primary section, i.e. 1-5th grade
  - 32% of children were from 6th-8th grade
  - 22% of children were from 9th-12th grade
RESULTS:

- Of the reasons why children who were unable to attend online classes:
  - 62% of children mentioned unavailability of smart phones
  - 5% children mentioned inability to recharge phone for data due to lack of money
  - 33% of children mentioned other reasons like, the phone was with fathers or brothers who left for work, having to share one phone for amongst other siblings etc.
RESULTS:

57% of children who were able to attend the online classes, were asked the following questions:

• ‘Do they understand what is been taught in class?'
  • 84% of children mentioned that they were able to understand class lessons most of the time, while 16% of children found it difficult to follow what was taught in class

• ‘Do teachers make an effort to clear their doubts, if any?'
  • 42% of children mentioned that teachers don’t make any efforts to clear doubts or clarifications of what is taught in class
RESULTS:

• 57% of children who were able to attend the online classes, were asked the following questions:
  
  • ‘Were you given homework to complete after class?’
    • 91% of children mentioned that they were given homework
  
  • ‘Did your teacher check your homework?’
    • 90% of children mentioned that their homework were checked by their teachers
Sachin lives in Trilokpuri and is a 8th standard student of Premchand Rajkiya Bal Vidhyalaya. During the last two years of school closure, Sachin was unable to attend online classes as he did not have a smart phone. Initially he would visit his friend and share his phone, but later he was forced to discontinue as it was difficult for them to share and do their classwork together. During the mobilization, JOSH team found out about Sachin and he was connected to one of our tuition volunteers, Bushra. Sachin started going to her for tuition classes. Here he was also able to begin attending the online class, as Bushra would facilitate the process for all the other children using her phone. She has been helping students like Sachin to not only attend and keep up with the class, but also to clear all their doubts and complete worksheets given by the school.
• Mansi is in 6th grade and is a student of GGSSS, Kalyanpuri (adjoining area of Trilokpuri). She has four siblings and their father who works in a small factory has only a keypad phone. None of the siblings were attending online classes, as they could not afford a smart phone. As part of JOSH’s efforts to connect such children with tuition volunteers, we connected Mansi with Rozi. Rozi has been teaching Mansi regularly since then. She has been helping her with her lessons and complete the worksheets that were given out by the teachers from school.
CASE STORY

Manisha is in 5th grade in Rajkiya Sarvodaya Kanya Vidhyala, Trilokpuri. She was able to attend the online class, as her parents owned a smart phone. However, even after attending the class, she found it extremely difficult to understand what was taught. Most of the time in class, students kept talking and greeting each other, there would be background noise, or students would keep dropping off the class, all of which led to disturbances which made understanding class lessons difficult. She would also collect worksheets given by the teachers every week from the school, but would not be able to complete them. She joined the tuition class given by our volunteer, Gulnaaz. Gulnaaz helped her with her lessons, cleared her doubts and helped her to complete her worksheets on time.
INITIATIVE TO BRIDGE THE LEARNING LOSS—TUITION CLASSES FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN
TUITION SUPPORT: BRIDGING THE LEARNING GAP

- Under the background of the prolonged school closure, JOSH reached out to its volunteers to come forward to help children struggling to access online classes. These sessions were initiated and ongoing since July 2020. JOSH was able to mobilize 30 volunteers whose skill sets were matched with school going kids. Each volunteer initially started teaching around 4-5 kids, making the coverage to about 150 school going children in Trilokpuri area.

- However, over the last two years, the number of children being taught under this initiative has doubled and is more than 300, with each volunteer teaching 10 children.
TUITION SUPPORT: BRIDGING THE LEARNING GAP

• JOSH was able to provide a small stipend support of Rs. 1500 per month for 15 tuition volunteers with the generous support of ASHA for education.

• We also provide essential stationery material to help them to conduct their classes effectively for the children. Most children are so poor they don’t even have essential stationery material.

• The ongoing tuition class, has helped both the kids who were not able to access online classes due to various reasons and those who were taking the online class, but were having difficulty in coping up with what was being taught. Individual, personalized and regular attention on studying has helped to a large extend to address the growing learning gap.
TUITION SUPPORT: BRIDGING THE LEARNING GAP

• JOSH has also collaborated with Avishkar Trust to train the tuition volunteer on teaching and learning practices for Science and Mathematics. This has helped these volunteers to understand simple techniques of teaching children, especially the younger children, to better understand concepts of Science and Maths.

• JOSH has also collaborated with Chehak Trust to 5 volunteers to undergo training to start and run small home libraries. This is mainly being done to help in inculcating reading habits amongst children, especially because they don’t have access to libraries and books beyond their school curriculum.
Snapshot of classes being taken by volunteers
THANK YOU!