

An Empirical Study of Entrepreneurial Qualities Shown by Teaching Fraternity in India during COVID-19 Lockdown

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Abstract: *The purpose of this research is to highlight the challenges that teachers faced during COVID lockdown in the academic years 2020-2021 and 2021-22, explain how they coped with them, and assess if their solutions aligned with the description of entrepreneurial qualities. The phenomenology pattern was utilized as the research approach in the qualitative study. The sample comprises of 20 teachers who work in private schools in five Indian states throughout the academic years 2020-2021 and 2021-22. (Delhi, Utrakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Karnataka). Workload, lack of expertise, and a lack of digital infrastructure for teachers, as well as teacher autonomy and compensation deductions, were all investigated in the study. These were found to be consistent across all samples, and they also discussed difficulties that their colleagues were facing. Teachers have stated that these withdrawals are not just made at peak COVID lockdown, but that they are also made today, and that they are in serious financial trouble. Except for a few teachers, the study revealed that most teachers lacked the ability to take risks in order to address problems in novel ways. As a result, instructors must learn how to be more entrepreneurial.*

Keywords: COVID-19, Pandemic, Education, Teacher, Teacher Education, Entrepreneurial Qualities

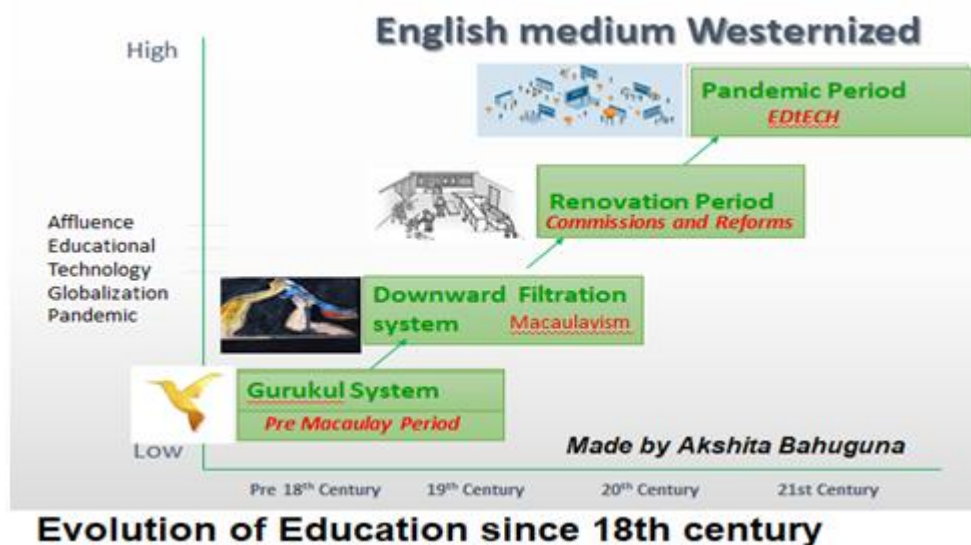
1. Introduction

The pandemic's nature and scope have thrown mankind into unprecedented, unforeseeable uncertainty. When everything else in life seems to be coming to a halt, it is Education that has kept the ball of hope going. Following the global financial crisis of 2008, India fared better, and the education sector emerged as a recession-resistant business. However, the pandemic and its aftermath demonstrated that education is not immune to health insecurity induced by COVID-19. Approximately 1.6 billion students from over 190 countries have been affected, according to a UN report. The rate of dissemination of Corona Virus Disease 2019, also known as (COVID-19), is related to the rate of change in Educational Institutions working.

Bahuguna 2020 investigated the evolution of education as well as the scope and magnitude of change brought about by the epidemic in India's educational system. Teachers are

viewed as social change agents who are accountable for developing the next generation of citizens with talents that are yet to be discovered. When it comes to preparing all other vocations, teachers have that never say no attitude.

