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Empowerment of the Teachers in the Technicalities of Online Teaching: The Need of an Era

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Abstract

This research paper emphasizes that the teachers need to be proficient in handling and operating the synchronous and asynchronous based applications for teaching through online mode. In the growing digital world, the traditional mode of teaching is getting changed with the replacement of online mode of teaching. The significance of online teaching is globally accepted and respected. However, teaching through online mode has been accepted by so many developed countries since long back. In India, online teaching has been significant and has been considered to be the most effective way of rendering the knowledge. An analytical method is used to conduct this research. However, in this study, particularly the teachers of the senior colleges and universities are focused. However, several teachers of senior colleges and universities face difficulties during operating and using the different applications of online teaching appropriately. The teachers who are not well acquainted and proficient in the technicalities of online teaching applications require to have perfection in them for easy and effective teaching through online mode.

Keywords: Applications, Courses, Empowerment, Online Teaching.

Introduction

In online teaching the teaching is done by using different applications that are made for teaching purposes which can be conducted from limitless distance that require the connectivity of the internet. To install these applications any one of the smart phones, laptops, desktops or tablets are required. Nowadays, many applications are made and launched by different software companies and

applications makers. Some applications are free of cost, for some of the applications paying subscriptions are required and some of the applications are there which are free up to the particular time limit and the limit of number of attendees. The world is developing technologically in a fast pace with concrete nature.

The study is based on the discussion with many of teaching faculties of the senior colleges and Universities through mobile and through the discussion which was held with some of the teachers directly. Some of the facts are understood by participating in the online Faculty Development Programmes, Conferences, Workshops and Seminars. It is found that during the time of such programmes the teaching faculty was confused in many of the tools of applications and many basic educational software which are useful for making effective presentation. It is found that many of the teachers have insufficient knowledge with respect to the proper use of online teaching software which caused them problem while teaching online to the students. However, during the time of lockdown and as per the directions of the government and the universities the classes were conducted online. The Professional Development Programmes were organized through online mode, therefore the teachers who were lacking in handling the educational applications and software they tried to learn about them by participating in them, but yet a number of teachers are poor in having the knowledge of the technicalities of such applications and software. If the teachers fail to operate the synchronous and asynchronous based applications appropriately, the students will lose the knowledge and may cherish negative ideas about the teachers which may affect the dignity of the teachers and their confidence. It is the requirement of the day that the teachers must make themselves proficient in using such educational applications and software. During the post-modern era the education system is getting changed and getting developed continuously. The way of teaching is getting converted from physical mode to online mode. University Grants Commission has already suggested to conduct classes through blended mode. Though the offline regular classes are started after the lockdown is released, but for most of the reasons the teachers need to develop themselves technically.

The Need of the Online Teaching

The whole world has been experiencing continuous innovative development in the technology. It has changed the thinking, ways and life style of the people. It has become essential for the people to be abreast with the new technology and technicalities. The technology has provided various useful software, applications, tools and equipment. They are being used massively in the urban areas as well as in most of the parts of rural areas. The revolution is done in the sector of Information Technology in the entire world. The colleges provide the students and the staff

different facilities as free Wi-Fi, computer labs, free e-sources, e-books, free membership to the e-journals, institutional email ID. The availability of the knowledge is at the finger tips which assists in getting information in scientific manner quickly. Therefore, it has become easy to reach the knowledge of any branch. Even the rarest of information can be found on internet if the proper sites or the applications are known. Digitally the whole world is united. The far distance has become no distance in the online world. The people from the farthest parts of the world can communicate and share their knowledge face to face. This is the well-known fact that nobody is perfect in everything, hence everybody needs the help of somebody to boost their knowledge. Online is medium through which we can reach anybody from a large distance within a second. This helps to save the time and the saved time can be utilized more and more.

The knowledge is limitless and borderless. The human beings can survive in the universe up to the particular age limit. Therefore, within limited years it is not possible to acquire as much of knowledge as we want to gain. Through the online teaching, online workshops, online conference, online seminars, online meetings anybody can go through the deep knowledge which is not possible to acquire through physical mode. From children to the old age especially those who are concerned with education have become at least partially proficient in basic knowledge of handling and operating the smart phones and some of the education related applications and software of computers. Regarding the teacher faculty it is found that most of the teachers are quite unaware of online teaching platforms, most of the teachers have partially basic knowledge of such applications and software. Why there is need of online teaching? However, teaching consists of curricular and co-curricular aspects, therefore, the study is based on teaching of curricular and co-curricular aspects which also include programmes, conferences, workshops, seminars, and symposium. Some of the points are highlighted as following which ensure the need of online teaching. These are:

- Most of the students in India belong to the poor families so they cannot afford the education in metropolitan cities or in foreign countries.
- Most of the schools and the colleges (The colleges which do not fit in the criterion of receiving grants form RUSA) are established in rural and semi-urban areas and those face financial problems in conducting the national and international Seminars, Workshops and Conferences. They are unable to bear the expenses of inviting the experts from the longest regions and the foreign countries.

