

## EVOLVING HORIZONS

An Interdisciplinary International Journal of Education,  
Humanities, Social And Behavioral Sciences

(A Peer Reviewed Journal)

Volume 9 • November 2020 • ISSN : 2319 - 6521

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# NEW CHALLENGES TO THE SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN ONLINE TEACHING IN THE PANDEMIC COVID 19 SCENARIOS

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### Abstract:

The global impact of widespread pandemic Coronavirus has changed the normal system of every sector and all are in a critical crisis to overcome the situation. In this post-COVID 19 pandemic situation, though all the sectors gradually open their shutters, educational institutions are still under lockdown. If students and teachers are forced to stay at their homes and pupils remain detached from formal education, then what would be the destiny of the nation? Though almost every sector faces some problems to conduct the system smoothly, it becomes a new challenge to the educational personnel especially to the teachers to turn the formal face to face set up into an online teaching-learning environment with the help of digital technology. The present paper focuses on the challenges that especially the secondary school teachers face to run the online classes in this critical scenario. A survey was conducted on the teachers through telephonic conversation and video calling and some with a face-to-face conversation with semi-structured schedule and from various literature reviews, the data have been analyzed qualitatively. The major findings of the study are networking issues, lack of digital devices, teaching and assessment method, lack of ICT training, digital division, handling disable children, communication gap, inappropriate home environment, students' indifferent attitude and lack of emotional bonding that the teachers are facing and finally the recommendation that the teachers and the stakeholders should follow to wear this nomenclature to cope up with this situation.

**Keywords:** New challenges, school teachers, online class.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

None can imagine that the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will witness such a pandemic caused by the Coronavirus named COVID 19 which has suddenly stopped the heartbeat of the Earth at a time. Daily activities of every sector were totally postponed and all are locked and pull their shutters down. People are at their homes, self-isolation, quarantine centers, and those who are going outside for any purpose everyone has to maintain physical distancing. Every time and every moment people are in a panic of being infected by this severe touchable Coronavirus. This COVID 19 has changed not only the normal system of every sector and the livelihood of all the people but the movement of wild animals and nature also, the environment becomes calm and quiet, nature is pollution-free. Though in the beginning, it becomes comfortable for most people to stay at home and spend quality time with their family members, relatives, and near once with different sorts of activities but gradually this scenario turns becomes worse because the nation cannot move with this. If people are home confined how the destiny of the nation will be fixed and how the nation will be developed? Therefore to Govt. decided to unlock some sectors and with time, all the sectors gradually re-open their daily activities with some essential conditions.

“Teachers are the next level of COVID warriors, fighting for the nation and shaping the future of tomorrow,” “We are still not aware as to when things will be back to normal. So, instead of leaving everything to the future, teachers should plan, keeping one thing in mind that learning should not stop.” says Raghav Poddar, Chairman, Poddar Education, Mumbai. (Ourselves et al., 2020)

But the current scenario is that all the educational institutions are still under total lockdown, no bell rings in the morning, and in the afternoon, students and teachers are at their homes. Then what will be the future of the students who will enlighten the world and what will the teacher do if they are in home quarantines. Necessity knows no laws. Despite all difficulties like other sectors, teachers are trying to create an online teaching-learning environment with the help of digital technologies-teaching-learning and Students’ assessments process have moved from the formal classroom to virtual online climate to the millions of households (Wills, 2020) and after going to this process the teachers have to face various new challenges to cope up with this critical situations. Various studies exist related to the problems faced by the teachers in Higher Education both in government and private sectors but the teachers who are working in Government secondary schools and facing various problems to continue their online classes are not studied yet, so it creates a research gap to continue this study.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The objective of the study is to know the new challenges that the Secondary school teachers face while they are conducting online classes in this pandemic scenario and how they are trying to cope up with this situation.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study is conducted on a purposive sampling technique with semi-structured scheduled items. Baruipur and Canning Subdivision in South 24 Parganas were selected as the areas and secondary school teachers were selected conveniently for this study and through