It has been seen that all over the globe the educational institutions were closed and faced the pandemic. In India too educational Institutes were closed unannounced. Teachers, who are the foundation of every educational institution, were the first to be affected, and they were tasked with the task of leading the transition and rolling the ball by adopting a new teaching paradigm. Teachers experienced numerous concerns, problems, and inhibitions with the online teaching they were required to undertake. Teachers, living up to their status as change agents, devote their whole attention to online instruction. The goal of the study is to determine if the teachers themselves showed these entrepreneurial traits both during and after the pandemic lockdown



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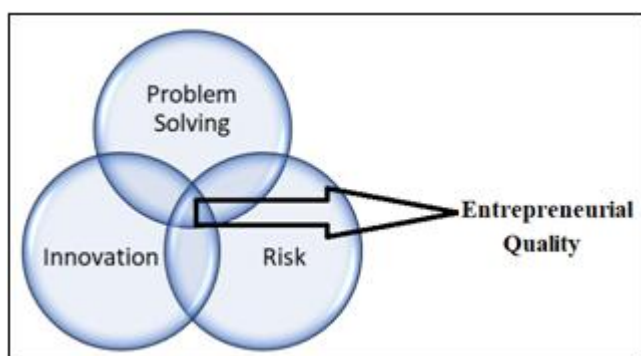
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Fig 1 Adopted from “Bahuguna Akshita (2020). *Paradigm Shift in Educational Entrepreneurship: An Indian Perspective of Pandemic. COVID19 and Lockdown in the World. Eureka Publications*”

There is no single definition of entrepreneurship. Various disciplines of study look at different elements and define it differently. Nonetheless, an entrepreneur is frequently associated with the important abilities of innovation, organization, and risk management.

Definition of key terms The following definition of entrepreneurial qualities is operationalised to be evaluated for the study.

Entrepreneurial qualities entail taking a risk in order to solve a problem and going above and beyond to achieve new heights.



Few examples of entrepreneurial qualities shown by teachers as per news reports and those encountered while conducting interview for the study:

With the lockdown the responsibility of continuing to educate the youth has rested largely on teachers all around the world. Despite issues of lockdown, internet connectivity, lack of study material for distance teaching, and digital divide or unavailability of proper digital infrastructure, many teachers have adopted innovative and entrepreneurial ways to teach students as a result of the unprecedented lockdown imposed as a last resort to combat health uncertainties caused by COVID-19. The following are a few examples to consider.

- 1) Teachers used tree shades and community centres in West Bengal to teach rural and tribal students.
- 2) Every morning, a rural teacher in Kolkata ensured that his classes ran well by climbing to the top of a tree to establish a network connection and access the internet on his mobile phone.
- 3) In order to teach nursery rhymes to young children, a Marathi nursery on hygiene was made and shared by a teacher from Aurangabad.
- 4) In Uttarakhand, a teacher took a small group of pupils to a farm area to educate them beneath the sky with activities, ensuring that COVID procedures and activity-based learning were followed.
- 5) In Uttarakhand, a teacher who was unable to attend online lessons owing to a lack of digital infrastructure partnered with a Delhi-based NGO to guarantee that online learning continues. The teaching profession, not

just in school but also in higher education, has developed entrepreneurial abilities to address issues such as the digital divide, distress, access, pedagogical skills, and many more.

- 6) To assist persons in distress, a professor of India Psychology at Hyderabad launched teleconsultation with students and other members.
- 7) Not only teachers, but also teachers-turned-leaders such as Late Prof I Ramabrahmam, then-Vice-Chancellor of Central University of Odisha (CUO) in Koraput, paid an unprecedented visit to the homes of final semester students in Koraput, Jeypore, and other parts of the district, and communicated with them to understand the issues students faced during online examinations and to bridge the digital divide. He also developed a new MBA executive program with a curriculum designed to foster business acumen in young people.

The aforementioned tales both touch our hearts and hurt them. The study aims to delve into how teachers have been handled as a result of the pandemic.

Research Question

- 1) What are the challenges that teachers encountered during COVID?
- 2) How did the teachers deal with their fears and inhibitions?
- 3) Were there any instructors who possessed entrepreneurial qualities?

