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## ONLINE EDUCATION AND NEW NORMAL SITUATION: A JOURNEY

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### Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic has claimed more than 2 lakh lives and is the worst one the world has seen since the advent of desktop computers. Computers and modern technology changed the workplace in a very big way after centuries of staying the same. Two comparatively recent pandemics-the Asian flu of 1957-58 that killed 1.1million and the Spanish flu of 1918-20 that claimed 500 million lives-were worse. Everyone, however, went back to their normal routine afterwards. It is unlikely that the same thing would happen with Covid-19. The workplace as we know it will change in a big way. Working from home will become that standard. Use of video conferencing will be preferred over travelling to meet clients. Offices will have to adopt cultures that will prevent touching and encourage the use of personal protective gear or PPG. The purpose of this study is to identify and obtain information about the online education system and New normal situation. This paper is based on the analysis of related literature obtained from primary and secondary sources and internet. The COVID-19 has resulted in schools the shut all across the world. Globally, over 1.2 billion children are out of the classroom. As a result, education has changed dramatically, with the distinctive rise of e-learning, whereby teaching is undertaken remotely and on digital platforms. The study suggests that online learning has shown to increase retention of information, and take less times, meaning the changes corona virus have caused might be here to stay.

**Keywords:** Online Education, Pandemic, New-normal situation, Technology, Virtual Classroom

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### INTRODUCTION

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the workplace in a very big way after centuries of staying the same. Two comparatively recent pandemics-the Asian flu of 1957-58 that killed 1.1million and the Spanish flu of 1918-20 that claimed 500 million lives-were worse.

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Everyone, however, went back to their normal routine afterwards. It is unlikely that the same thing would happen with Covid-19. The workplace as we know it will change in a big way. Working from home will become that standard. Use of video conferencing will be preferred over travelling to meet clients. Offices will have to adopt cultures that will prevent touching and encourage the use of personal protective gear or PPG. Technology will be the driver of education in the next decade. Education in the last decade experienced a gradual shift from teacher-centric to student centric and industry centric. Education policies in the last decade that focused on innovation and technological advancement, will determine the nature of Education 2020 and beyond. Technology will be the enabler in the education scenario in the next decade. The new education trends will include increased diversity, increase in instructional technology and a quantum rise in skill based courses. Technology will be a game changer in the learning process. Today, educational policy makers and reformers have tried addressing issues of strengthening educational institutions with emphasis on quality and governance research and innovation.

Indian education will emphasise on creating an analytical and innovative mind capable of independent thinking. Interdisciplinary study will be the new normal and the private sector will play a greater role, incorporating programmes to create aptitude and advance entrepreneurial spirit. Classroom learning will be replaced with learning on the go, through devices that connect the world together. Knowledge will be shared easily. In the last decade, education globally and the Indian context saw a lot of new and progressive ideas that have penetrated in the education ecosystems as Smart classes,

learning-centric and student-centric education as against teacher-centric education in the past. Emphasis on research, doing away with written examination, a lot of project base learning has changed the education paradigm in the last 10 years. In the next 10 years, technology will take over. Technology will play a vital role both in and outside the classroom through laptops, notebooks and mobile phones. Student-centric learning will be of paramount importance.

### **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

The Covid-19 pandemic has claimed more than 2 lakh lives and is the worst one the world has seen since the advent of desktop computers. Computers and modern technology changed the workplace in a very big way after centuries of staying the same. Two comparatively recent pandemics-the Asian flu of 1957-58 that killed 1.1million and the Spanish flu of 1918-20 that claimed 500 million lives-were worse. Everyone, however, went back to their normal routine afterwards. It is unlikely that the same thing would happen with Covid-19. The workplace as we know it will change in a big way. Working from home will become that standard. Use of video conferencing will be preferred over travelling to meet clients. Offices will have to adopt cultures that will prevent touching and encourage the use of personal protective gear or PPG. Technology will be the driver of education in the next decade. Education in the last decade experienced a gradual shift from teacher-centric to student centric and industry centric. Education policies in the last decade that focused on innovation and technological advancement, will determine the nature of Education 2020 and beyond. Technology will be the enabler in the education scenario in the next decade. The new education trends will include increased

diversity, increase in instructional technology and a quantum rise in skill based courses. Technology will be a game changer in the learning process.

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

The COVID-19 has resulted in schools shut all across the world. Globally, over 1.2 billion children are out of the classroom. As a result, education has changed dramatically, with the distinctive rise of e-learning, whereby teaching is undertaken remotely and on digital platforms. Research suggests that online learning has shown to increase retention of information, and take less times, meaning the changes corona virus have caused might be here to stay.

