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COVID-19: TURN THE CHALLENGES TO OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION SECTOR

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Abstract

Any disaster just does not throw light on the massacre occurs following it- it also opens up the fabric of normality. Various holes are opened up through which people can glimpse possibilities of the worlds. The World Wide pandemic situation due to COVID-19 begins to launch several avenues to get back to change. The global people have to accept now the unacceptable so far. The lessons learned from COVID-19 crisis bring new challenges ahead. The main objective of the present paper is to ascertain the challenges ahead posed by this crisis and also to analyse the new opportunities to get back 'Next Normal' in different education sectors. It has tried to show how the challenges that the pandemic has brought turn to opportunities to guarantee the right to Education For All. In the present study, descriptive and analytical methods are used. Different journals, e-journals, websites, articles, report of various organizations have been studied and used as secondary sources of data. Educational policies, curricula and school governance, teachers and educators all are now responsible to build just societies for the future ahead. The new horizon is now more concerned with the emotional quotient of the learners as well as the teachers who will actually effectively deal with the vicissitudes of life during or post COVID-19 period. Opportunities also emerge for the teachers to train them for emergency responses. Enhancement of teachers' capacity for pedagogical innovation, including digital literacy, blended teaching method will be the outcome of this changing perspective. To build a better normal in a post COVID-19 world, skills of higher level of creativity, innovation, social

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and emotional intelligence skills have to be developed. To ensure that 'Learning Never Stops', here comes the significance that people therefore cherish or otherwise perish in this new environment.

Keywords: COVID-19, Education policies, , education sector, impact, teaching-learning.

INTRODUCTION

For the first time in last 30 years, Himalayan peaks become visible during COVID-19 pandemic situation—not normal .In Africa, mobile operators grant free online access to the educational resources during this pandemic period-- not normal. There is no shooting in US schools, which is witnessed by March 2020 for the first time in last 18 years-- not normal. Therefore, now is our chance to build up a "Better Normal". And it can be started by transforming education sector, by rethinking and revitalizing the application of science and technology in education. In the wake of New Normal for pandemic COVID-19, to strength resilience, education in emergency situations calls for imaging the world to come ahead. The crisis which has shaken the global society, has also challenged the education sector like others. Simultaneously, it kicks off the laboratory of ideas. So from disruption to recovery, the need of the hour is to facilitate the continuity of education. Nurturing the social and emotional wellbeing of teachers as well as the learners during or post-COVID-19 to a great extent calls for the dependence on 'Diplomatic Quotient". With persistent inequalities and social fragmentation, advancement of digital world and artificial intelligence have raised serious challenges ahead. In this transitional phase, the future of education rests on the notion "Learning to become" to transform the challenges into opportunities.

CHALLENGES OF NEW ROLE FOR PLANNING TOMORROW

What's the challenge?

During and in post-COVID-19 crisis period, the challenge is to cope up with 'New Normal' and about Futures of Education. To facilitate the continuity of education, the challenge is, therefore, for 'Learning to Become'.

Who are the challengers?

Worldwide COVID-19 school closure consolidates all the stakeholders of the education sector to face the challenges. It includes students, teachers, parents, school administration, community, national, regional and district level governments, and all humanitarian and development partners globally.

When challenges knock the door?

The future is now -- amidst the COVID-19 crisis, the challenges actually has become a catalyst for educational sector worldwide. So now and in future challenges knock the door when adaptation is actually taken place in the form of New Normal.

Where the challenges affect?

Mental health of all the elements of the educational sectors are affected by this challenge.

Why challenges become significant?

UNESCO's projection highlights that 24 billion

learners from pre-primary to tertiary education will not back to their studies following COVID -19 induced educational disruptions. It also hampers access to a balanced diet , parents' financial conditions, increases problems of marginalized sections that may threat decades of progress. All these are significant to turn the challenges into opportunities.

How challenges become opportunity?

Challenges become opportunities by accelerating the usage of web 2.0 and adopting web 3.0 tools gradually.