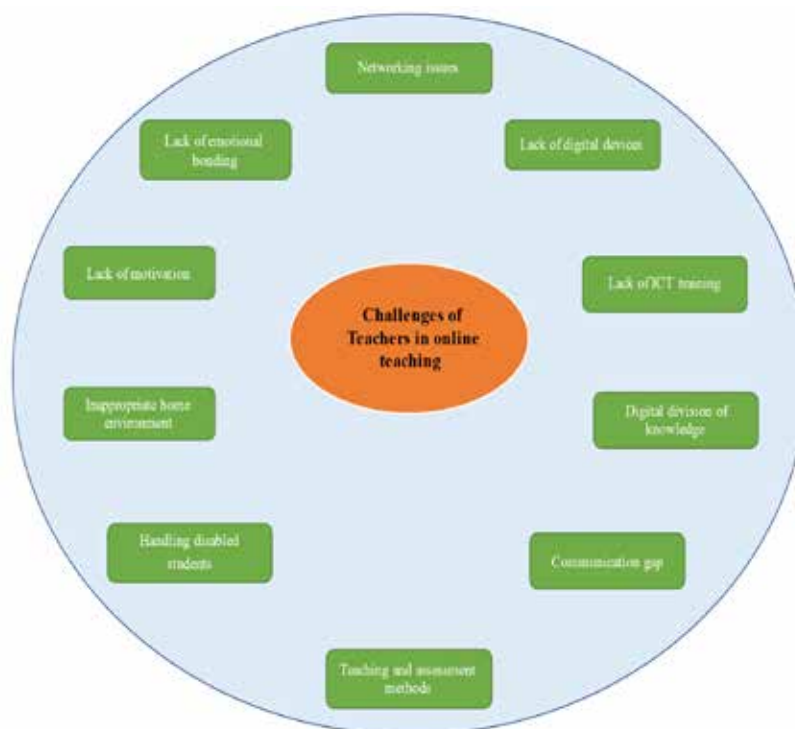
observation, interview and over telephonic conversation and also online video calling the data are collected and with this access to further literature and recommendation of some other sources and internet browsing the reference list this empirical research is conducted.

### DATA MANAGEMENT

The collected data are analyzed by the qualitative data management process. The result an-

alyzed by searching different statements and the difference of the opinion between genders are considered negligible from the analysis of narration. All the transcript data are translated into English and then analyzed qualitatively by some common information with the own verse.

### ANALYSIS AND MAJOR FINDINGS



Various challenges that the teachers are facing in the online class

**Networking issues:**

The pandemic COVID 19 forces to declare the Government to lack down everything and almost every member of the family has to stay at home. Every individual passes their time by scrolling the smartphone, PC, laptop, or any other digital media. For a long time, the huge pressure of browsing on the internet slows down the web speed. So, during the online classes, both the teachers and the students face various types of networking problems like poor data speed, continuous buffering, etc. Besides these, it becomes a major problem to conduct an online class with the students of rural areas as there always connectivity problems and this becomes a severe range after the super cyclone Amphan. Therefore, it becomes a major problem for the teacher to conduct the online classes and to bring the attention of the students- doing online class has become a new challenge to the teachers.

**Lack of digital devices:**

India is a third world developing country where most of the people are middle, lower middle class and below poverty level, it is quite natural that every parent cannot afford a smartphone, tab, or any kind of digital device for their children. Many guardians become jobless. Without minimum income, it becomes a major challenge for them to satisfy the needs of their daily lives. At this moment participating in the online classes or to connect with the teachers asynchronously becomes a nightmare for the students who have no smartphone or they cannot imagine any digital devices. In these circumstances what the teacher will do? How they will connect with them. Yet with a few students, the teachers conduct the online classes

but a large number of students are beyond this boundary.

**Lack of ICT training:**

The sudden declaration of lockdown, suspension of traditional centuries' talk and chalk dust-er method, and adaptation of digital technology and taking online classes make the teachers very much stunned. Most of the teachers have the least knowledge about modern devices and are not accustomed to the various applications like Zoom cloud, Google meet, Jitsi meet, Webex meet, Go to meet, Skype, Hangouts, etc. through which they can connect with the students. Most teachers face various difficulties at the time of content sharing from their devices or browsing from the internet during their speech delivery sessions. This kind of lack of efficiency in addition to some elder teachers' phobia of adapting digital technologies makes a new challenge to the teachers now.

**Digital division of knowledge:**

Practice makes one perfect and gathers knowledge, but how the students will practice if they have no digital devices. According to studies, a large number of students and their parents have no sufficient knowledge about how to handle any digital device like smartphones, laptops, PC, etc. This digital division of knowledge makes a major problem for the students to take part in the online classes that have been conducted by the teachers and creates a challenge for the teachers to bring all the students under the umbrella of this platform in this critical situation.

