

Students' Learning Processes, Development, Adaptivity, Emotional Imbalance, Moral Development in the Non-traditional Way of Learning: A Brief Observation of Education System after a Year of Lockdown in India

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Abstract: *India had been struck with a severe blow by the introduction of the Corona Virus and its consequent lockdown on March 2020. All sectors and fields of life was barred from activities, people were confined in their homes and amidst such a situation education came to a standstill in the initial few months after the nationwide lockdown. However, as soon as things were under control of the government education also started to continue with a new kind of approach which was not adopted earlier in this country. The method of online education system was applied for the purpose of teaching and learning processes for the very first time in India. However the online education system had its duality in its effect on the education system and also among the students also. The online mode of education was the need of the hour to cater to the need of studying from home. Students across India soon felt the difference between the online and offline mode of teaching learning process. In a way the online mode made it easier to reach the students with speed and regularity without any scope for absence. The online mode of learning also developed self dependency, self learning skills and several other new sorts of skills. However like every good things the negative sides of online mode had been also there, mental stress, physical stress, lack of physical activity, lack of inter- personal communication, lack of moral development and imbalance in adaptability among students had been observed. However it was also found fruitful that the online mode of education opens up a whole new kind of approach and methodology towards education. And in near about future would play a vital role in facilitating the education system in India.*

Keywords: Stress, Adaptability, Development, Imbalance, Non-traditional, Motivation

1. Introduction

The advent of Corona Virus resulted in a dramatic turn of events in India. India was struck heavily by the Corona Virus because of its huge population and the density of the population made it lot harder to fight with the spread of the virus. However, several immediate measurements were taken both the state and central government to counter Corona Virus; transportation, businesses, factories, entertainment sources, educational institutions, everything was put under a sudden uncertain halt. On March 2020, the government of India announced a nationwide lockdown to confine the spread of the virus. As the virus was of a fatal nature, many deaths occurred in India and people died like falling pins. There was a grim looking atmosphere throughout the nation. People were suffering from unemployment and as a consequence hunger for food. In such a condition education hampered and the teaching learning process went through a very dramatic change which shifted not only the mode of teaching but also the ways of learning. In a new turn of events education went through a drastic change. But before delving deep into the discussion about the changes that occurred, the traditional mode of teaching and learning processes needed to be understood.

In traditional mode of teaching and learning, there had been an interactive way of teaching and learning. From ancient Vedic ages students had been going to their *Gurus* or teachers for education. There had been a specific educational

institution where students would visit for studies. The same tradition of educational mode of going to a particular place, from Guru's home to present day educational institutions; school, colleges and universities had been considered the traditional way of teaching and learning. In traditional mode of learning students would sit next to their teachers with their books and pens to read and write. Hence, going to a particular educational institution, getting face to face interactive learning from the teachers, learning alongside classmates in a particular educational atmosphere, doing specific educational or learning activities such as projects and building interpersonal relationships with teachers and fellow students had been the traditional way of learning. And according to many scholars and pundits, this kind of learning helps not only to get better education but for also building the character of the student, his/her emotional intelligence, social exposure, emotional development, physical activity development and in many other ways. For that particular reason this kind of so called traditional mode of learning had been preferred by the scholars and pundits of our age.

However, the Covid-19 pandemic changed the circumstances of the world and brought a pause in the regular way of living. All institutions, be it commercial, educational or entertainment industries, all came to sudden uncertain halt. In such a condition where people had to confine themselves in their home in order to keep themselves safe from affecting themselves with the virus. As a consequence quarantine came into existence and going

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outside houses was completely denied. In such a condition people were dying like falling pins, all activities including transport were stopped by the government for contaminating the spread of the virus. Educational institution and the teaching-learning processes came to a standstill. All such educational activities were stopped for initial few months when the government of India introduced country wide lockdown in March 2020. In such a condition the traditional mode of education was not a possibility and even the stress and panic among people made it lot harder for students to learn on their own in the initial few months of the pandemic. Hence the traditional way of education was completely stopped.

