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Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Education.

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Abstract

One of the major fatalities of the COVID-19 pandemic and consequential closure of schools is mal-effect on education of students. Schools have been shut to prevent community spread of the virus and this has given place to 'online teaching'. Online teaching is a new concept for many stakeholders. Online education is a compensatory way to educate the students in this situation but we must ponder over various safety measures, precautions and preparation for reopening of schools. This article is an attempt to scan, organize and present significance of online teaching, main limitations of online teaching-learning process, suggestions to ameliorate online teaching and some innovative technique to make online teaching more effective, easy and impressive. The long closure of schools has given place to 'online teaching'. Online teaching is a new concept for many stakeholders. Online education is a compensatory way to educate the students in this scenario of lockdown and closure of schools. It is a new way of teaching with the help of ICT (Information Communication-Technology) tool smart phones, laptops, tablets, computers etc with Internet connectivity on WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube Channels, Zoom App, Google Meet, Hangouts, Microsoft Teams, Moodle, Edmodo, Google classroom, Chamilo and Canvas etc to maintain chain of learning, to engage students and to maintain flow of study for students. Online teaching is very significant in this scenario of COVID-19 and closure of Schools. Some innovative suggestions to make online teaching more effective and interesting were discussed in the paper like creating WhatsApp group of students, Facebook account of school and YouTube Channel of school for online teaching: Teachers may use social media and ICT tools for teaching of students during this crucial period. Teacher may create WhatsApp group of students; open a Facebook account of school and YouTube channel of school for providing study material to the students very quickly, effectively and easily. Students may use these study materials (in the form of lecture videos, PDF file, cartoon videos, short educational movies etc.) as per their convenience and availability of smart phone. Managing online SPIRAL VOCABULARY practices, which include introducing new words, and ensuring proper learning, memorizing, using, revising these words during online teaching of the lessons, assigning home assignments, testing questions-answers, explaining exercise, translate and general speaking etc and reflecting various other innovative techniques for Making Online Teaching Effective. Proper Arrangement of Co-Curricular Activities in English: Various School Commissions, School Committees, Indian School Policy 1986, various thinkers of India and abroad, National Curriculum Framework 2005 and National Curriculum Framework for Teachers' School 2009 also paid due importance to the co-curricular activities. Teachers may organize online English debate competitions, speech competitions, English storytelling competition, English recitation contests, write-ups for school magazine etc. are very useful co-curricular activities in English, which can be organized online.

Due to COVID-19 pandemic, schools have been shut to prevent community spread of the virus. One of the major fatalities of the COVID-19 pandemic and consequential closure of schools is mal-effect on education of students. Schools and colleges cannot remain closed for ever. Reopening of schools is a very sensitive, deliberate and responsible decision in this situation. Following precautions must be pondered over for preparation for school reopening during COVID 19 pandemic:

- Marking social distancing circles at the main gate of the schools
- Arranging THERMO SCANNING of students and guardians at the main gate of schools
- Establishing elbow-operated hand washing machine near the main gates of the schools
- Arranging foot-pressing sanitizing and soap dispenser machine near classrooms
- Marked circles for ensuring social distancing throughout the school at library, playground, computer classes and M.D.M. HALL
- Fully sanitized cooks for preparing midday meal-adopting all preventive measures
- Arranging doubled-layered masks for students
- Managing social awareness program and campaigning regarding COVID-19 pandemic
- Organizing PUPPET SHOW on the theme of COVID-19 pandemic for students
- Making animated cartoon EDUTAINING videos on COVID-19 pandemic and posting them on YouTube channel of school
- Video lectures on safety and preventive measures regarding COVID-19 pandemic for social awareness
- Designing POSTERS on COVID-19 and placing on school notice board and other prime locations
- Commencing WHATSAPP account of school to educate the students about COVID-19
- Educating the students and other stakeholders regarding COVID-19 through FACEBOOK ACCOUNT of the school
- Providing reliable, authentic and up-to-date information regarding COVID-19 through WALL PAINTING
- Arranging telephonic guidance to students and guardians
- Increasing air flow and ventilation in the classrooms
- Establishing WASTE MANAGEMENT facility in the school
- Following environment cleaning and decontamination procedures
- Promoting, advocating and ensuring social distancing
- Organizing online essay competition and quiz competition on COVID-19 for increasing awareness
- Establishing various hand washing stations with soap and water at school
- Arranging class-wise hand sanitizers
- Arranging separate timetable for COVID-19 period
- Cleaning and disinfecting classrooms, kitchen and overall school building