Objectives of the Study

- 1) To identify the problems faced by teachers during COVID lockdown
- 2) To study the ways teachers overcame their fears and inhibitions during COVID lockdown
- 3) To analyze if these actions can be regarded as entrepreneurial quality as per definition

2. Review of Related Literature

Tufan (2021): The study examined the challenges faced by teachers during COVID-19 pandemic and to discuss their opinions regarding the process in Turkey. The qualitative research methods, the phenomenology pattern was used with a sample of 80 teachers, selected using purposeful criterion sampling technique who work at public and private schools in different provinces of Turkey in 2019-2020 academic year. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Turkish national educational television network (EBA TV) or education site performed a critical role in meeting students' educational needs and ensuring education continuity, according to the research. In terms of the themes and views that stand out, teachers considered EBA TV and education portal to be good, although there were difficulties with quality, presentation, and connectivity. The issues that instructors confront are divided into two groups.

- 1) Difficulties with pupils
- 2) Issues with their own online teaching abilities

According to the statistics, teachers observed a detrimental influence on the majority of pupils' psyche during the COVID-19 pandemic. The teachers faced a number of difficulties with students, including technical and hardware concerns, the lack of parental support for their children at home, the inability of students to keep their motivation to study, the failure of parents to create a learning environment, and the inability of students to maintain their interest in learning.

Teachers expressed worry about their lack of ability to use technology as a pedagogical medium, as well as a lack of willingness to employ distant education technologies, according to the study. Teachers believe that things will not be the same after the COVID-19 pandemic; the significance of school, teachers, and face-to-face education will not be acknowledged again, and blended learning techniques will take center stage.

Bahuguna (2020): The study attempted to examine the changes in the Indian educational system and assess the acceptability of the pandemic's abrupt shift. Education is a diverse subject that is always changing. Most people associate it with teaching, although there are several options for businesses. Several laws, commissions, and reforms have contributed to progress, although they have been restricted in terms of access and fairness. The pandemic presents a unique chance to completely overhaul the educational system rather than simply refurbish it. The plan for five online institutions and AtamNirbhar Bharat gives up opportunities for people from all walks of life to take the less traveled path (Entrepreneurship) although the student-to-teacher ratio is high, the student-to-technology ratio can be beneficial.

Carvalho (2020): This research was part of the Center for Global Development's education finance series, which looked at how the pandemic and following economic crisis impacted educational resources. The study looked at teacher labor markets and remuneration and discovered that contract and private school instructors appear to be disproportionately at risk in the aftermath of the pandemic. As a result, it is advised that the wider education workforce be protected for the benefit of the education sector, which accounts for a significant portion of the formal labor market in many developing nations. The study discovered that significant employment losses in the education sector might have ramifications for the whole labor market and economic stability. As a result, ensuring that teacher wages and jobs are safeguarded throughout the crisis might be a cost-effective way to give some type of employment insurance to substantial segments of the formal sector in many developing nations.

3. Research Methodology

One of the qualitative research techniques used in this study was the phenomenology model. The primary objective of phenomenology research is to identify and understand human experiences related to larger-scale events. The objective of phenomenology research is to discover and comprehend people's attitudes, perceptions, and perspectives on a certain event or situation. The goal of this research is to

analyze the issues that instructors experienced during COVID-19 lockdown, as well as how they overcome their anxieties and inhibitions, and to see if these activities may be classified as entrepreneurial in nature.

Sample

According to a study by Shelby Carvalho (2020), while full-time regular teachers in government schools and a few public schools had relative job security, teachers in private schools and those working as contractual teachers faced a double whammy of financial hardship, including the possibility of losing their jobs or having their salaries cut, as well as a change in teaching methods imposed due to COVID. The research of full-time government school vs. private school teacher job loss revealed that private school teachers and contractual teachers had a greater likelihood of losing their employment.

Given the foregoing, the study's sample was chosen using the criteria sampling approach, which is one of the purposive sampling methods. During the academic years 2020-2021 and 2021-22, the current study employed a sample of 20 teachers who worked in private schools in five Indian states. (Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, and Karnataka)

Being a private school teacher is taken as the main criterion while determining the participants. References of teachers were taken from those who were already known to the researchers. Other criteria used while determining the sample:

- a) Teachers teaching different classes and subjects in schools
- b) Being ready to participate in the telephonic interview for study,
- c) Had taught students in academic session 2020-21 and 2021-22

Data was collected using telephonic semi-structured interview

Table 1: Information regarding sample

Gender	Female
Teaching Experience	2-15 years
Teaching classes	6 th -12 th
Subject	Any
Type of Teacher	Private school-15 Contractual-5

Tool for Data Collection

Since the study is based on a phenomenon, it was decided to conduct a semi-structured interview. Interview consisted of six open ended questions. The question in semi-structured interview was fragmented into 5 categories:

1) Financial Issues

- a) During COVID time did u get full salary or the deductions were made. How much deduction was there? How did you overcome the issue?

