MAD – 2020
GOVERNANCE
Day – 30

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Question:

The outbreak of Covid19 has underlined the advent of Education 4.0. Discuss the impact of technology and internet in education in the country. Further highlight initiatives of the government to further the same.

Answer-

The advent of the fourth industrial revolution with the explosion of internet also revolutionized the idea of learning bringing to fore Education 4.0. Education 4.0 is seen as a disruptive system which is aligned with future trends, in order to develop and enhance individualised education through technology and internet.

With physical institutions and centres of education having to shut during the Covid19 pandemic, this new model of online education and e-learning has received a massive push from primary classes to skill and vocational training modules. The advent of cyber learning, internet of things and alternative methodologies may lead to huge paradigm changes as far as education in India is concerned. These include:

1. **Demand-led instead of supply**-led education: Instead of mushrooming of schools and colleges and students flocking to these places, the advent of education 4.0 by making education accessible now focusses on the demands of the learners instead.

2. **Lifelong learning instead of front**-loaded learning: ASER reports have continuously pointed out the dismal learning outcomes in Indian education system. Education 4.0 now shifts the focus from mere enrolment and attendance to inculcate learning in students.

3. **Incorporate disruptive technologies &skill-sets**: The incorporation of these technologies can help prepare the students for the demands of tomorrow but it can also lead to loss of jobs as now fewer teachers may be able to reach wider and have the ability to adapt their teaching to these new methods.

4. **Focus on purposefulness, mindfulness leading to overall Happiness & Wellbeing** as conclusively established in global research of OECD learning framework2030. Delhi government in 2019 came up with Happiness curriculum for its schools to focus on the qualitative development of students.

5. **Infrastructural requirements**: While on one hand education 4.0 with its massive reach can have an equalizing effect as far as education is concerned, the lack of physical and human infrastructure can also lead to further polarization among diverse students in the domain of education.

While India has witnessed a surge in online learning, the government too has taken a number of initiatives to push forth the cause of education 4.0. NITI Aayog in its reports as well as the Draft National Education Policy 2019 have underlined the importance of online education, machine learning and adoption of information technology.

The Ministry of Human Resource Development has developed platforms like such as DIKSHA, EPATHSHALA and SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds) to ensure access, equity and quality in education through AI and online learning. It also announced the National Educational Alliance for Technology (NEAT) Scheme for using better technology for better learning outcomes in Higher Education in 2019.

Furthermore, the EQUIP Project envisaged by the government focuses on harnessing education technology for expanding the reach and improving pedagogy. Similarly the Samagra Shiksha scheme focuses on the two Ts of Technology and Teachers to fulfil the SDG of quality education for one and all in the country.

Cyber security and privacy concerns still remain an issue as far as online education is concerned as was witnessed in case of zoom. However, education sector in India has opened and will continue to open multiple avenues of AI intervention. It could be a difficult road for the nation to achieve the targets under the SDG on Quality Education without harnessing this superpower, often believed to be the new electricity for the 21st Century.