- Postponing or cancelling assemblies and sports competitions
- Arranging space for children's desks to be at least half meter apart
- Providing updated emergency contact numbers to the students and staff members
- Downloading AROGYA SETU MOBILE APP in the mobile of teaching staff, cooks, SMC members, Gram Pradhan and other villagers
- Developing children-friendly material, such as animated movies, cartoon posters and short movies on COVID-19
- Adopting flexible attendance policy and leave procedure for students and staff
- Discouraging school attendance awards for students
- Utilizing handmade or computerized WORKSHEETS for students' education
- Promoting, educating and informing about various educational radio and television programs and e-pathshala
- Promoting various mobile apps such as DIKSHA APP, SAMPARKBAITHAK and READ ALONG APP to engage students at their homes
- Ensuring clean, sanitized and separate toilets for boys and girls with proper facility of hand washing and sanitizing
- Emphasizing more on online teaching

The main advantages of online teaching-learning are as follows:

- Online education maintains flow of study for students
- Partial completion of syllabus of the students
- Utilization of students' leisure time
- Consistency in study of students
- Connection with school and teachers
- Revision of curricular contents
- Educative use of social media
- Teaching and learning at any place is possible
- Recorded videos posted on YouTube channels, Facebook account and WhatsApp group can be utilized by students as per their convenience
- Online teaching provides opportunity to students for free thinking
- Online education provides opportunity to revise and repeat the study material provided to them
- Online education also emphasizes on IEP- Individulaized Educational Program and programmed learning (if used rationally)
- Online education also provides opportunity for students' activities and active participation

- Online teaching-learning ensures students' engagement in educational activities
- Online teaching is preparation for school re-opening
- Online teaching is assisting in education of students after lockdown
- Online teaching also provides awareness and proper guidance about COVID-19 and precautions
- Online teaching reduces students' forgetting of educational content
- Online teaching is the only way to educate in this scenario
- Online teaching enables students to clear their doubts from the teachers regarding various educational and other issues

Online teaching can never replace the real face-to-face interactive teaching. It is suitable for some times, for some places, for some students, for some teachers and for all the time, for all the places, for all the students, for all the teachers and for all the content. There are some limitations of online teaching. The main limitations of online teaching are as under:

- Lack of Internet connection and connectivity in many places
- Lack of smart phones to maximum students
- Single and simple keypad phone with the maximum families of rural areas
- Problem of inferiority complex in many students because of lack of smart phone
- Less knowledge of operating smart phone as a teaching learning device
- Poor Internet connection
- Power cuts and interrupted power supply
- Less awareness of villagers, guardians and students about online classes
- Lack of positive attitude towards online teaching among many stakeholders
- Lack of technical know-how in various stakeholders
- Mobile addiction and addiction of social media in students
- Mal-effect on eyes, mind and health of students due to excessive use of smart phones

Making Online Teaching Effective

Teachers must ponder over the following points while teaching online:

- Contacting the guardians and students on phone to make them aware of online classes, procedure and timetable
- Brain washing of guardians, students and other stakeholders to develop positive attitude towards online classes
- Collect mobile numbers and e-mail ids of all students
- Provide proper guidance to students and motivate them for online learning
- Preparation of suitable timetable for online teaching

- Arranging video lectures to be posted on YouTube channel of school or Facebook Account of school so that students may utilize them whenever they have smart phones of elders
- Proper allocation of time to different classes and students for online teaching as per students' convenience and availability of smart phone
- Set up routines with consistency
- Allocation of time for lecture, seeking feedback and feed forward, assigning homework and checking of homework of students
- Build, develop and maintain rapport with students
- Simplicity of presentation
- Pre-arrangement of recorded lectures, videos, PPT, PDF files, charts, diagrams, pictures and other study material
- Plan for effective use of social media, such as Facebook, WhatsApp group, YouTube channel etc
- Individual differences of students must be noticed well
- Previous knowledge of the students should be well utilized
- Timeliness and scheduled teaching with punctuality
- Attracting attention of students, arousing interest and developing desire to know in them
- Providing more opportunity to students' activities, free writing, creativity and personality development of students
- Timing of online teaching should not clash with other mode of education such as educational programs on television and radio