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- Due to Covid-19 pandemic the schools and colleges remained closed for a long time. Therefore, in such critical condition online teaching proves boon in the education sector.
- Most of the teachers are on contract hour basis who face financial problems, so it becomes improbable for them to develop their academic profile by taking higher education or becoming proficient in some skills.
- The experts cannot spare their time usually to guide in other colleges or to become chief guests in the Workshops, Seminars, or Conferences through offline or physical mode.
- In India, many of the rural places are lacking in transportation facility, therefore, the students cannot reach the college established in the urban areas.
- Education in physical mode is more expensive than the education which is being given through online mode.

The Advantages of the Online Teaching

- Education becomes global.
- Experts can be made easily available.
- The students of remote place can take admission for higher education or can join any course easily.
- The fee of online education is affordable comparative to physical mode of education.
- In the large quantity the participants can join the Workshops, Professional Development Programmes, Conferences, Seminars, and Training Programmes.
- It saves the time of transportation.
- The teachers can use skillfully different tools of Information Technology while teaching.
- The communication among the large quantity of teaching faculty establishes, which help to share their knowledge, experiences and new ideas.

The Problems of Online Teaching

- Internet connectivity is required to run the applications of online teaching. In India many of the parts of rural areas are devoid of internet connectivity.
- The speed of internet connectivity is very low in most of the rural regions.
- Teaching is two-way process where the reciprocation of the thoughts and opinions are required from the side of the teacher and from the side of the

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students. In online teaching it becomes difficult for the teacher to understand the actual opinions and the satisfaction of the students.

- It becomes difficult for the teacher to keep all the students actively attentive in online class.
- The students hesitate to ask the teacher for clarifying the concept which is not understood by them.
- The classroom teaching creates studious atmosphere, but online teaching cannot create it in comparison with classroom teaching.
- No eye contact can be formed between the teacher and the students in the online class.
- The affectionate bond is probably difficult to be formed between the teachers and the students.
- There are very little chances of getting formed the close relationship and the helpful discussion among the students.
- The students miss the education in the classroom.
- The students miss the educational life in the college.

In India online Professional Development Courses are started. But many of the programmes are not given permission to run through online mode. Recently, University Grants Commission has given permission to some of the universities to run many of the programmes through online mode. It is also discussed to implement compulsorily blended mode of teaching in the colleges. The opinions of many of educationists are in favour of starting the programmes through online mode. Particularly, the senior college students are demanding for the online teaching. But it is essential to know that how many teachers are proficient in operating the applications and software which are necessary to be operated and understood by the teachers. There are two types of applications for online mode of teaching as first is synchronous based applications and second is asynchronous based applications. Synchronous based applications are those through which live classes can be conducted and asynchronous based applications are those through which the study materials, videos, audios, images can be sent or uploaded in such applications, the discussion can be held and the feedback can be taken. Both kinds of applications are important in teaching through online mode. There are various applications in the market which can be used for both purposes. Along with these applications the teachers also need to have the knowledge of some software through which many of the contents can be presented in a very skilful, easy, and attractive way. The students can easily understand the topic if it is presented through power point presentations, and by using some images, diagrams, videos, audios, animated videos and drawings in their teaching. The question is that how many teachers are there

who can operate these available applications in a better and skilful manner. If the teacher lacks this kind of knowledge, then the online classes will fail to satisfy the students. The online teaching will collapse and it will prove vain. The teacher must have the knowledge about the application which is being used by them for teaching through online mode. There are a number of features in many applications which make online teaching easy to deliver the lecture in a skilful way and can satisfy the students. The practice and the knowledge are required to prepare the different kind of diagrams, animated videos, provide the link of the video lectures of some experts, to prepare a test, to create online form, to make the assessment of the students' performance in the conducted test, to take the feedback of the students, to create a platform of discussion forum, to keep the record of attendance of the students, create the link of the online class, to mute and unmute the students, to present the screen, to upload the videos, to upload the study materials, questions in test exams, to reply the students' answers and many others. If the teachers have become proficient in operating these applications and using the different educational software, they would be able to deliver their thoughts, to teach the concept and to make the students understand skilfully.