But life and education being a dynamic phenomenon of living and learning could never be stopped for infinite time. The government of India introduced several new aspects of educational activities to tackle these things as soon as possible because teaching-learning processes could never be stopped completely for the betterment of the society. In the initial stages, government thought of promoting students with their previous years' records and marks. Students of schools were promoted to the next class without the proper kind of traditional yearend summative examination and evaluation. This brought a negative influence upon the school going students, in these new circumstances they need not study to sit for examination. Promoting students without examination brought a negative influence and for this to tackle the government introduced project works, examination from home, study task; all such things were introduced in order to keep the students attached with learning activities as much as possible.

However the fact being that exercising the traditional way of teaching- learning processes was not a possibility. Hence the joint efforts of state and central government made it a possibility for a new mode of teaching - learning processes through the digital mode. It was during the middle half of the year 2020, the government of India thought of cancelling examination for the college and university students. But later on it was decided that cancellation such crucial examination would not only hamper their educational growth but would also hamper their educational achievements. In a study Ms. Veena Shenoy, Ms. Sheetal Mahendra and Ms. Navita Vijay, found that, in such a condition the digital platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet and E-mail had been used by the faculty members to either conduct online classes or for examination purposes.¹ Students were asked to give exam

¹see for details, "Teaching and learning are always in demand and when faculty heard about lockdown due to challenge for faculty to look this as an opportunity to go for virtual COVID 19, it was classrooms, virtual learning and teaching. With the crisis there is a wide adaption of technology in teaching learning process. The higher educational institutions in Bangalore have opted for online classes. The tools used by faculty during lockdown for teaching and learning through online modes are Zoom, Google Hangouts, Skype meet up, Google classrooms, LMS, ICT, YouTube, etc. Many institutions conducted Faculty development programs online to gear up the positivity among faculty during the crisis. Faculty feel there is no much difference between online and offline sessions as they can share PPT, play videos and use board and marker as regular classrooms. One interesting part, one of the respondents was handling an analytics course for PGDM students

from their home and send their written pages through Mail or Whatsapp if necessary. This opened up a new mode of learning through digital media. Now teachers were instructed to conduct classes through the digital medium, and this mode of learning came to be known as online learning and the traditional mode of learning came to be known as offline mode of learning.

But there were also challenges in the online mode of learning because teachers and students were not accustomed with this mode of teaching- learning processes. There were also challenges for the educational institutions to continue the teaching- leaning processes through the digital medium because it had been a fact that even though the Digital India programme was launched couple of years ago but the facilities had not been sufficient enough to meet the need of 1.5 billion people and lakhs of students in such a huge geographical space. However the availability of electronic gadgets and the government also providing electronic gadgets to the students made it a possibility that the teaching- learning process through the online mode reach every student and cater to the need of the hour. This specific instance of online learning or learning through the medium of digital media had been the only instance of teaching through the medium of digital media.

The introduction of online teaching- learning processes helped the educational processes to continue. In the online mode of leaning uses of software were necessary to deliver lecture digitally to send customized reading materials to the students to facilitate the learning processes. All of a sudden the new mode of teaching- learning process became the norm of education. A year after the introduction of lockdown the online mode of education replaced the traditional mode of education. The government, following the safety measurements and health security of the students, had been continuing the lockdown on the educational institutions. In this situation the learning processes had been continuing through the online mode.

The accessibility of the digital medium changed the mode of education or the teaching- learning process. It facilitated the education system and teaching- learning processes, introduced new methods of teaching and learning. The online mode also enhanced the availability of the instructions and lectures of the teachers, professors for a longer duration which the students could go through repetitively. In this mode of learning the study materials customized by the teachers spreads lot more quickly than the traditional mode of learning. This mode of learning also increased the attraction of the students because it was a new kind of activity for the students, for a change they could now sit in their own homes according to their preferences and

and even she can run all the codes online and students were very positive towards the learning and course. And faculty have also done online role-play, group presentations, guest sessions by experts in the field and CEO talk online. This has created a revolution in the higher education institutions and proved the hybrid system of teaching through offline and online mode." *COVID 19 – Lockdown: Technology Adaption, Teaching, Learning, Students Engagement and Faculty Experience*, Ms. Veena Shenoy, Ms. Sheetal Mahendra, Ms. Navita Vijay, Mukd Shabd Journal, p.700.