2) Workload

- a) Discuss the load of work assigned to you? What steps did you take to resolve the problem?

3) Virtual classroom

a) What issues did you face the day you came to know you have to teach online? What was your solution to the problem?

4) Online Teacher skills

a) What problem do you face in conducting class?
 b) Give few stances of issues faced during classroom management and the way you resolved

5) Issue of teacher Autonomy

a) Do you have autonomy in class conduction? How did you resolve the problem?

4. Analysis

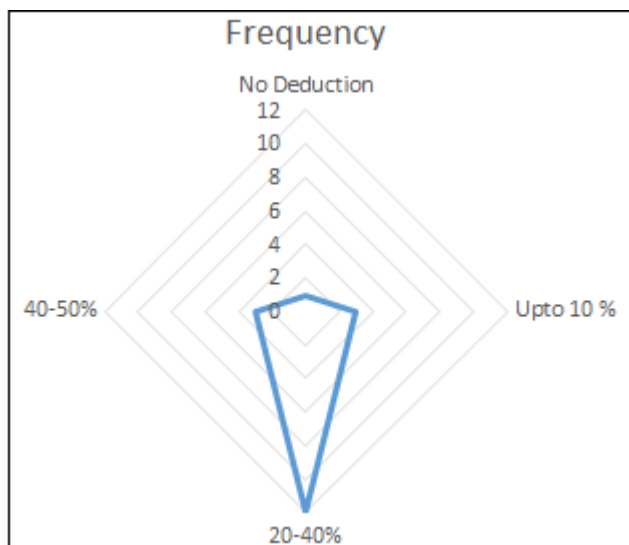
After obtaining the information, the data gathered from the interviews with teachers was evaluated and coded in the context of the objective of the study. Themes indicated by teachers' replies to interview questions were compiled and analysed using the descriptive technique. The answers given by teachers were analysed on Problem solution, Innovation and Risk. Qualities shown by more than 50% is considered to be present and answered as yes. The solutions giving all three yes was considered to have entrepreneurial qualities.

The interview took place in both Hindi and English

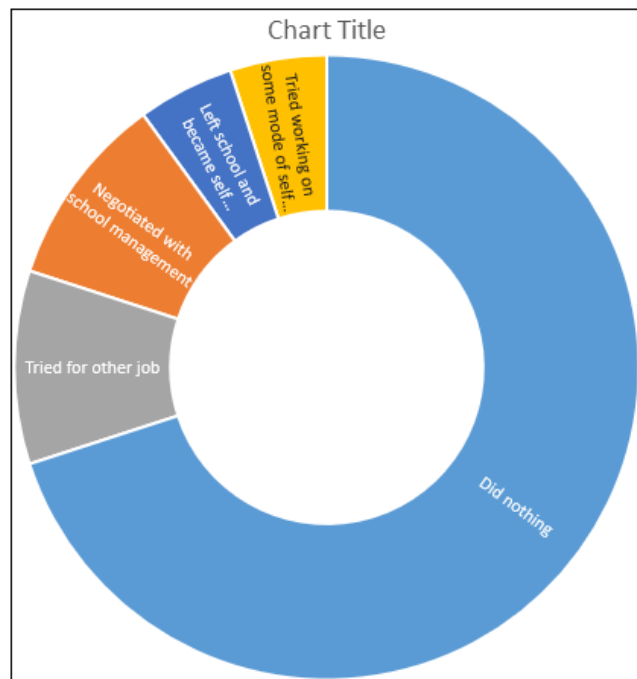
1) Financial Issues

a) During COVID time did u get full salary or the deductions were made. How much deduction was there? How did you overcome the issue?

