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Changing Role of Teachers and Learners During the Virtual Mode of Teaching: Problems and Suggestions

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Abstract: During the covid 19 lockdown all the educational institutions were closed for offline teaching learning process and the virtual mode of teaching and learning was the only option, but it was not a simple task for the teachers and learners to switch from offline to online. There was a paradigm shift in the roles of teachers and learners from the offline mode of teaching to the virtual mode of teaching. Teachers faced many problems in handling the virtual mode of teaching and same was the case with the learners they also faced many problems in virtual mode of learning. The present work is intended to present a clear picture of the various problems and challenges faced by the teachers and learners in the virtual mode of teaching and learning and some remedial measures will also be suggested to overcome those problems and challenges.

Keywords: Keywords: Offline, Virtual, Teachers, Learners, Challenges



1.1 Introduction

Online teaching has become the new normal worldwide these days due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Due to covid- 19 pandemic all the educational institutions were closed for Onsite or offline teaching and teaching learning process started virtually through different online mediums. It was all so abrupt that there was no time for the government and other private institutions for the systematic planning to manage the online teaching learning process. This was the situation of India in general and Jammu and Kashmir union territory in particular. There are many organisations who provided the online support for the learning and teaching free of cost. Online teaching and learning may become the permanent feature in the future but right now it poses different problems for the teachers and the students to handle the situation, because teachers and students were adapted to the traditional classroom teaching and learning and the online teaching and learning is a novel concept for them especially for the government schools. The present paper is an attempt to analyse the different problems and challenges which the teachers and students are facing during the online teaching in the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

This paper is divided into three sections
 Problems of teachers in online teaching
 Problems of students in online learning
 Suggestions or remedial measures to improve online teaching and learning

1.2 Problems of teachers in online teaching

Teaching the students online successfully is not a simple task for the teachers because it poses many problems and challenges for the teacher especially for ones who don't have the knowledge of educational technology. Educational technology is the use of computer hardware, software and educational theory to facilitate learning. It was a big challenge for the teachers to operate the different technological tools to facilitate learning. During the different online conferences even, the professors are sometimes not able to handle the simple online tools due to the lack of experience in handling such tools. But now it is the time to focus on learning to handle the online educational tools and gadgets, because day by day educational institutions and other organisations are going online for the teaching and learning process and in near future it may become the permanent feature of the education system to deliver and present the content through the online mode. Teacher has to learn to handle the different online platforms available in order to deliver the lesson. But it is not a simple task for the teacher because after learning to handle the simple technological tools available for teaching there are other problems for the teacher which he needs to handle like:

1.3 Internet connection

A good internet connection is an essential pre-requisite for the online teaching and learning process and if the internet connection is not available there will be a complete failure of teaching learning process. If we talk about the situation of Jammu and Kashmir. The internet connectivity is barred most of the times which becomes a big hurdle for the teachers to continue the teaching process. Sometimes, continuously for 5-6 days internet remains barred and the education sector is suffering the most.



1.4 Content creation and presentation

Content creation and presentation is essential in the online teaching, most of the teachers are not able to handle the simple online platforms and to create the online content is not possible for them. Here again professional development of teachers is essential and it is the duty of the different training institutes to organise different seminars and workshops for the teachers in order to equip them with the latest technology available in the domain of educational technology, so that in the future teachers will not face any problems in handling the online teaching.

1.4 Discipline

It is very challenging for the teacher to manage the discipline in the online classroom, it is a personal experience also that many students just log in the google classroom and zoom classes for attendance and don't remain present in the class. Some students are playing during the online classes and when accidentally they are unmuted it comes to the notice that they are playing and the whole class gets disturbed and if the teacher wants them to be online and tells them to on the video still there comes the connection problem and the whole class gets disturbed.

1.5 Assignments and evaluation

Providing assignments and evaluating the students is big challenge for the teachers because the teacher is not able to check who solves the assignments and who is writing the paper. Students cheat often in online exams. What teachers here in Kashmir were doing for evaluation, they used to send the paper to students on their WhatsApp nos and students were supposed to write the answers of the question paper and send it back to the concerned teacher after a given time period. The students used to copy directly from the google and taking help from the elders in solving the question paper. So, to stop the cheating in exams is a big concern for the teachers of Kashmir valley.

