PANDEMIC: A CASE STUDY OF ONLINE TEACHING ACROSS VARIOUS PARTICIPANT GROUPS IN THE INDIAN CONTEXT

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CASE SYNOPSIS

The world of education, learning and teaching has undergone drastic transformation with the killer pandemic hitting all cross sections of the society. Teachers in India have adopted new pedagogical methods for online teaching to engage students to achieve learning objectives. Technology and internet connectivity are now the basis for online and peer learning. Role of faculty is now evolving around creating a learning environment, encouraging interaction and provoking the spirit of enquiry and self - directed learning. The various limitations of online engagement owing to technology, student learning environments and motivation are the key challenges in online teaching. Going forward in to the future online teaching will remain mainstream considering its strategic advantages and in providing flexibility to students and faculty members. The whole eco system is undergoing change and all the stake holders are required to align or perish in the emerging circumstances. Corporate are maximising engagement and productivity enhancement through online training initiatives. This case study throws light on the dimensions of online learning and learning via virtual classrooms.

Key Words: Instructional Design, Online learning, Virtual class rooms, Pandemic, Teaching, Technology, Assessments, Pedagogy, Internet, Teaching methodologies

INTRODUCTION

The Covid 19 situation across the globe changed the run and flow of all lives, businesses, health care access, education, training and almost all spheres of our lives. The organisations found innovative and engaging experiences for employees to stay connected with the organisation and parallelly expect performance at expected levels. Travelling to work, attending meetings/ training sessions and go-to market strategies have all undergone changes. Life styles, learning styles and work processes have been refined to address the current ground realities.

Since the COVID -19 pandemic has disrupted the normal lifestyle of people across the globe, the virtual world has come to the rescue. Amongst many institutions / schools have also shifted their base to virtual platforms to conduct classes online. Consequently, catering to the needs of all stages of education from pre-primary to university level, online education has emerged as an alternative to ordinary face to face classes. Accordingly, various stakeholders such as government and private organizations are trying their best to assist each other by sprucing up their existing online platforms, apps and providing training to teachers to use these apps and platforms to the optimum level. Moreover, efforts are being made by both government and non-government organisations and edtech companies to support the school system to make a smooth transition to the virtual world. Upskilling and motivating teachers, organising counselling sessions for stakeholders such as teachers, parents and students are some of the important measures taken by the administration in the recent past.

Making a continuous effort to provide customised teaching-learning material suitable for online classes is another way of facilitating the schooling of children (Anviti 2020).

In this context a case of a faculty member involved in teaching MBA graduates, post graduate diploma students of Training and Development and trainer's experience is recorded with data for case study discussion in a class room situation. The objective of the case study is to present the current trends in online teaching or training in the Indian context and how with the changing circumstances post Covid, how innovative practices prevailing globally can be adopted to make learning fun and engaging without losing focus.

Owing to a wide spectrum of participants or students a variety of approaches and methodologies were to be adopted to keep the classes lively and enriching. The challenge on hand for the faculty was learning to adapt and be innovative to teach or train in a virtual platform using all the experience, technology available at one's disposal.

A comprehensive account of the trends in online teaching with various literature reviews has been presented to collaborate with the teaching experience. Various teaching methodologies for online learning/teaching with focus on curriculum design, development, instructional design, student engagement, various technologies adopted, different assessment and evaluation techniques have also been presented for a discussion.

Participants of the Case Study- Frame

The overall mix of students or participants is shown in table 1 clearly depicts that the MBA students form part of the major chunk of the recipients of online and virtual class room learning in this case study. The number of 1st year MBA students is high owing to a mandatory course or subject, unlike the 2nd Year MBA students were attending an elective course.

The details of the program, target audience, time/duration is depicted in Table 1.

S. No	Target Audience	No. of Participants	Sessions	Subject	Duration	Total Time
Table 1 PARTICIPANTS AND COURSE DETAILS						
1	Post Graduate Diploma Students	35	10	3	90 mins	2700 mins
2	Webinar-Open Program	738	1	1	180 mins	180 mins
3	Private Corporate Facility Management Company	60	1	1	180 mins	180 mins
4	Private Industrial Manufacturing Company	48	2	1	180 mins	360 mins
5	MBA 1st Year Students	68	20	1	60 mins	1200 mins
6	MBA 2nd Year Students	18	30	1	60 mins	1800 mins

CASE DISCUSSION

The author was responsible for delivering training solutions to corporate staff and academic syllabus to students pursuing MBA program.