CHANGING PERSPECTIVE OF TEACHING – LEARNING TO COPE UP WITH 'NEW NORMAL'

Now the challenges to the evolution from offline to online education in a developing

country like India are too much alarming. The ground reality pose the great question of 'Digital divide' in such countries. This process of 'Digital divide throws several challenges

Changing Perspectives	Then	Now
• Teaching- learning Meaning	• Socially constructed	• Socially constructed & Contextually reinvented
• Knowledge	• Transmitted	• Open Free Contextual Reinvented Appied
• Learning form	• Formal & Informal	• Lifelong
• learning nature	• Double-loop	• Spiral-Loop
• Teaching is done	• Teacher to student & student to student	• Teacher to student, student to student Student to teacher
• Teachnology	• Confiscated at the classroom door(digital refugees), Cautiously adopted (digital immigrants)	• Everywhere (digital universe)
• Science of Teaching	• Pedagogy: Teacher- Led Learning, Andragogy: Self - Directed Learning	• Heutagogy: Self - Determined Learning
• Learning Activities	• Collaboration Learning mostly Within Institution & Classroom Boundary decided by learner and teacher	• Flexible, Social Networking decided by learner
• Learners dependence	• Independent but strive for autonomy in learning, to arrive at a destination determined by others	• More Independent but they know their destination and become independent on those who can help them determine the route
• Learning Motivation	• Primarily motivated by external pressures, competition for grades and the consequences of faliure	• Internal Motivation by self-esteem, recognition, better quality of life, self-confidence, self-actualization
• Learning orientation	• Based around experiences & performance centred in their learning	• Capability-oriented, Learning how to learn and apply learning
• Content	• Copyright & free/open Educational Resources	• Free/Open Educational Resouces created & reused by eductors
• Teachers are...	• Licensed Professionals	• Everybody, Everywhere
• Institution Location	• Building & Online	• Anywhere, Everywhere & throughly infused into society
• Learning Assessment	• Paper-pencil	• Online Group Collaboration Projects

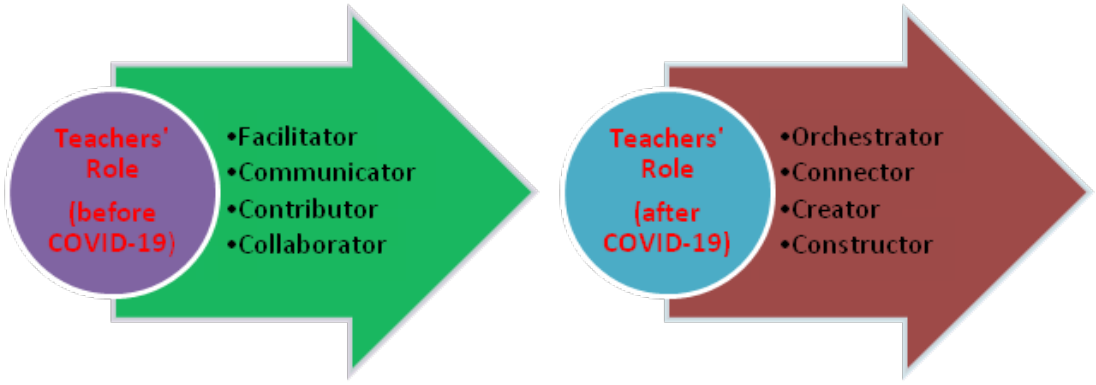
in the frontline. Awareness about the digital devices, their right use for the right job are most important to meet the challenges facing by the makeover posed by the digital uses. Lack of digital awareness is a great problem of the developing countries. In this context, a multi-pronged strategy is requisite for manage the crisis and build a strong Indian Education system in the long-term scenario. If we are want to change these challenges to opportunities, we should be cope up with following new teaching learning perspectives for 'New Normal'.

Teaching-Learning strategies before COVID-19 (Then) & after COVID-19 (Now)

SHIFTING ROLE IN EDUCATIONAL CRISIS

Teachers' role

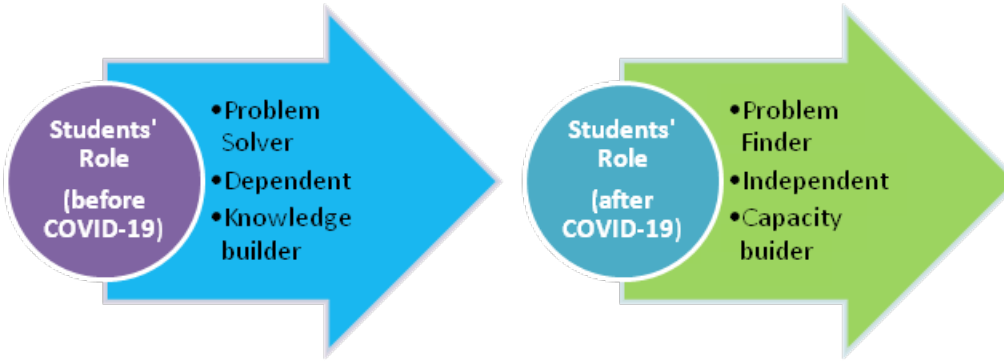
- Teachers must have sufficient knowledge and interest in digital teaching-learning process for cope up students with virtual classroom concept.
- Teachers must have enrich some competency skills to control different electronic equipments.
- Teachers must know the different teaching-learning technique like blended method, flipped method, mind mapping, Just in Time Teaching (JiTT)method, Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) method, SEARCH method etc.
- Teachers must play a role of coach for their students.
- Teachers may send teaching-learning material through email, WhatsApp etc.
- Teachers must cope up themselves with following virtual mode of conducts-
- Web Video Conferencing app: Cisco Webex Metting, Zoom, Microsoft Team, Google Meet, GoToWebinar, Free Conference etc.
- Curriculum management software: Top Hat, MasteryConnect, Kiddom, Learnzillion, PlanbookEdu, Forethought etc.
- Classroom Management software: Dyknow, ClassDojo, McGraw-Hill connect, LanSchool, PowerSchool Unified Classroom, Nearpod etc.