1.6 Problems of students in online learning

Everything has its advantages and disadvantages. If the online teaching helps the students in a number of ways but still there are many hurdles and problems which the students are facing in the Kashmir valley. In order to access the online learning material, the students should be in possession of smart phones, laptops etc. but there are many students who come from the poor background and are not in a possession of a smart phone and if a student is able to manage the smart phone but that is of low range which again becomes a problem for them to manage the online class.

1.7 Connectivity problem

As mentioned earlier internet connectivity is big issue in the valley of Kashmir and due to this a student has to miss many days in a month without attending the online classes. There are also some far-flung areas where the internet connectivity is totally not available and it becomes a big concern for the parents and the students to attend the classes in such a situation.

1.8 Environment

The environment of the students doesn't allow them to attend the classes smoothly because usually there is much noise in the households and students are not in a possession to control the noise like sibling distractions, distractions from



neighbours etc. students also make friends and learn from each other but it is not possible in the online teaching platform. One more concern for the parents is that when they give smartphones to their children, they don't concentrate more on the studies rather they use other social networking sites like WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram etc. and waste their time and career. We need develop the culture which will make our teachers, parents and students responsible to take full benefit of the online teaching and learning.

Online teaching has many benefits for the teachers as well as students.

1.9 Time management

Through online teaching a lot of time can saved. Both the time of students and teachers can be saved like the time consumed in travelling etc. Teachers and students can manage the time more easily and efficiently. Students can learn according to their own pace and interest.

1.10 Economical

Online teaching is more economical than offline teaching because it doesn't require much infrastructure as of on campus teaching. Students can relearn, reread and recap the concepts by playing the pre-recorded sessions.

2.1 Suggestions

Although teachers and students are facing a lot of problems in the online teaching and learning process but they need to adapt the changes and become the permanent part of this change. The most important responsibility lies on the different national, state and local teacher training institutes to train the teachers to handle the different online teaching learning resources or gadgets so, that they can have the full knowledge and competence to handle the resources judiciously and efficiently. The different teacher training institutes which are presently working in the union of territory of jammu and Kashmir are the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), District Institutes of Education and Training (DIET's), different government and private collages of teacher education and university departments. To develop the professional development programmes in the domain of educational technology for the teachers is the joint responsibility of these training institutes so that in the future teachers will not face any problem in handling the different online platforms in performing their duties. Government has also the role to make available the internet connectivity and there should minimal internet restrictions in the valley. The government and other institutes can hire the different hardware and software companies to develop such applications and softwares which will be user friendly and can help the teachers to teach effectively like which will help them to sort out the problems of giving online assignments, keeping track of every student, evaluating the students without any issue, creating and presenting the content without any hurdle and to maintain discipline in the online classroom.

3.1 Conclusion

Due to Covid-19 pandemic world community has learned many things especially by the educational sector. There are lot of benefits of the online teaching and at the same we can't deny the challenges and problems faced by the educational sector in teaching learning process during the covid-19 pandemic. The roles of teachers and students changed in the online classroom. Teachers were supposed to prepare the lesson and deliver or present the same in the classroom but in the online classroom teacher is supposed to have the knowledge of educational technology in addition to the subject specific knowledge. Teachers in the union territory of jammu and Kashmir faced many problems in the



online teaching learning process. The most challenging situation before the teachers was to handle the different online teaching platforms because they had no previous experience of the same, good internet connection was another issue before the teachers, creating the content and present the same before the students, maintaining the proper discipline, active involvement of the students and evaluating the student's performance were the other issues which were very challenging for the teachers to handle. Students also faced many problems in the online classes like the internet issues in the valley, managing the smartphones to attend online classes, environmental distractions in the home etc. are the other problems which the students faced during the online classes. Different training institutes have the responsibility to develop a man power in the educational sector who will be able to manage the future online teaching learning process without any hurdle.

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