Deduction	Frequency
No Deduction	1
Upto 10 %	3
20-40%	12
40-50%	3
No salary	1



How did you overcome the issue?	Frequency
Did nothing	14
Negotiated with school management	2
Tried for other job	2
Tried working on some mode of self-employment with school job	1
Left school and became self employed	1



Interpretation

It was determined that 95% of the teachers in the sample, who worked in private schools or on a contract basis, experienced wage reductions or job losses. Only 10% of this group had the fortitude to negotiate with the school administration, while 56% accepted their fate and were afraid to take risks. To earn more money, 20% moved into self-employment, with 50% quitting their jobs to establish a full-time business, while the other half continued to teach and tried their hand at other businesses.

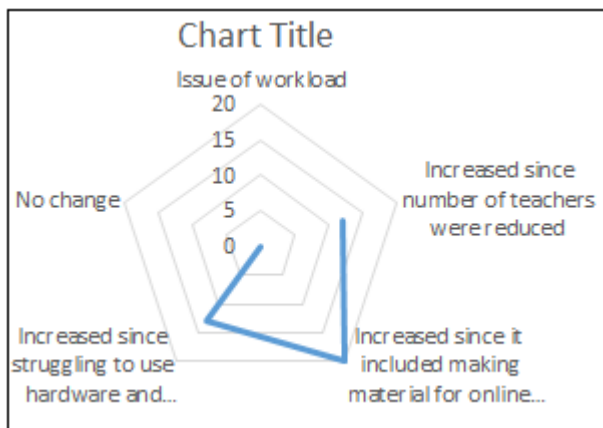
Findings 1

As observed from above the financial issue faced by teachers was not solved in 90% cases and in 10% case they switched to some other mode that involved some risk hence for financial matters it can be said teachers showed risk taking capacity 10% times. Hence they have 10% chance of entrepreneurial quality.

2) Workload

a) Discuss the load of work assigned to you? What steps did you take to resolve the problem?

Issue of workload	Frequency
Increased since number of teachers were reduced	12
Increased since it included making material for online teaching	20
Increased since struggling to use hardware and software	13
No change	0



Issue of workload	Steps to resolve
Increased since number of teachers were reduced	No action
Increased since it included making material for online teaching	No action
Increased since struggling to use hardware and software	Learning
No change	Nothing

Interpretation

As a result of the COVID-19 lockdown, 100% of instructors believed that their workload and work time increased after switching to online teaching. The causes for the increasing workload varied. Teachers revealed that school faculty had been drastically decreased, and they had been ordered to take on more classes. As a result, working from home required 4 to 6 hours of more per day effort. Teachers said they were having varying degrees of difficulty with the hardware and software aspects of online education.

Findings 2

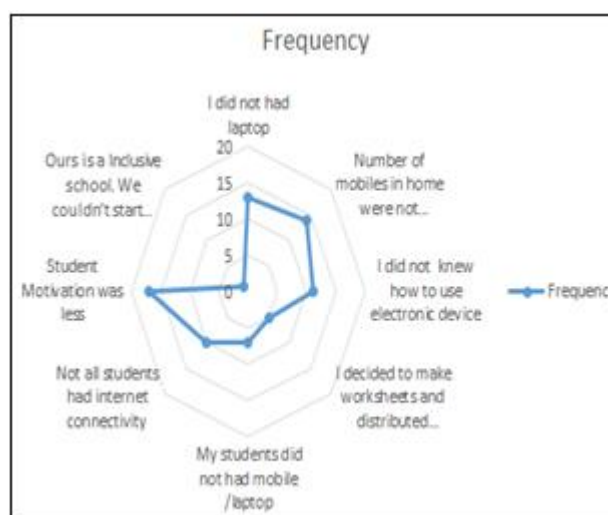
As observed from above the issue of extra workload faced by teachers was not solved innovatively in 100% cases and teachers adjusted to give more time. This does not involved any risk hence for matters related to extra workload. Hence

the teachers did not show any entrepreneurial quality and played victim.

3) Virtual classroom

a) What issues did you face the day you came to know you have to teach online? What was your solution to the problem?