1. A research entitled, The rise of online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic on 29<sup>th</sup> April, 2020, has found that currently more than 1.2 billion children in 186 countries affected by school closure due to the pandemic. In Denmark, children up to the age of 11 are returning to nurseries and schools after initially closing on 12 March, but in South Korea, students are responding to roll calls from their teachers online.
2. Another research, Online learning and education for all during and after Covid-19 pandemic on July 13,2020 has suggested that the normal lifestyle of people has been disrupted across the globe, the virtual world has come to the rescue.
3. The study, entitled, Online-Learning: A Panacea in the time of COVID-19 crisis on June , 20, 2020, has found that learner are not to be sufficiently prepared for balancing their work, family and social lives on-line learning.
4. Mishra, Lokanath and Shree Abha(2020) have studied on Online teaching –learning

in higher education during lockdown period of COVID-19, pandemic. They employ both quantitative and qualitative approach to study the perceptions of teachers and students on online teaching-learning modes and also have highlighted the implementation process of online teaching-learning modes.

5. Jeva, Pravat(2020) has also studied on On-line Learning During Lockdown Period for COVID-19 in India. He has emphasized on how online learning is beneficial during times of crises like work absences or pandemics.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the study are to:

- highlight the educational scenario of the Neo-normal period.
- draw attention to the effectiveness and limitations of on-line learning.
- focus on the mental health of the stake holders of the neo-normal environment.

### **EDUCATIONAL SCENARIO OF THE NEO-NORMAL ERA**

Human beings are creatures of habit. Disturb settled habits, and one can knock them over. Right now, there is no cure for the corona virus. It has been almost one year since the corona virus brought our lives to a halt, shutting down schools, offices and gyms. Stuck at home, we have had nothing but time to reflect on the things that matter. That's right. I am admitting that many of the high-tech innovations I want to point out to deliver lessons through On-line platform in this Neo-Normal. Some Communication tools are as follows:

### **ONLINE RESOURCES**

- SWAYAM: Online Course.
- MOOCs:
- SWYAMPBABA: a group of 32 DTH Channels, providing high quality educational curriculum based course contents covering diverse discipline.
- You-Tube Channel
- National Digital Library
- Shodhganga
- Vidwan
- The DIKSHA
- DYJUICE etc.

Free- online platforms that support live-video communication:

- Zoom
- Google Meet
- Skype
- Facebook Live
- You Tube Live
- Free Conference
- WhatsApp
- Instagram
- Twitter
- Messenger etc.

Amidst this lockdown, the good thing that happened is students' acceptant to consider home as their educational institutions. With the spread of the corona virus pushing many people into enforced self-isolation, education are starting to see more extended periods of

remote learners. While there are some institutions who have been in the professional world for a while and are accustomed to the work from home culture, there are others still trying to get a hang of it even after so many hours of neo-normal situation regarding lockdown. Neo-Normal is a new world for education for the generation of the world.

### **EFFECTIVENESS OF ONLINE EDUCATION**

The effects of online teaching and learning on educational system on both teachers and learners have an indelible impression and have been debated for a long time. Studies have suggested that online education can be a potential for brain storming. Readers should be remindful that only quality education with robust methodology can boost up both learners and teachers. The benefits of online teaching learning are as follows:

#### ***Inflammation***

When we studied even though exercise can have an acute inflammatory response, but it is followed by anti-inflammatory cytokines (proteins for cell signaling) and decreases the production of pro-inflammatory cytokines over time. It is important to note that this relationship is dependent on the type, frequency and duration of exercise along with pre-existing medical conditions and inflammatory markers.

#### ***Lessons in tolerance at schools***

Accept differences and be tolerant, schools are telling students as the country's current atmosphere of religious animosity creeps into classrooms. Some schools are talking to students about diversity, plurality, equality and freedom of choice while some others have conducted meetings with parents to tell them that their

religious preferences or affiliation should not be reflected in their children.

It is the responsibility of all institutions to mould young minds and create a feeling of oneness irrespective of caste, creed or colour. We must perceive each other as fellow human beings. We have always been telling our students this but under the present circumstances talking to them about unity in diversity is significant.

Virtual internships are a great alternative during these testing times. Students can learn new skills while adding experience to their resumes from the safety to their homes. With virtual internships, one learns to adapt to new technology and develops multitasking skills.

#### ***Developing Home Office***

While working at home comes with the advantages of being at ease, more time in bed and lunch with family. It also comes with a horde of drawbacks like more distractions, increased amount of work because of lack of concentration and missing of coffee breaks with colleagues. In an age of technology, working remotely or working from home does not have to mean working in isolation. It is all about doing it the right way if one embrace the new normal.

#### ***Clicking to Creativity***

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, creativity is considered an important skill, especially for students. Since the pandemic changed life, many students have decided to use this enforced period of inactivity to enhance their creativity. In the last few months, plenty of fun workshops-most of them conceptualized and hosted by young people-have been happening virtually.