attend online classes with ease and comfort of their home. They could now do all things at a single time. The traditional attire and dress course of the students changed drastically and now all of a sudden they could be in their own comfortable attire. According to the educationalists the dress course or dresses wore by students impacts upon the interpersonal relationships and social relationships, which in turns affect their education in a particular educational institution. Such kind of phenomenon also broke down in this method of teaching. The shy students, who would have been afraid of asking questions and clearing his/her doubts, could now drop a question or query in the comment box section without any sort of discomfort. Students who preferred isolated studies also found the online mode of learning preferable.

The noise barrier of teaching- learning process also decreased to a significant extent. The online method of learning also decreased the rate of students' absence in the lecture.² Even if the student would have been unable to go the educational institutions in the normal situations because of ill-health, could now attend the class in his/her own comfort. The carefulness of the parents also influence the learner, specifically the children's to attend classes without missing any. Now there was no escape for the students to bunk classes, all of a sudden all such atrocities decreased to a significant extent. Now there was no such phenomenon of disturbance, noises or discomfort. Hence it could be said that, the online mode of learning helped to facilitate the teaching-learning process and changed the outcome of the education system. And in near about future when situations would be back to normal, there would be a blended mode of learning; the traditional mode along with the online mode. This would definitely increase the level of teaching to a significant extent. Archil Abashidze, a notable researcher in his study also found that, instead of totally going online it would be always better to make part of the courses through online mode and the rest in a regular offline mode.³

²For more details see, "No doubt, virtual classes cannot replace the real classroom education, but it can be used as a supplement to the real classroom. There is a need to face-lift the current teaching methods so that online learning can be effortlessly assimilated into mainstream education. The educational institutes have to reshape and restructure (Sun & Chen, 2016). Majority of the students (51.6 percent) agree that they have access to a laptop/desktop/mobile phones to attend online classes. Majority of the students (38 percent) agree that online classes are convenient, but it is not interactive. Some of them feel that attention is not given to students in online classes as compared to the real classroom. Some even felt they could not concentrate as much in online classes. As expected, students faced problems in various numerical subjects. They do not want to continue with online classes after the pandemic. Students are not satisfied with online classes. It was discovered that there is more attendance of students during online classes." *Online Classes Experience Among Students During Lockdown*, Bhavna Sharma, The Online Journal of Distance Education and e-Learning, Volume 9, Issue 2, April 2021, p. 241.

³For more details see, "In winter 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic made the country make fast decisions and the education system went online. Students and lecturers experienced frustration before the unexpected, had to look for solutions for new challenges, such as access to the internet, online platforms, interaction in a new format. At the end of the semester, what most agree on is that a "hybrid" method of study, with part of educational activities taking place online, is more acceptable than going totally online."

But as all good things come with a negative side, the online modes of teaching-learning processes also come with a negative side. The goodness and effectiveness of the online mode of learning comes with its shortcomings also. Though learning through the digital medium had been the need of the hour but it could never replace the effectiveness of the traditional mode of teaching- learning processes. In online mode of learning the students found it difficult to attend five to six classes a day which in the traditional mode of education the students could attend five to six classes regularly without the kind of stress and difficulty of attending online classes. In the traditional mode of learning teachers would come and deliver their lectures one by one in a very smooth manner. But in the online mode of learning the same kind of smoothness in teaching- learning processes could never be exercised because in order to deliver a lecture a teacher needs to create a separate section of his/her own where students would log in and attend the classes and for this to happen it takes a very tiresome time to do that.