Issue	Frequency
I did not had laptop	13
Number of mobiles in home were not sufficient to take care of needs of my children and me	14
I did not knew how to use electronic device	11
I decided to make worksheets and distributed from one student to other	5
My students did not had mobile /laptop	7
Not all students had internet connectivity	10
Student Motivation was less	17
Ours is a Inclusive school. We couldn't start classes	1



Issue	Solution
I Did Not Had Laptop	I Brought New Laptop
	Used Mobile
	Gave Worksheets Through Mail
Number Of Mobiles In Home Were Not Sufficient To Take Care Of Needs Of My Children And Me	Incurred Expense To Buy New Mobile
	Took From Some Friend/Relative
I Did Not Knew How To Use Electronic Device	Work Sheet
	Teachers Said Their Children Helped Me
	I Still Struggle
My Students Did Not Had Mobile /Laptop	I avoided classes for few days and am still finding it hard to embrace the transition to online teaching
	Asked Them To Buy
	I Decided To Make Worksheets And Distributed From One Student To Other
	Students Were Asked To Watch Swyam Prabha Channel, Radio, Podcast, And Go Through DIKSHA Portal
Not All Students Had Internet Connectivity	Collected Small Group Of Students Of Nearby Area.
	Worksheets Were Sent
Student Motivation Was Less	Class Recording Is Shared With Students
	Tried To Engage
Ours Is An Inclusive School. We Couldn't Start Classes	Can't Do Much
	Nothing Could Be Done Without Intervention Of School Authority.

Interpretation

These issues were due to digital divide and socio economic conditions of the nation hence teachers had limited choice but still many of them tried to solve problem within their limitations and tried to reach maximum students through helping them with TV channel, Radio broadcast, podcast, worksheet and managing small group of children staying in nearby area. A large number of issues were ignored with the pretext of we cant do much this showed lack of confidence in trying to bring a change.

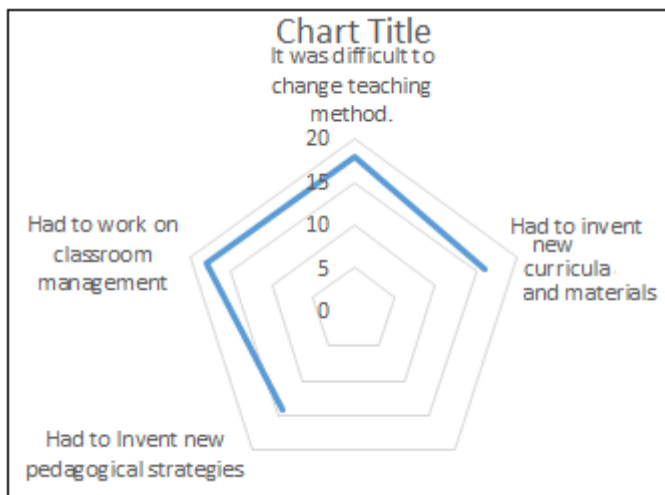
Findings 3

As observed from above the issue sudden transition to online classes due to COVID and consequential lockdown faced by teachers was solved but the solution lacked innovative initiative on teachers part in 98% cases. Teachers compromised to large extent and complained to system and digital divide. The solutions did not involved any risk hence for matters related to sudden transition to virtual class. Hence the teachers did not show any entrepreneurial quality and played victim.

4) Online Teacher skills

a) What problem do you face in conducting class?

Issue Faced	Frequency
It was difficult to change teaching method.	18
Had to invent new curricula and materials	16
Had to Invent new pedagogical strategies	14
Had to work on classroom management	18