The Condition of Teacher's Knowledge with respect to Different Educational Applications and Software.

It is found that due to the traditional method of teaching through physical mode several teachers could not upgrade themselves and could not make themselves abreast with the new updated technologies. Therefore, as the Covid-19 pandemic situation occurred in India and in many of the countries which caused to start online classes, a number of teachers faced problems during teaching through online mode while using the different applications and software. During the discussion with many teachers, it is observed that many of the teachers had no knowledge about the synchronous and asynchronous based applications. After attending many of the online Professional Development Programmes, workshops, conferences, seminars it is observed that the teachers faced many problems in using different tools of the applications. Many of the teachers have attended different programmes which delivered the knowledge on the technicalities of such applications. Many teachers have stepped towards getting and increasing their knowledge and developing their skills by participating in the different online coursed conducted to make the teachers' acquainted with several websites, software and application which are best in giving online education.

Currently, in India there are many applications which are made to teach through online mode. Some of the synchronous based applications are as Google Meet, Webex, Zoom, Teachmint, Microsoft Team, GotoMeeting, etcetera.

Asynchronous based applications are as Google Classroom, MOODLE, Teachmint, Edunext etcetera. Many of the applications are free up to the particular limit of a number of participants and for a limited period of time.

Ministry of Education of India already started the courses, Professional Development Programmes through online mode. The college teachers can complete their Professional Development Programmes through online mode which are necessary to be actively attended for the promotion under Career Advancement Scheme. Study Web of Active-Learning for Youth Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM) is a platform which organizes several courses and Professional Development Programmes through online mode. National coordinators of SWAYAM are All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), Consortium for Education Communication (CEC), Indira Gandhi Open University (IGNU), IIMB, National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), National Institute of Technical Teachers, Training and Research (NITTTR), NPTEL. However, the online courses and Professional Development Programmes through SWAYAM have got massive response throughout India. Online courses are getting massive response from the participants. up to today 11772 courses are successfully completed, 26003591 students have enrolled in the different courses, 40678959 students enrolled for the courses (SWAYAM) and 3958352 registered for the examination of the courses (SWAYAM), 2528181 students have received the certificates successfully (SWAYAM). Through online courses the participants could gain the knowledge which is not possible to be taken through physical mode because the experts of all kind of branches of knowledge cannot make available at one place. Online platform is the best medium to deliver the knowledge and to develop the skills of a number of participants. There are a number of websites and institutions which provide courses through online mode. Some institutions provide free online courses and some of the institutions charge fee for online courses.

The education from primary level to the higher level, the mode of teaching and the pattern of teaching are developing with new concepts. The syllabus of each level of education is upgraded and is incorporated with different kinds of ICT tools as power point presentation, different experiments and projects which can be prepared with the help of different software. As the government is focusing on the skill-based education and education through Choice Based Credit System (CBCS). Through Choice Based Credit System the students are given facilities to opt their favoring subject of any branch though they are admitted for different branch. If the teaching is done through online mode, it would be easy and convenient for the students to attend the class without losing the time in travelling or reaching the

class. If the teacher is able to deliver the knowledge through online mode with proficiency in handling the tools and presenting the contents of study in effective way, the entire education will experience massive positive change.

Conclusion

The teachers have to develop themselves technically if they want to survive with dignity in the world of teaching, to increase the knowledge of the students, to develop their skills and make them abreast with the new upgraded technology. Today's students need the teachers who are technically proficient. If the teachers lack the knowledge of the tools of online application and software, it will have adverse effect upon the students who may lose some kind of knowledge, their confidence and may develop negative thinking about the teachers with respect to the teachers' technical knowledge required for operating synchronous and asynchronous based platforms. Though, during online teaching many of the problems may occur but those problems can be solved and definitely the number of problems will get decreased during the course of time. However, online course is to be structured in particular pattern which may ensure the development of the participants. Hence, to prepare the structure of the course the teachers need to have the technical knowledge of educational platforms or applications and software. Today's changing pattern of education demands the empowerment of the teachers in the technicalities of the educational application and software for successful teaching through online mode.

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