Not only that the online mode of learning had also the phenomenon of mental stress associated with it. In attending online classes students very often gets affected with stress full eyes, because the light coming out of the electronic screens could affect the eye and damage the eye sight permanently. That's why students always found it difficult to cope with it and very often they feel haziness in their mind after attending a long online lecture. And after attending such classes for such longer duration headache and unwantedness for doing any other work or task becomes the normal outcome. And looking at a particular object for a longer duration also affects the neck bone and spinal cord of the students.

The mental stress of the online mode of education had been the chief most objections raised by the students. In the traditional mode of education students had to go to their educational institutions where they would come with friends and attend classes with them, they would gossip and laugh; they would also found a vigor and energy to attend classes together. But in the online mode of learning they would sit alone in an isolated atmosphere where except him or her there would be no other person, in most of the circumstances. Hence learning in a isolated atmosphere impacts negatively upon their mental health and students found it the most difficult to cope with. The energy level of the learners decreases significantly after a couple of hours and those impacts heavily upon the classes to follow. With being no room for relief or a good time, students feel confined and tends to quit classes after a couple of hours and join classes in fragmentation.

The online mode of learning had little scope for physical activity. In the traditional mode of learning, in a foremost manner they needed to reach their particular educational institutions either through bus, bicycle or by walking and later on they would roam about their institutions and would also take part in sports for a leisure time, which in turn helped in promoting their mental abilities and also in relaxing their mental stress. Physical activities not only

Education in the Condition of "A Total Lockdown", Archil Abashidze, Quarterly Review of Distance Education 21 (3), 2020.

helped students for the physical health but also in their mental health. Because very often physical activities meant indulging in sports and indulging in sports increased their mental strength, co-operative skills, tolerance skill and fellow compassion along with team spirit which had been considered as most crucial for moral development of the students. And in online education there had been zero scope of physical activities and hence the moral development of the students through physical activities, taking parts in sports, gets completely nullified.

In the traditional way, the students would go to a educational institutions where he or she would meet all kinds of people from different social strata and different religious background and there he or she would have learnt a lot from inter-personal relationships and from his or her friends. Not only that, teachers also plays a vital role in shaping the conduct and attitude of the students by his or her mere presence in the class. Students also learn discipline from the educational institution in the traditional mode or learning. The online mode of learning also includes such discipline and conduct of the students but in a robotic way. Students would need discipline to stay quiet during the lecture of the teachers and would be required to perform the electronic settings accordingly. Such online mode and methodology of learning involves less amount of disciplinary caution as against the traditional mode of learning. However, it needed to be mentioned that, the online mode of learning had been designed to cater to a specific need and hence we should not desire all the aspects of the traditional educational outcomes from this mode of teaching. But it had been also a fact that the students learning through the online mode had been facing such vital issues and they had been also deprived of such traditional facilities of a teaching- learning process in a particular educational institution which would have made their learning process a little bit easier and more effective.

To point out few other shortcomings of the online mode of education, we could also point out the effect of online education upon the teachers also. They also feel the same kind of difficulties. Alongside students they also feel it hard to keep up the motivation of the students and delivering online lectures also takes a heavy toll from the teachers also. Many of the teachers had been unable to use such technologies to conduct online classes, they found it difficult to adapt with it. Not only teachers but also the students from rural places, they also found it difficult to cope with the online mode of learning because of the unavailability of the electronic gadgets to those students.⁴ Pramod Kumar an eminent researcher felt that the foundation for improving

⁴For more details see, "Due to the lockdown and closure of schools and colleges, the students are facing lack of offline classes. The students are unable to use the laboratories, go for internship or appear in the examinations. The students are studying only theoretical knowledge. The impact is more severe for rural students and below poverty line students because in rural areas there are network issues. The majority of the parents are not having a mobile phone with an internet connection. In the rural area, they are major disturbance with mobile connectivity. The government is launching various schemes to provide online quality education to students." *COVID-19 Lockdown: How the Pandemic Bringing Change in Indian Education System*, Neeru Rathee, Chiranjit Sarkar, Eureka Publications 2020, p. 136.

quality, accessibility and affordability of education in rural areas of the country can be laid down by encouraging technology interventions.⁵ Taking account of such situations, a question become evident that if India had been ready to meet the challenges of online education.