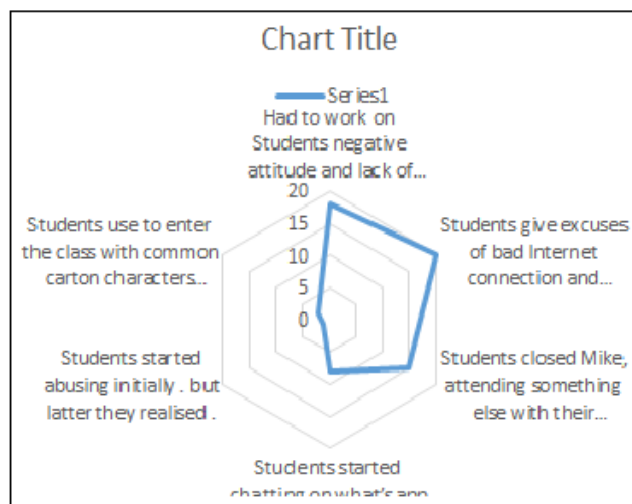


Interpretation

Teachers felt that they had to redefine approximately as skills related to teaching like method of teaching, preparing new material, Pedagogical strategies and class room management they said required more attention. They felt that no support was provided to them from school management and the expectations were too much for them to handle. Teachers shared that they were asked to switch to new pedagogical method without any preparation. They agreed to have done all under the pressure from school as part of duty. And only one teacher was able to share the innovative practice adopted by her to engage the students in the class.

a) Give few stances of issues faced during classroom management and the way you resolved.

Issues of classroom management	Frequency
Had to work on Students negative attitude and lack of Motivation	18
Students give excuses of bad Internet connection and electricity for being non attentive or delay in submission of assignment or exam	20
Students closed Mike, attending something else with their headphone was on	15
Students started chatting on what's app or slept while logged in	8
Students started abusing initially but latter they realized.	1
Students use to enter the class with common cartoon characters name like doremon, tom & jerry	2



Solutions

As a consequence of the class room management approach, teachers attempted to maintain class discipline and decorum by employing the following technique in online classes.

- Making a list of dos and don'ts for the class,
- The regulations of online classrooms were clearly defined.
- Using the names of the students in the class as a callout,
- Requesting students to open their video
- Requiring pupils to wear school uniforms to class

Interpretation

Class room management is an important teaching skill that teachers are taught and equipped to use. This maintains the class's discipline and decorum. Teachers originally struggled with the abrupt transition to online instruction. They eventually figured out how to fight. Though the problem solving attitude of most of the teachers is clearly marked by this but it did not involve risk for any innovation so we cannot say teachers showed any entrepreneurial qualities

Findings 4

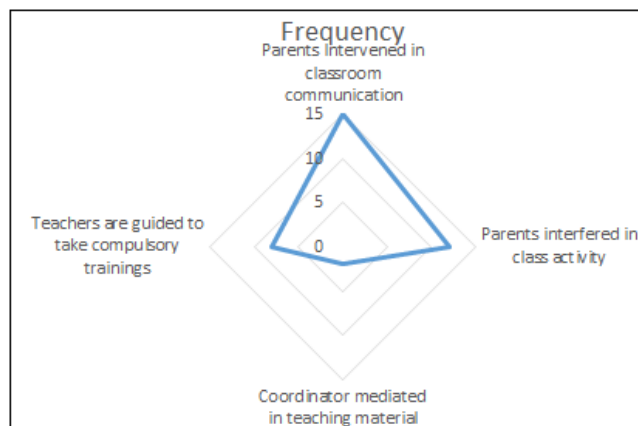
As observed from above the issue teacher skills in online teaching during COVID era and consequential lockdown showed 80% times propensity to redefine skills and manage class. Initial issues were solved by 75% teachers with efforts and new learning. Hence these new learning can be

considered innovative ways with risk of failure being involved. As a result teachers can be considered to have shown 75% entrepreneurial qualities in this.

5. Issue of teacher Autonomy

a) Do you have autonomy in class conduction? How did you resolve the problem?

Issue	Frequency
Parents Intervened in classroom communication	8
Parents interfered in class activity	8
Coordinator mediated in teaching material	2
Teachers are guided to take compulsory trainings	8



Interpretation

“The ability to take charge of one's own teaching” is how teacher autonomy is defined. Teacher autonomy refers to a teacher's ability to research, learn, and teach. Forces outside class should not meddle too much with a teacher's work so that he or she may do his or her job without fear.

Interference of parents increased in day to day classes with parents sitting besides students and keeping a birds eye in the class. It becomes difficult for teacher to manage an average 40 students online in a class and then entertain intervening parents who comments on things like “my child was ignored as teacher did not gave him chance to answer” Teacher has favourism, teacher could do this or that or was not polite. Teachers shared that these parents at times complain to coordinator or the principal and then it becomes rather mere difficult to handle class.