Some Innovative Techniques for Making Online Teaching Effective

- Issuing handmade and computerized worksheet to students: Teachers may issue handmade or computerized worksheets to students for revision work, teaching new points, assigning home assignments and getting goals of education.
- Conducting one-word substitution competition online to develop synthesizing ability of students in English subject. In this competition, online students are divided into two or more teams and they are provided with a set of various items for one-word substitution and they are required to answer within a timeframe to win the points.
- Arranging English Antakshari competition to enhance students' vocabulary. In this innovative activity, online students are divided into two groups. First group speaks a word, for example-APPLE, second group is required to concentrate on the last letter of the word and speak a new word begin with that last letter. In this example, the last letter of the word APPLE is E. the second group will speak a word with letter E, for example- ELEPHANT. How the first group is required to speak any word that begins with

last the letter of ELEPHANT i.e. T. This process will learn a lot of words in a pleasant way to enhance their vocabulary

- Conducting full forms competition to attract online students' attention towards various short forms and full forms useful for them. For example- A.D-Anno Domini (after Christ), B.C=Before Christ, S. St=Social Studies, P.S.= Primary School, C.D.=Compact Disk, C.P.U.=Central Processing Unit, LCM=Least Common Multiple, HCF=Highest Common Factor, B.E.O=Block Education Officer, L.P.G=Liquefied Petroleum Gas, PAN=Permanent Account Number, PIN=Postal Index Number (code), UNO=United Nations Organisation, W.H.O=World Health Organization etc.
- Organizing English poem recitation online competition to ameliorate and develop skills of correct pronunciation, intonation, rhythm and rhyme and to learn more English words as well.
- Use of Action and Recognition game which includes teacher performing an action before online students and students are required to observe on screen, guess or recognize and tell quickly. It will develop learning and insights about various action verbs in the students of primary level. Main examples of action verbs used for the same are: eating, drinking, dancing, singing, writing, reading, jumping, sitting, standing, running, cooking, sleeping, weeping, laughing, washing and walking etc.
- Story making and story completion competition in English to develop online students' divergent thinking, convergent thinking, imagination power, creativity and English writing skill. For example: 1. Raju went to a fair of with his By 2. There he saw,, And 3. He ate, and there with his 4. He bought, and in the fair. 5. He also rode on And 6. The fair was full of,, shops. 7. A juggler was showing his 8. Raju returned in the Withby
- Online K B C (Kon Banega Champion) Game: it includes English online quiz competition having various questions regarding English vocabulary, grammatical rules, prose and poetry. Just like KON BANEGA CROREPATI program, students take interest and pay attention to the players and question-answers.
- Organizing MORE WORDS- MORE MARKS ONLINE GAME in which students are required to tell maximum words they learnt starting who tells maximum words gets maximum marks and becomes winner of the game
- Conducting Rhyming Words Online Competition, in which online students are required to tell rhyming words as much as possible.
- Organizing online essay competitions on various objects, events or festivals to develop and assess their imagination, creativity, divergent thinking, convergent thinking, free writing and ability of word selection.