While all the knowledge inputs were shared using the digital medium i.e., Zoom, Google Meet or Microsoft Teams from the Trainer or Faculty's home office the participants attended the sessions, online, from their respective home locations.

The program design and content for delivering the learning objectives as regards the open program and corporate training was left to the trainer based on client inputs, however

for the Diploma program and MBA students it was a prescribed syllabus or curriculum that was required to be adhered to. The only variable was teaching methodology.

The evaluation and assessment methodology were also prescribed by the respective institution with a bit of freedom to the faculty to adopt their own teaching style.

MBA 1st year students had just joined college and were attending a mandatory course in corporate legal framework and hence they were exploring the new ways of learning and interaction in the virtual class room and demonstrated greater discipline in completing class assignments. The MBA 2nd year students were opting an elective course and hence the number of participants was mush lesser and easier to handle in a virtual classroom situation. It was experienced by the faculty that the senior MBA students carried a lot of baggage and preferred on campus engagement rather than online classes in a regulated home environment. Training and development students had online classes part of their course completion on weekends and attendance was not mandatory. Each session duration was 90 minutes and the students were to attend classes from 9 am to 5 pm with short breaks in between. MBA Students were required to attend the online classes six days a week and each session was for one hour scheduled during the first half of the day as per the time table and their attendance, evaluation and assessments were done through the online medium. However, they had six hours of online classes daily to attend various other subjects. The overall experience of the faculty member was very mixed since most of the MBA students refused to keep the video on as compared to the corporate participants and diploma students.

The training sessions for the company employees were scheduled at different time intervals and a standard format was not followed rather flexibility of the time was offered. The corporate training was focussed and attendance was by nomination and mandatory for the employees to attend.

Participation by way of quiz, case studies, assignments, lecture method in the class was a routine affair and both symmetrical and asymmetrical learning processes were adopted. The participants from the corporate were monitored by their Managers, HR team and the leaders who proposed the intervention.

One of the important points for discussion is whether, despite the use of technology tools and innovative methods was active engagement possible? It is felt that the corporate participants took best advantage of online learning platform unlike MBA students who preferred campus engagements. The effort to contribute to the learning process by the faculty online was easier for corporate participants unlike for MBA students, it was a huge ask as many challenges were experienced along the teaching path. The adult learning methodology followed for corporate training was highly impactful online since the corporate employees were self-motivated and proactively to enhance their performance and productivity. It can be safely assumed online teaching can be a viable alternate to the classroom teaching only if faculty can innovate and bring in new methods for teaching with adaptation of technology.

For this case study, the researchers reviewed the instructional design, the curriculum and syllabus for the transfer of learning. higher education, e-learning as per the plan. Learning on digital platforms is gaining more and more impact, especially in the format of blended learning, and in this new format the traditional teaching and learning can be practiced. Effort was made to compare face-to-face teaching vs online learning and measure the effective amongst a cross section of participant groups with diverse backgrounds, learning styles and priorities.

A large proportion of the students around the world, were engaged in remote learning at the height of the pandemic in March 2020. Some students were able to access the Internet to do so, but not all. The majority of students around the world, who have access to smartphones, were able to use these as learning devices. Others were more fortunate and had tablets, laptops or desktops. Their teachers, some with no previous experience of teaching online or at a distance, discovered new approaches to teaching and learning and imaginative work was undertaken to overcome the challenges posed by the pandemic situation.

While students did not return to the campus for the in-person learning in India. Returning back to something resembling normal may not happen until some point in January 2021, but not before. Faculty are exploring what online teaching reality means for them. What is the new pedagogy of online teaching really like? How does learning look like in this new situation and produce outstanding learning experiences?

While the faculty tried to replicate online what he normally did in a classroom. It was soon discovered it was not a strategy that was practical, as not all students could access synchronous classes reliably and many had challenges, such as other siblings or parents needing access to the technology, the costs of broadband.

This case presents the facts on the ground and reflects the commitment, learning styles and the efficacy of pedagogical teaching methods through online digital platforms. A case is made here for driving unique classroom methods for teaching students and drive maximum results during and after the pandemic.

The details of the classes and training sessions organised are given in Table 2.