**Teaching methods and assessment:**

Teachers also face many problems in their teaching method- it becomes very difficult to

follow question-answer or any other methods. Various hazards arise in the question-answer method as the students are not habituated to the new Applications, they cannot follow the instructions of the teachers. In practical or experimental parts of the syllabus lack of necessary equipment is a major problem. The teachers can not present it practically to the students. Though in many cases pictures are shown to the students but these cannot be a substitute for a laboratory or practical class. And in the case of assessment the teachers face another problem because the students are cheating and copying in doing their assignment. This causes another challenge in the online teaching-learning process.

***Communication gap:***

It must be agreed that communication has a major role in the teaching-learning process. Conducting the online classes and giving lectures to the students make this gap to a severe stage and gradually increasing the distance between the teacher and the pupils. Teachers have no control over the students and some pupils become totally inactive during the session. This has become a vital issue that the teachers face in this current scenario.

***Problem to handle disabled students:***

Most of the secondary schools are inclusive wherein an inclusive set up the teachers can take sufficient care and give necessary instructions to disabled children directly according to their special needs for their all-round development. There are various types of impaired and disabled students and it may not be possible to pay attention to them separately through online mode. They are being neglected- they are alive but they have no lives. Teachers can-

not do sufficiently for them through the online class in this critical situation and giving instruction becomes a major challenge to them.

***Inappropriate home environment:***

This severe pandemic situation has changed the home environment of every family too. People are anxious about their lives, become frustrated, a sense of depression comes to everyone. Different domestic violence turns into new shapes that hamper normal life also. During this psychological crisis, most of the students do not get any appropriate family environment and comfortable situation for the online classes, or if they can join do not get proper concentration to involve emotionally with the class and the teachers. Lack of an appropriate home environment to conduct the online class becomes a new challenge for both the teachers and the students.

***Students' indifferent attitude, lack of motivation:***

In some cases, it is found that students do not pay appropriate attention to the online classes because of their depression and frustration in this situation. Some students have lost their relatives, some students' parents can't come to their native land, and some parents become unemployed- all these factors make them restless and indifferent in their studies. They are disturbed both mentally and physically and do not get motivated. They are talking unnecessarily during the session and disturbing the teachers in their delivery of lectures and this becomes a major problem for the teachers.

***Lack of emotional bonding:***

The online virtual teaching-learning environment totally destroys the traditional formal

face to face chalk- duster method of teaching. A formal classroom creates a sweet bonding between the teachers and the students but in this online classroom situation young and soft minds get no live contact with the teachers and in their learning. It seems to them just to pass the time with the digital devices, studies show that sometimes they pay less interest in this class and involve themselves with other sides and do other works after muting the and audio and video in their devices. This is obviously because of the lack of emotional bonding with the teachers and it becomes a major problem for the teachers.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Though the pandemic COVID 19 has changed the normal system of everything with some severe effect on the mankind on this planet, nothing can stop the way of thinking and studies- it is a lifelong continuous process and to continue this process the only way to make the future generation more developed there is no other appropriate alternative to come to the students through the digital platform. Though teaching in this critical situation has proven to be extremely challenging. Most of the teachers have had to adapt to technology that they weren't familiar with, overnight. And as a result, the working hours would be increased. Teachers' smartphones never seem to stop buzzing. It is the teacher who has the ability to do everything for the students and who will change the world by developing future generations. The teacher must adopt new technology and new strategy in teaching methods and will be accustomed to the new devices and their technical systems. The weekly short-term assessment would be a suitable method of assessment in this situation.

The government should take the initiative in these facts to overcome the severe pandemic situation, especially in secondary education. Learning management software should be developed; innovative mobile-based learning, quality assurance, and quality management in E-learning- all these may reduce the challenges that the teachers face during the online classes. With these proper planning, suitable teaching methods, and positive thinking and optimism teacher will go forward to teach the students for their future development.

### **CONCLUSION**

Therefore, at last, it may be concluded that in this critical situation one cannot think of the teaching-learning process without digital devices and there is no other suitable alternative to conduct the classes and to involve the students in their studies through an online mode of communication. Though it has some important facilities both for the teachers and the students of higher education the practical scenario shows the different pictures, especially to the teachers of secondary education in the government-aided schools and that is very much alarming. Not only the teachers but the students are in critical crisis also in this system of an online class. Whatever the difficulties may arise the teachers' positive attitudes and proper necessary steps will try to show a new way to the problem along with being the authority on their subjects, teachers have to play technology trouble-shooters and at the same time to develop the future citizen and to shape the 'destiny of the nation' Government's necessary steps will be more effective to face this situation to see the Century new dawn after this COVID 19 massive global pandemic.

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