It needed to be also mentioned that, the online mode of learning also reduced the scope of covering a complete syllabus both for the students and for the teachers. They found it difficult to complete a course which was possible in the traditional mode of education. Hence the syllabus had been reduced to a significant extent. The question pattern of an examination changed significantly. The duration of exams and the mode of conducting such exams also changed drastically to meet the need of the hour.⁶ Open book exams became the norm of the online mode of education. The scope for students to copy from other sources and skip their preparation for examination also became a problem for the new mode of teaching- learning process.

However to conclude upon the discussion about the effectiveness of the online mode of education and the methodology it involves along with the difficulties and issues that the online mode of teaching- learning process includes, it needed to be remembered that there had been a dual of looking at the impact of online education in the present education system in India. The online education in a way facilitates the learning process to a significant extent and it had been also catering to the need of the hour where

⁵ For more details see, "Innovative use of digital initiatives can make a difference for creating vital impact to solve some the keys in rural education in India. Appropriate use of technology can help in mitigating a lots of concerns through digitized/elearning educations services. With the help of public-partnership, rural areas can be equipped with multimedia teaching tools, smart classes having the facility to learn through video lectures, smart boards etc. Through interactive digital medial tools school having one teacher can conduct remote lectures across several locations. This will also help in addressing the shortage of teachers in these schools. While using technology, there could be initial challenges to acclimatize teachers in rural areas with its usages and expose them to digital tools. Therefore, before implementation, due care should be taken to train teachers. Interactive learning through digitization can make learning in classrooms interesting and engaging which in turn can arrest drop-out rate. The collective efforts of the government, NGOs & civil society organization alongwith private sectors companies have already begun to steer rural India through digital e-learning transformation of education system." Pramod Kumar, *Philanthropic & Literary Discourse On E-Learning Penetration In Rural Education System, India In View Of Covid-19 Lockdown*, International Journal of Innovative Technology and Research, 2020.
⁶For more details see, "India comes second after china in terms of population and stands as the youngest nation on the planet with an average age of around 30 years. Year 2020 initiated with great hopes and opportunities in India also but soon the country went into lockdown to avoid further spread of Covid-19 pandemic. In this crucial time, the most affected is the education sector which suffered drastically from primary to higher streams in school, colleges and universities. Digital alternatives were streamlined to cover up the syllabus and mobile phones along with other electronic gadgets which were prohibited and strictly banned in schools became the only supporting gadgets during the lockdown." *Online versus Offline Mode of Education-Is India ready to meet the challenges of Online Education in lockdown?*, Naman Wadhwa, Sunita Khatak, Journal of the Social Sciences, July 2020 48(3), p.405.

there had been no other scope for educational activities to continue. The online mode improves self study skill, self-dependency, improves adaptability of the student and it also gave them a new experience of the digital mode of learning which in future would also aid them in facilitating their scope for learning. In her review paper Cecilia Azorin also hinted towards the possibility of a blended mode and methodology of teaching- learning process will arrive.⁷ However, the importance and need for the use of technology had been already stressed time and time again. It had proved to be a significant aspect for the purpose of spreading education to the learners in farthest corner of the country. The positive impact of online education also brought forwards a new aspect of teaching-learning process which would affect positively upon the future education system in India. Keeping in mind the positive sides and its need in the present situation, the online mode of education had been found to be less effective than the traditional way of learning.

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⁷For more details see, "COVID-19 affords a golden opportunity to rethink what matters most in education. The crisis at this moment is being contained with a response of an adaptive nature, but a transition phase towards hybrid schooling (virtual and physical) is yet to come. There are doubts as to whether this will allow for the arrival of a pedagogical renewal movement or whether education will simply return to square one when the de-escalation phase ends. In other words, the post-pandemic schooling universe has two possibilities open to it: a return to traditional education as usual or a transformation towards another education." *Beyond COVID-19 supernova. Is another education coming?*, Cecilia Azorin, Journal of Professional Capital and Community, 2020, p.381.