TABLE 2 PROGRAM DETAILS							
Sno	Program Details	Target Audience	No of Participants	Medium	Duration	Time	Location of the Participants
1	Open Program on the IR and Labour lawTrends in the country	Training Professionals in the Corporate	738	Webex	3 hrs	5-8 pm	Pan India
2	Facilitation Skills, Business Strategy & HRD and Training Metrics	Diploma students	35	Zoom	90 Mins x 3x10= 45 hrs	9 am 10.30am	Pan India
3	Go-to market Strategy - Covid 19	Private Industrial Products Company	55	Zoom	3hrs x 2 sessions= 6hrs	11am to 2pm	Pan India
4	Emotionally intelligence for Facility management	Private Facility Management and Catering Company	47	Google Meet	3 hrs	3Pm to 6pm	Bangalore
5	Compensation Management	Business School MBA 2nd yr students	18	Microsoft Teams	1 hr x 30hrs= 30 hrs	Morning Sessions	South India

6	Corporate Legal Framework	Business School MBA 1st yr students	68	Microsoft Teams	1hr x 20= 20 hrs	Morning Sessions	South India
7	Orientation & Induction	BBA & MBA Students	100	Zoom	1hr x 20= 20 hrs	Afternoon Sessions	South India

On careful analysis of the data in table 2, it is evident that bulk of the sessions were organised on Microsoft teams for college students and with a large participation. Microsoft Teams was less user friendly when compared to zoom platform and hence gamification, student interactions in break out rooms etc was a huge challenge.

Analysis of 125 Hours of Faculty Engagement during the Pandemic Situation

Corporate employees with clear goals, productivity and performance measures took to online training with precise objectives and take away. While they surely wanted to improve their engagement on the job while working from home and feeling the need to be recognised for their contributions and seeking job security. Open programs were seen as an additional input to enhance the on the job performance and to improve their knowledge.

Students pursuing post graduate diploma were students already possessing 5+ yrs of industry or freelance training experience and hence level of engagement in the class room was high and focus was more on facilitation, self-discovery and problem solving in adult learning groups.

The motivation for the MBA students was to complete the postgraduate program within the stipulated time frame, as per the university framework and seek campus placements or pursue entrepreneurship.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected corporate, universities, students, teachers/trainers equally as a result of the closure or partial closure as a result all the stake holders had to rapidly adapt to remote teaching. The rapid, unexpected and forced transition from face-to-face to remote teaching has entailed a number of challenges and constraints but also opportunities that needs to be examined.

One of the reasons for the lack of interaction or effective two-way communication during the classes with students is that the students operating from rural or semi urban locations in India suffered from poor internet connectivity or frequent power outages. The urban students also frequently experienced power outages or slow internet connectivity. A family of four and where more than three persons are accessing the internet at the same time had its own share of challenges.

Student demographics have been changing for some time now – mature students looking for flexible learning options. Students these days are growing up in a world where technology is an essential part of their environment. Their expectation is that technology will be absorbed to learn, develop essential informational and technological skills, and master their specific subject domain. This is one reason blended learning has grown in use across universities. Blended and online learning are a feature of most strategic plans for colleges. The plans have been given a new emphasis as the pandemic forced online learning.

While MBA students were feeling taxed due to the load of online learning, digital assignments to complete, lack of industry internship opportunities owing to the lock down, negative vibes of seniors not getting placed on campus this year or offers being withdrawn, unable to return to campus. Students used to stay in the hostels but now from home without much infrastructure in the rural areas felt the heat and inability to concentrate in the online

class. The home environment, lack of privacy or too much parental control followed by inadequate internet and communication network was a hinderance in the participation and learning process. Digital platforms such as Microsoft teams was still research in motion added to the woes of the students. Motivation followed by work load had an impact on continuous learning and participation in the class. Therefore, to enhance the understanding various innovative digital tools and techniques were adopted for transfer of learning in addition to submission of digital assignments. Efforts were made to help the students overcome the shyness and habit of hiding behind the screen during online class hours. Constant power fluctuations were also an hinderance for seamless transfer of learning.

Peer pressure was exerted to overcome many of the above said challenges and to some extend positive results were seen. Timely submission of assignments was mandated and tracked and daily quiz in class was a stated norm to validate the degree of learning. Physical attendance was near or close to 100% and was never an issue but approximately 20% of the students joined the class just after the class began on within 10 minutes from the start. About 5-8% of the students would go out of the online class and join back owing to connectivity issues which could never be managed owing to class size and perennial connectivity issues.

While the overall experience of the students based on the evaluation and assessment methodologies adopted indicated that the results were surely encouraging and outcomes were as desired. 80% of the students secured 80% and above scores in the internal and final assessments. Balance 10% scored above 90% and balance 10% between 70-80%.