- Conducting online debate competitions on simple topics of their choice and on various current issues and concerning topics
- Arranging online pronunciation competition by providing students, a list of difficult words with silent letters, long spellings and typical pronunciations. Examples of these words are-knowledge, knife, knight, could, would, often, psychology, lamb, muscle, stomach, miscellaneous, benign, design, sign, bomb, debt, thumb, womb, solemn, autumn, whistle, listen, climb, lamb, tomb, science, scare, scorn, Wednesday, foreign, align, drought, thought, through, plough, enough, cough, rough, tough, might, daughter, hour, honor, exhibition, knee, know, knot, knit, calf, column, condemn, pneumonia, receipt, card, work, pour, scissors, ascend, fascinate, evening, interesting, vegetable, fight, flight, thigh, sigh, high, taught, brought, bought, weigh and weight etc.
- Online Syntax Competition for the students to make them aware about grammatical rules and their uses. All online students are divided into two teams-team A and team B. They are provided with some sentences, which have some grammatical errors. Students are required to identify the errors and rectify them team wise. For example- 1. Ram and Shyam is going to school. 2. Mens are watching television. 3. Thiefs has stolen my suitcase. 4. Sheeps are grazing in the field. 5. GandhiJi was known by me. 6. This book is my. 7. I did not play football. 8. You have been reading newspaper since two hours. 9. The child was dying from thirst. 10. Can I come in?
- Online spell out competition: The teacher will tell some difficult words and online students are required to spell out these words accurately
- Use of same question and different answer online technique: Here the teacher will ask one question and all the online students are required to answer differently as per their own standpoints, preferences, family background , likings and hobbies etc. examples of these questions are: 1. What are your hobbies? 2. What do you want to be in your future life? 3. What do you like to do during lockdown period? 4. What is your experience during lockdown? 5. How did you utilize your time during lockdown period? 6. How is your experience of online teaching-learning? Etc.
- Online ACTION VERB PLAY which includes online instruction of teachers stating various verbs and students are required to perform actions accordingly such as-sleeping, writing, laughing, jumping, eating, drinking, reading and singing etc.
- Online English storytelling to develop listening skill, ameliorate pronunciation and punctuation
- Effective use of Multi-Class and Multi-Stage Online Teaching techniques: for example teacher will ask students of class first- 'A' for.....?; from class second students teacher will ask-what is the spelling of that word?; from class third students, teacher will ask-tell 4-4 words from the spelling or letters of that word or object; the teacher will instruct the students of class five to make 10 sentences on that word or object initially told by the student of class first.

- Students are instructed, online, to study their lesson and underline the difficult words and note down in their notebooks. The teacher will tell the proper pronunciation, clear meaning and students will learn these words for making them a part of their active vocabulary.
- Assigning less, simple, interesting and activity-based online home assignment as per caliber and interest of students in different subjects
- Conducting word-opposite online competition for students to attract attention and arouse interest in English vocabulary
- Organizing word-synonyms online competition for students to learn, memorize, use and revise English vocabulary
- Motivating jumbled word online competition for students to promote comprehension and arouse interest and desire to know
- Use of English puzzles and games as a part of online teaching-learning and vocabulary enhancement tool
- Involvement of online students in creating knowledge by following the rule of constructivism
- Use of English riddles online technique to attract online students' attention towards different objects and to develop their thinking power, imagination, creativity and interest in English
- Arranging online cross-word puzzles to develop students' word power
- Effective use of all the sources of information available to students-100s of TV channels, smartphones with Internet; websites, Facebook, WhatsApp, twitter, instgram, WZone, YouTube, WeChat, Weibo, Tumblr, Telegram, Baidu Tieba, LinkedIn, LINE, Snapchat, Pinterest and Viber etc.
- Proper use of 360 degree angle of students' learning i.e. utilizing all sorts of students' learning resources-formal, informal and non-formal
- Online presentation of study material in SIMSIM form i.e.in-S=Simple; I-Inspiring; M=Melodious; S=Short; I=Intelligible and M=Memorable-manner
- Use of AIDAS model of online teaching which shows sequence of steps for effective online teaching: A=Attracting Attention of the online students; I=Interest (arousing interest of the students); D=Developing Desire to know; A=Activity-based learning; S=Satisfaction level of students
- Arranging online peer tutoring and adopting praise and raise policy in online teaching-learning
- Regular online meetings with staff, guardians, School Management Committee, educational officials regarding innovative efforts and amelioration in educational environment of students during this period.
- Providing minimum, interesting and activities-based online home assignments to the students
- Maintaining activities bank and effective use of activities in online teaching learning process

From the above-cited description, it is clear that online teaching is a must for maintain flow of study for students and maintaining a chain of learning, for engaging students in some educational and creative activities. Some safety measures and preparation for schools-reopening during COVID-19 pandemic are also very

important to be pondered over. So, therefore, it is believed that above-cited set of innovative techniques of online teaching will be a treasure, worthy to be possessed, studies deeply and implemented.

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