#### **WE SHOULD TAKE A BREAK FROM DIGITAL DEVICES BEFORE BEDTIME**

When one's better angels are in charge of one's schedule-instead of the insatiable gremlin that won't get off Instagram- one end the day by starting one's bedtime routine: lighting candles, eating early (three-ish hours before going to sleep, in a knockoff version of intermittent fasting), moulting daytime clothes and obligations (no screens, so no social media, no texting, no email), and then floating around for 20 minutes of Vedic meditation; some at-home hypnotherapy; a little journaling; reading a book that asks nothing of one; and listing five "happiness", just some small things that one want to keep close.

The privilege of pursuing "wellness" asserts itself most clearly in these choreographed twirls through body, mind and soul, in having the time and support to get holistically loose every night.

#### ***Start early - no, earlier***

Bedtime routines for babies and toddlers can involve many pre-bed hours in support of a slow, sleepy descent. Dr. Chris Winter, a neurologist specializing in sleep and the author of a book on the subject, said of a bedtime routine, "I always think it's interesting that we kind of drop it as we get older," and instead make a hard stop at 11pm, still covered in a day's worth of psycho-emotional goo.

Kelly Love, the Mississippi-based co-founder of Branch Basics, which sells nontoxic cleaning products, begins her evening routine around 4pm when she wants to "give my eyes a break from screens" and, phoneless, takes her daughter out to play.

Gretchen Rubin, the author of several books about making our lives better including *The Happiness Project*, describes herself now as a “sleep zealot”, but said that previously she struggled to priorities rest before bed. She said for a lot of people, deciding between staying up and going to bed presents “real tension”. She recommends setting an alarm for bedtime; even if one snooze it, “there’s an awareness that there is some line.”

### ***To Sleep, Walk***

After dinner, Love goes for a walk, which can include some “barefoot time” and “getting some grounding in”. “Earthing” is the practice of skin-on-dirt, sand, grass, rock. This is not so practical in a Midwest winter or a New York apartment.

Sara Panton, a co-founder of an essential oil company Vitruvi, lives near the beach in Vancouver, British Columbia, where she walks her dog, Charlie, every night. Later, around 9:30pm, she practices qigong, reiki or pilates, or simply puts her legs up against a wall, a position that can allow for stress relief. Movement, “whether through stretching or through energy work”, creates “a sense of ritual for helping the body reset to a different time of day”. Panton sometimes chooses not to eat for 12 to 14 hours, which she said had been “beneficial in being able to wind down in the evening”.

Kristin Dahl, a holistic nutritionist and herbalist in Los Angeles, US, goes for a walk, to “practice some deep breathing”, and does yoga nidra as part of her bedtime routine, which is “essentially a guided body meditation and body scan”.

Love stretches and does deep breathing for 15-20 minutes.

### ***Engaging the five senses***

A warm drink can help-if it’s sugar, caffeine and alcohol-free. Love-who prepares organic foods without excito-toxins (substances that trigger the neurotransmitters) and preservatives for dinner at 6pm- drinks mushroom lattes, which are “warm and cozy and help me wind down”. Before bed, Panton drinks something warm in winter and iced in summer, “with antioxidants”, and likes turmeric chai tea. Dahl drinks lemon balm tea.

### ***Turning off the light***

The blue light emitted by digital screens could be the most essential part of our tech-poisoned daytime lives to address in a bedtime routine. Winter said, “The blue-green light is interacting with your pineal gland to block melatonin,” which is why “a cell phone in your face at night is preventing you from making melatonin to help you sleep.”

### ***Solving a Problem, Starting Something New***

They say, “if there is a problem, there will be a solution” and we can safely say if the solution is right, there will be someone ready to pay for it. Modern problem-solving is largely an information technology business, coupled with imagination. While the brick and mortar part is important, it is toothless without technology. Zomato solved the problem of getting stuck in traffic while picking up a meal on a day. Ola solved the problem of the cabbie of our beloved yellow cabs rejecting a fare because he doesn’t like the destination. One don’t know if anyone has made an attempt to solve the problem of parents not getting the support of children who stay abroad. Has anyone considered the problem of having to see for a doctor for a minor cold when it’s raining cats and dogs? We

have all kinds of new hardware such as the Apple watch. Together with online payment and high speed mobile internet, healthcare could be revolutionised.

As could education, one can see a great opportunity in supplying Bengali content for primary school students. When bright kids send one immensely funny Tik Tok Videos, one wish they would create such content for education. This approach to a business is a little more complex. It is more glamorous but it may involve patience, a good team the ability to raise funds and a bit of luck.

### ***Creating new technology***

This is the most difficult path to building a business and is not for the faint-hearted. But the world needs this kind of entrepreneurs. Our demand of energy, mobility is ever increasing and so is the climate related risk. And Bengal will be soon be witnessing the worst facets of climate-related risk.