- Tutoring software: ABC Tutor, At Ease Tutoring etc.
- Assessment Software: Canvas, BlackboardLearn, Kahoot, Schoology McGraw-Hill Connect, Survey Anyplace etc.

Students' role

- Students are accept full responsibility for their learning and also welcoming challenge and serendipity.
- Students must build a knowledge base content and shown how their life experiences connect with the presnt learning.
- Students are self-directed through self-evaluation also.
- Students must have interest in following digital mode of study
    - Best Academic Advising Software: Campus Lab, Starfish CONNECT, Panorama Education, Ellucian CRM Advise etc.
- Study Tools: Evernote, Quizlet, Goconqr, Mindmup etc.
- Online Learning platforms: Udemy, Infosec Flex, WileyPLUS, TalentLMS, McGraw-Hill, Teachable, Skillshare, Thinkific, Tovuti, Kajabi etc.
- Virtual classroom software: BigBlueButton etc.
- Online Course Providers: LinkedIn Learning, Pluralsight, Udemy, Udacity, Coursera, HubSpot Academy, Khan Academy,CBTNuggets, ITProTV, Codecademy etc.
- E-content or E-Book: eBasta, e-pathsala (I to XII) etc.
- MOOC Platform : DIKSHA by NCERT, SWYAM by MHRD for UG & PG courses, VIDWAN is an MHRD project for research projects, e-Sodh Sindhu etc.
- TV Chanel: Swyam Prabha free DTH channel for Education.



- YouTube Channel: Study IQ Education, Mahendra Guru, Nptelhrd, BYJU's, Unacademy etc.

CHERISH OR PERISH IN THE NEW ENVIRONMENT

To ensure 'Learning Never Stops', education should follow the recovery process. When over 1.5 billion learners in 165 countries are affected by school-closure due to COVID -19, it obviously threats the education system worldwide. To keep pace with this unprecedented nature of education, use of technology in education is necessitated. This new environment brings such a teaching-learning platform where any content at any time to any age can be delivered. It facilitates, therefore, teaching through web-based technology. Today's digital world welcomes Flipped Classroom, Blended mode of teaching, JITT (Just-in-Time-Teaching) Technology, SEARCH (Select, Extract, Apply, Run, Chart) Technology etc. to cope with this ' New Normal'. For sustenance, all over the world governments have been developing distance learning i.e. mainly online learning solutions. Among several challenges of technology-mediated learning, one significantly considers that it is the content, not the container is important. Therefore the effectiveness of this strategy is conditioned by levels of preparedness from different angles like technological readiness, content readiness, pedagogical and home-based learning support readiness ,monitoring and evaluation readiness. Again, the access related problems of technology-mediated learning will also broaden digital divide in the digital regime. Actually, in response to educational disruption due to COVID-19, this sector-wide measures should be cherished to welcome New Normals otherwise the global educational platform will be threatened to be perished. The Matthew Effects of educational technology will influence learning poverty. So we have to explore alternative ways. The problems are personal as well as organizational. Considering all the problems related to the institutional, teachers and students, content or pedagogy and also assessment, modular content, continuous feedback should be introduced. Anti-cheating tools should be used extensively. People should learn from media as well as with media. Transitioning with the extensive use of technology and lessening the digital divide can only steepen the curve of educational technology and help to cherish in the new environment.

CONCLUSION

Digital transformation is not a destination, it's actually a journey. And educational technology by itself is not a panacea. Actually a paradigm shift posed by COVID-19 transforms 'if' to 'how'. So the education sectors starting from pre-primary to higher face the challenges to be resilient. And the right to education has become dependent on connectivity. Countries all over the world will be able to turn the challenges into opportunities with the use of web 2.0 or 3.0 technologies gradually only if universal access to connectivity is restored.

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