Findings 5

As observed from above the issue of teacher autonomy was new problem and teachers are simply facing it. It needs intervention by schools management and, administration and teachers together. But teachers are unable to solve it and are waiting for schools to open to sort it out. Hence there is no risk, innovation and problem is not solved. Thus no entrepreneurial qualities are shown.

6. Result

Problem faced by teachers (objective 1)	Risk involved in solution	Innovation in solution	Problem solved	Is the action entrepreneurial (Objective 3)
Financial Issues	No	No	No	No
Workload	No	Yes	Yes	No
Virtual classroom	No	No	No	No
Online Teacher skills	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Issue of teacher Autonomy	No	No	No	No

According to newspaper reporting, Over 60, 000 Maharashtra teachers have lost their jobs in state ([https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/nagpur/over-60k-teachers-have-lost-their-jobs-in-state-associations/articleshow/77684276. cms](https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/nagpur/over-60k-teachers-have-lost-their-jobs-in-state-associations/articleshow/77684276.cms)) and 40, 000 Karnataka teachers have lost their jobs (<https://www.deccanchronicle.com/nation/current-affairs/080720/kar> Overworking was addressed with wage cutbacks or no pay at all for those who were lucky enough to maintain their employment. As a result of the difficult efforts made for less pay, many teachers suffered from mental health concerns and news of teachers turning manual labour under MANERGA were reported. The study further strengthened the claims of the newspaper and found

- Teachers accepted pandemic as their fate and felt hand cuffed with circumstances. An entrepreneurial quality is needed to build their confidence
- Teachers have been ordered to take up online teaching as a remedy of lockdown, for which neither they nor their students and schools were well prepared.
- Most of the teachers responded to the challenge as a part of their job; and did their best under difficult conditions.

They are working harder and more hours than before. Hence feel victimized.

- Few teachers feel at least partly successful in serving their students. Mostly regard pandemic learning as a complete disaster.
- By far the greatest source of support for teachers is other teachers. Less-useful system supports are those from the school authorities and government.
- Teachers individually have struggled and found new solutions but the collective efforts are not visible. Hence the scope of improvement and learning in difficult times remained limited.
- They had double trouble of work overload and financial reductions. And at the top of it they were expected to attend teachers workshop held by CBSE
- Technologically modern metro-cities with few high-end schools, experienced innovation. However, there is a dearth of rural innovators and entrepreneurs. As a result, we must investigate and give opportunities and access to rural users in India, a developing country.
- Worksheet was overburden as it needed psychology of children, the age appropriateness and average students capacity.

- Hence entrepreneurship education is needed for teachers not only to improve their financial status but to increase their confidence to rise above situation instead of blindly accept in it and to building their positive attitude towards risk, innovation and problem solution.

7. Suggestions

In India, education is on a concurrent list, which means that both the state and the national governments are working on it. There are also government, non-government, public, and private educational institutions. According to the study, private teachers were the most hit, with the most job losses and compensation reductions. As a result, an intervention from government is recommended. Governments may make following efforts to keep and safeguard the teaching force.

- a) Newspaper reports have shown teachers doing manual work under manarega and the teacher who left jobs were the one who were not getting salary. It's difficult to understand why teacher can have a golden parachute exit plan in schools. Ministry of cooperatives may work out a program for teachers their security and increased risk taking propensity.
- b) If Global value change that is needed to expand global economy. Entrepreneurial teachers are needed to bring about that change. Hence reforms are needed in education, employment and enhancement of teachers so that these entrepreneurial teachers perform to transform the world. Aatmnirbhar Bharat is dependent on teacher's quality and performance. Thus education of entrepreneurial qualities is highly recommended for teachers
- c) The government may guarantee that teachers are paid and that schools are prepared to resume quickly if permission is granted.
- d) The government may improve school health and safety by upgrading sanitary facilities and providing guidance on topics such as hand washing and health education.
- e) The government may decide to replace customary extended holidays with an extra school session to make up for lost time.
- f) Governments may also try more permanent adjustments to the traditional school calendar, integrating local community traditions with a teaching and learning timetable that maximizes kids' and instructors' time together.

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