If one do think of Elon Musk. He is not really building a business. His mission is to help the human race survive and make the world a better place.

### **LIMITATIONS OF ONLINE EDUCATION**

When we started believing that we could achieve just anything, a minute microorganism creeps into our lives to unsettle everything, and gives us a new perspective. WhatsApp for young children was considered sacrilegious, Instagram profane. Each school had its own policy discouraging overuse of cell phones/electronic gadgets/social media inside and outside of the school campus. However, within a month, our mental viewing has changed and we are advocating all this and more. Schools across the world are conducting online classes

and we are in a race to outdo the other. Principals and administrators receive at least 20 to 30 new invites every day for online classes/webinars/seminars.

After conducting online for over a month, we have learned a thing or two about online teaching-learning and have been trying to address certain concerns and constraints with regard to:

- Too much screen time for students.
- Non-availability of gadgets as each personal needs a separate device. If both parents are working, and parents have two children at home, it is becoming difficult to provide a dedicated device to each member of the family.
- Intermittent internet connectivity. Although 90 per cent of students get to study and learn, 10 per cent are left behind as they live in areas where connectivity is poor.
- In the absence of domestic help, parents are unable to give too much time. Moreover, the opportunity for the children to help adults in household chores is lost.
- Children can't go out because of the lockdown, so they play online games in their free time, increasing their screen time.
- Students of classes I to VII are young and need their parents for technical support. However, parents are not always able to give them time because of their own professional work/commitments, leaving students to access sites that are not age-opportunities.

- For the students, the fun of learning with friends, away from the observant eyes of the parents is lost.
- With dependence on online education both internet abuse and cyber crime has been increased during the lockdown period.
- Doom schooling is going on as many school students are taking an interest in ethical hacking.

While trying to navigate this difficult situation, this is a great opportunity for us to build or children's language and numeracy skills. We should give them online work, to be done offline. As exercise books are not available, teachers should be willing to accept work on A4 size sheets, on sheets from old exercise books, provided the work is submitted in the child's own handwriting and within the time frame given for submission.

Furthermore, spending time with parents, watching them work, earn, strategies, will greatly help them to hone their skills, and imbibe family values. It is sure that guardians and educators feel a sense of relief when it comes to 'Good Touch, Bad Touch' learning in schools. Children will learn to touch and hug only their family members and only those people the family trusts. Parents will also start appreciating the responsibilities of teachers and the school. Our relationship with our parent community, which is already wonderful, will become better.

### **SOME SUGGESTIVE MEASURES**

It is easy to overeat during a time of crisis. But that is precisely what should be avoided. We should, in any case, not waste food and over-

eating is a form of wastage. Two, overeating leads to more health problems, which are absolutely avoided at the moment. Experts are advocating mindful eating. It means paying attention to what one is eating, watching how much one eats and savouring every morsel. It also means not being too hard on oneself if one have slipped. Less food guilt means better health.

- Students should ask questions whenever they cannot understand a concept. By asking questions, they make sure that they are listening properly and trying to understand.
- Students should request their teachers to post the lecture online so that they can listen to them (teachers) later in case of connectivity issues. This will also help students revise any concepts in case they miss a class.
- A small group or community is really useful to make sure that all of students are studying and understanding properly. It is important to consider having a small study circle in which students can ask their doubts and talk to each other. Parents should help the students to choose friends with whom they can be honest and meet online regularly.
- Taking notes is as important now as it was while students were going to school. Students should jot their notes down during class and afterwards too. By studying regularly, they will find that revision will not pile up for the last moment.
- If negative thoughts creep during the class, students should write them down at the back of their notebook and attend to them



later. During a pandemic of this size, where the world is not just what it used to be, it is normal to feel anxiety and stress. But by writing their thoughts down, they realize them and prevent them from repeating themselves constantly.

- Students should take frequent breaks from the screen as watching it for hours may cause eye fatigue and lower back pain. Students should do small and frequent exercises of their wrists, fingers and eyes. Students should take care of their health and make they should not ignore it.

## CONCLUSION

The year 2020 is undoubtedly a year of change. The Covid-19 pandemic and ensuring lockdown in various parts of the world has forced people to think differently and consider options

that they have never used or heard or before. The education sector, too, has experienced a sea change. Traditional courses are no longer holding fort as the need of the hour is far more advanced and technologically inclined. It has been almost one year since the corona virus brought our lives to a halt, shutting down schools, offices and gyms. Stuck at home, we have had nothing but time to reflect on the things that matter.

Rapid technological developments will give rise to a wide range of new age courses and professions. The service sector will experience a revolution with more focus on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the need for secured work environment will need focus on Cyber Security. AI and security will become the backbone of most private and government sector projects in future.

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