Critically Analyzing the Challenges that Teachers Underwent During Online Classes in the COVID Era

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Abstract: *The following research is an attempt in understanding the numerous challenges faced by teachers during online teaching which were taken in the covid era. Online teaching was far different from the traditional form of teaching, no teacher was prepared for this either technically or had such previous experience, for most teachers it was a new thing. The teaching was virtual but for teachers, it was teaching to a screen. The following study is a detailed analysis of the struggle that a teacher endured while teaching in online classes.*

Keywords: Challenges during COVID

I. INTRODUCTION

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus that occurred in the late year 2019 and spread in India later in 2020. Many people got infected and experienced mild to moderate respiratory illness and some recovered without requiring special treatment. However, some died due to it. This virus was lethal and took the lives of more than five lakh people in India alone. In the entail days, the county went into lockdown but thereafter the country had live with it. Then the concept of 'work from home' began and it changed everything. This was the inception of online classes and no teacher nor students were prepared for this. Many teachers enjoyed and some were annoyed by this new experiment. However, every teacher underwent certain challenges right from the fresher to the most experienced teacher in the institution. The COVID era certainly taught many things to teachers.

II. METHODOLOGY

This research is qualitative research, involving collecting and analyzing non-numerical data from teachers in order to understand concepts, opinions, experiences, observations and challenges a teacher underwent in online classes. Numerous teachers were interviewed and some teachers agreed to groups discussion. The outcome of such an effort is transformed into a detailed exposition.

III. CLASSROOM CONTROL

The more significant challenge was to control the students who were virtually present in a virtual classroom. The physical form of the classroom allowed us to interact with and understand various types of students such as, some are good listeners, some are distractive and some are even notorious. It helped us make a place in a classroom which was particularly suited to their nature, the online environment failed us to identify such students. Teachers didn't have control over the students on whether were paying attention to what the teacher is teaching, a physical classroom the teacher had full control over students and easy to identify whether the students were participating or getting distracted or even they couldn't understand the lecture, the could rectify it. Many teachers reported that the majority of students become more lethargic and careless about what they learned.

IV. INDISCIPLINE

In an ideal classroom, when the teacher enters the students will stand and greet and thereafter will sit in a disciplined manner and learn and study, the body posture is quite attentive. However, in the online class mode, it has been noted that the sitting posture of students is sometimes a sleeping posture, many of them are lying on the bed rather than sitting in a chair. In the virtual classes, teachers experienced some students being in the part-time workplace, some cleaning

their houses and utensil, some travelling on a train and bus, some having their tea or coffee and some students ignoring the class. One can't learn anything while engaging in such activities simultaneously. Students disrespect the online form of learning completely.

V. TIME CONSTRAINT

One of the areas teachers complain about the most is time consumption, teachers expressed that their time is more utilised in taking attendance as roll/name-calling, checking whether the audio is receiving or not and furthermore, the teacher waiting for their students to join from one class to another. A class viz about 45 minutes, around 1/3rd of the consume by the above which can't be ignored which makes the teachers are leftover with 30 minutes to deliver a lecture in which they have to explain, dictate, making them aware the current scenario. The virtual class made it difficult for the teachers to make a student understand and learn and even allow them to express the topic in their own words and examples in that limited time constraint.

VI. TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES

Online teaching is completely dependent on various elements such as electricity, the internet, the computer, the smartphone, the camera, Audio input/output, etc., if any one of the above connections fails, the online lecture halts. Various software is used to take attendance, but it fails to take attendance if the connection gets disconnected. For attendance, students commit malpractices through various gimmicks (software) used by students that they have learnt from the internet. The audio delay problem has been reported mostly by students, this is mostly due to poor internet connection on both sides. Students faced weekly power cuts in their houses and sometimes the devices they use to access the online classes don't work. Any form of technical difficulties leads to frustration and interruption in online learning.

VII. TOO MUCH DEPENDENCY ON TEACHING AID

Without teaching aid it is actually impossible to conduct an online lecture. In a physical environment, a teacher has a minimum black/green board which is even sometimes minimally used as to write a topic. However, in a virtual classroom, one needs to be fully prepared with a PowerPoint presentation, a word/excel file, a video/audio file, a photo file, etc. and even after all that still it becomes insufficient to deliver a proper lecture as a teacher becomes too specific and explanations in constraint.

VIII. GIVING LECTURES TO THE SCREEN

A teacher is a natural public speaker, this skill is very much developed in a physical classroom in the presence of students, the more the number of students the speech gets more passionated, although in the virtual classroom the teacher loses his/her ability to express and they are limited to giving a lecture on a topic specific with the use of teaching aids. This is because the teachers have to visualise the students instead of having a habit of being in the presence of students. In a physical environment, a teacher reaches a zone where the teacher is in full control of the class and the lecture transforms into an intriguing speech where students become completely immersed in the topic. A teacher fails to reach such a zone in an online lecture.

IX. THE SUBCONSCIOUS ZONE

A good lecture is delivered when it is fully prepared although sometimes a great lecture is delivered when the teacher progresses to the subconscious zone. A conscious mind is an active mind where every action goes to a process of active thinking, in the subconscious zone the teaching becomes robust, the teacher delivers a lecture in which the content comes more than he/she prepared, and the source can come from his/her early education, a content that he/she saw in a TV commercial, any form of information he/she remembers, makes his/her lecture robust, all these come naturally to the teacher when a teacher is in the Subconscious zone. Such robust lectures cannot be delivered in a virtual classroom.

X. TEACHING PRACTICAL SUBJECTS

Time constraint is itself an obstacle for teachers in a virtual classroom. However, it becomes more difficult for teachers to teach practical subjects, especially in explaining a question. For instance, teachers who teach accounting or statistical subjects find them in a challenging position to explain a question in a virtual classroom, even though the question is already typed and displayed on the screen. This is because students pay lesser attention and the teacher fails to notice as they have to start solving the question, this scenario is completely contrary to the physical teaching environment.

XI. EVALUATING STUDENTS

Teachers constantly express their concern about facing difficulties in evaluating student's progress in online teaching. A teacher shared her experience during the interview that she was taking viva and students used malpractices in order to pass the test, such instances were experienced by many teachers. Some teachers were worried about the student progress as it affected their performance. The teacher tried many things in order to evaluate the student's performance. However, students managed to malpractice every time. Virtual teaching makes the evaluation of students a challenging task.

XII. VIRTUAL RELATIONSHIPS

Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp, etc. are digital platforms for digital relationships, but never ever thought during this covid era that online education will develop a virtual relationship between teachers and students. The relationship between teachers and students is holy and holistic in nature as a student interacts with their teacher not just from a circular perspective but also from a personal aspect. A student's bigger question to the teacher is how to develop their personality and how to be more articulative in their subject, through this they interact, enquire, debate, confront and slowly develop a fond relationship. Such phenomena get eliminated in online teaching. The student-teacher relationship is a virtual relationship.

XIII. CONCLUSION

Ever since things came back to normal, the traditional form of classes started taking place and many students miss online classes. However, most of the teachers are in relief, they are very happy and they want to continue this traditional form of teaching with a mix of modern teaching aid. Some teachers find the new age of online teaching a future although, some find it a threat to jobs. In this COVID era, India not only saw a digital revolution but also a digital divide between the privileged and the underprivileged. No matter how much we debate, online education was only possible for such who have access to technology and technology isn't free. Education should accessible to everyone right from urban to rural areas, from rich to poor, and from the privileged to the underprivileged. The digital divide is a reality and India is not yet ready.