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Challenges of Online Mode of Teaching in Elementary Education

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Abstract

Education is the basic need of mankind. The journey of education starts with the Elementary education. It is not important for child only but for society as well. At this stage child gets the basic understanding of various academic subjects and social skills. Besides it's the stage where he gets the basic understanding of his duty towards the community and society. Further, it is the basis of higher education. During the coronavirus Pandemic (Covid-19), every sphere of life bears the huge loss. Education system is one of them. All the educational institutions were forced to shut down. Then the idea of online teaching emerged as a solution for functioning of educational institutions for every level of education. Through the use of technology educators are capable to meet the demands of all stakeholders viz. institution, students and parents. But in a developing country like India, implementation of online method of teaching at elementary stage is not easy since there are many pre-existing hurdles like economic conditions, lack of Internet facility, not competency in using smart devices and many more. Through this paper we will try to address the various challenges faced in implementation of online mode of teaching.

Keywords: Elementary Education, Online teaching, Right to Education Act, NEP, Challenges in Online teaching

I. Introduction

Now a day, the biggest challenge before the country in the field of education is not universalization of education but to improve the overall quality of education. The traditional method of teaching comprised of lecture delivery before the students by the instructor and expecting students to be cognitively active. It was totally teacher centered but the advancement of technology has acted as a catalyst for considering full scale changes leading to quality education. Educational technology can provide the spark for

promoting educators to envision new ways to teach and for creating the kind of schools needed in present era. No doubt, technology enhances the quality of teaching learning process but it cannot replace teachers. Trained teachers, school settings, smaller class size, proper content materials, cooperative learning and authentic instructions are an equally contributory factors in achievement (Johnson & Jennifer, 2005) of academic outcomes. So, Online approach is emerging now-a –days which includes both teacher and technology.

Online learning is the learning which replaces the face-to-face class time instructions with online interactions. These online instructions could be synchronous or asynchronous. Synchronous instructions mean students are engaged in learning activities online at same time via Zoom Google meet etc. While the asynchronous instructions are supposed to be scheduled at different times, for example- a quiz or presentation uploaded on LMS or in some class group which can be accessed by students at their own pace and time. Often blended courses and online courses are used interchangeably. But the difference is that an online course replaces the face-to-face class time with online time whereas a blended course acts like a supplement to face-to-face class time. Tuckman (2002) & Brunner (2007) found that online instruction combines the important features of traditional classroom instruction (classroom, instructor, and textbook) with those of computer-mediated instruction (learning by performing rather than listening, frequent assessment and feedback). Katela et al. (2005) has used the term online instructions to join the best features of in-class teaching with the best features of online learning to promote active independent learning and to reduce class time.

II. Key features of Online Learning

The Online mode of teaching has following features:

- Increased student engagement in learning.
- Enhanced teacher and student interaction.
- Responsibility for learning.
- Time management and flexibility
- Improved student learning outcomes
- Enhanced institutional reputation
- More flexible teaching and learning environment

III. Role of Teacher in Online learning

Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2004) have discussed the following roles for teachers in Online teaching-

- Process based curricula with learners who question and analysis
- Class room is learner oriented
- Teachers as managers of collaborative learning
- Teachers as an enabler of quality learning experiences
- Teacher creates structures for learning
- Teachers as advisors, managers and facilitators of learning
- Teachers as developers of skills

- Developed student-teacher relationships
- Teachers standing back to let learning happen and for children to solve problems
- Responsiveness to students' cognitive needs and development
- Teacher in many roles as required: designer, director-actor, facilitator, manager

IV. Role of Students in Online learning

a) Increase student interest

When technology is integrated into school lessons, learners are more likely to be interested in, focused on, and excited about the subjects they are studying.

b) Keep students focused for longer

The use of smart phones and computers with facility of Internet is life saver for Education. This engagement and interaction with the resources keeps students focused for longer periods than they would be with books or paper resources. This engagement also helps develop learning through exploration and research.

c) Provides autonomy to students

The use of e-Learning materials increases a student's ability to set appropriate learning goals and take charge of his or her own learning.

d) Instill a disposition of self-advocacy

Students become self-driven and responsible, tracking their individual achievements, which helps develop the ability to find the resources or get the help they need, self-advocating so they can reach their goals.

e) Allow instant diagnostic information and student feedback

The teacher can analyze the students' work instantly and on basis of the results can modify teaching method if needed.

V. Challenges in implementation of Online Teaching

a) For Teachers

- **Fear of Technology**

Many elementary teachers do not find themselves comfortable in using smart devices, laptops, educational software and other applications available for online teaching.

- **Pedagogical implications**

The first challenge for teachers is that they have to develop new design for delivery of instructions as students are not physically present. So it's very difficult for teacher to keep them attentive. He/she has to create content in a way that seems attractive to students for their continuous and active participation.

- **Lack of Feedback by students**

In traditional approach of teaching a teacher can get immediate feedback about his teaching methodology through observation. He can change his method of teaching at instance if found necessary. But in Online teaching it's very difficult to get that feedback.

- **Difficulty in maintaining healthy pupil-teacher relationship**

No matter how much importance technology has in education, can't replace a teacher completely. A teacher is not required to fill bookish knowledge in brain of child only, but he has to ensure all round development of child. Indeed, cognitive aspect is developed but the emotional bond that should exist between a teacher and student does not exist anymore.

- **Difficulties in evaluation**

Evaluation of students in Online teaching is a very difficult as well as tedious task. However, a lot of methods are available like quiz, Multiple choice questions, Discussion via online platforms etc. But it takes a huge responsibility on part of teacher. Preparing tasks for evaluation is very time consuming. Additionally, teachers can feel overwhelmed in reading too many responses on screen.

b) For Students

Every student has different objective while studying. some are satisfied with barely passing a course and some have the habit to put off the things till last minute. Here are some common challenges that students come across Online mode of teaching:

- **Lack of Internet facilities and smart devices**

In India, there are a lot of people who don't have access to Internet and smart devices. For such population it is very difficult to adopt this approach of teaching.

- **Online Temptations**

There are a lot of temptations that are present online like Social networking, gaming etc. that can distract the students while studying. Students at elementary level are too young to keep them away from these temptations.

- **Passive learning**

In Online mode of teaching a student is required to be active and responsible for own learning. But the students at elementary level lack this ability.

- **Poor listening skills**

In Online teaching students and teacher can't see each other. It requires a good command on communication skills. But students of elementary level lack this skill. They

misunderstood the instructions as there is lack of various elements of communication like eye contact, body language, voice intonations etc. that provide cues about what they want to say.

- **Forgetfulness**

Some students can forget about upcoming due assignments. This forgetfulness can cause losing points and failing the course.

- **No parental support**

In present era, both the parents are working. They can-not provide for their time for their child education. Parents sitting with child ensures their active participation and keep them away for other distractions.

c) Other Technical Issues

Another possible problem that may arise when adopting a Online learning approach is the emergence of technical issues. These can take many different forms, like sound problems or difficulties connecting to a live stream and so on.

Conclusion

Online teaching is the need of the hour. The nationwide closings have affected students, teachers, educators, and parents equally. But moving to Online instructions from traditional face to face instructions is not easy. There are various challenges both for teachers and students and we need to think about the ways to overcome them. Teachers need to be prepared according to the demand of the time. Students living in poverty-stricken areas are more likely to lack the educational tools like mobile phones and laptops that make learning at home successful. There is need to improving access to Internet and education platforms to support pupils and teachers who do not have access to computers and the Internet for teaching and learning. We need a paradigm shift in how we think about how to teach and learn, and how to create an environment that enables learning through technology. By overcoming these barriers only, we can attain the maximum benefits of Online teaching.

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