Heavy overload on the students by the faculty to catchup with the time lost was a challenge too. Students were short of energy during the early hours of the day owing to late night working/studying and that hampered the class room dynamics. Feedback from the students also indicated the speed and the quantum of work load was high and they found it difficult to focus and multi task.

The feedback of the participants regarding online vs classroom mode of teaching is depicted in Figure 1. Indicating MBA students are also wanting to return to face-to-face classroom environment to experience the real campus dynamics.
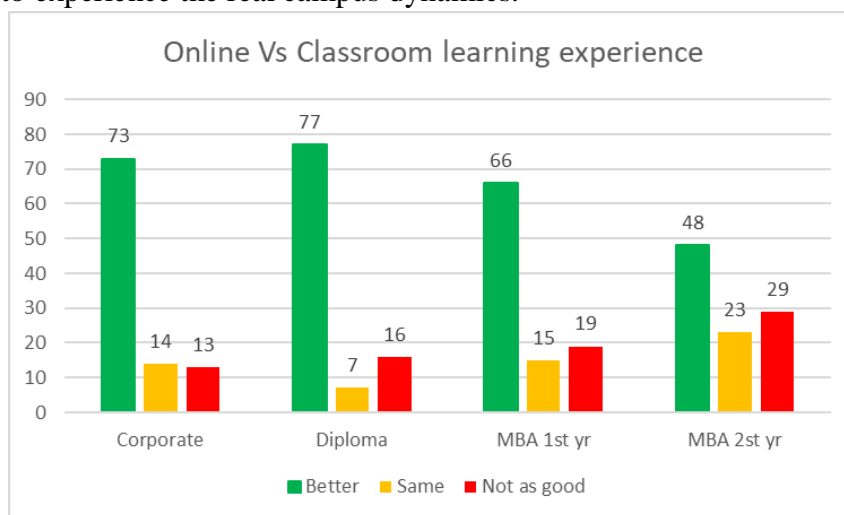
FIGURE 1
FEEDBACK OF PARTICIPANTS ON ONLINE CLASSES

Global Trends: New Expectations of the Student

The Internet has made online learning possible, and has made many teachers and faulty interested in online teaching or learning to enhance and improve the student learning outcomes. Online learning has become popular because of its potential for providing more flexible access to content at any time, from any place with flexibility inbuild.

One of the biggest shifts in L&D thinking is that workplace learning can be considered an ecosystem. Not a random collection of courses and workshops and webinars, but a complex, integrated system of formal and informal learning. Learning is not an event, but a journey (Danielle 2019).

Converting ILT (Instructor led training) to eLearning meant less ILT and some prework eLearning. Now we're creating robust programs *with* multiple modalities: eLearning, self-reflection exercises, virtual Instructor-Led Training (vILT), team activities (live and virtual), role plays, coaching, action plans unified by a shared learning space, gamification. Finding creative ways to incorporate the *social and peer-to-peer learning* that happens more organically in person, without it being a distraction or waste of time, seems to be the holy grail for vILT (Docebo 2019).

Interactive videos

Continuing the focus on engaging interventions, interactive videos and even practice-based simulations are moving the onus towards learner participation more than ever before, therefore moving away from the webinars and click-next computer courses.

Focus on Analytics

With advances in technology and data analytics, learning effectiveness measurement tools are beginning to be transformed. The older models of rendering the effectiveness of training are starting to be displaced by technologically-driven objective analytical assessment of all aspects of performance (Harry 2019).

New Technologies

Advances in digital technologies, social media, and mobile devices /smartphones, give the student, much more control and access to learning content. This empowers faculty and trainers in finding ways to leverage this enhanced student control to increase their motivation and engagement. More recently, developments in artificial intelligence for teaching and learning, virtual and augmented reality, simulations and gamification have further emphasized the importance of technology enabled learning.

Virtual Classroom Tool Tips: Chat, Breakout Rooms

When instructional designers incorporate the above tips into the training programs, facilitators leverage them during delivery, tools can increase learner engagement. Learners feel more connected to their fellow participants.

Gamifying the Virtual Classroom

The gamification of learning is an educational approach to motivate students to learn by using video game design and game elements in learning environments.

The goal of this technique is to bring in fun element at the same time to capture the attention and improve the learning of the students ensuring the students involvement and attention throughout the class duration.

Augmented Reality (AR)

In this so competitive era, everybody wants to be updated and to be the leader, has to adopt current trends and technologies, AR training module is an interactive training module with 3D models, graphics, animations enough to grab the attention of anyone. The use of AR in training is getting fame nowadays with its immersive content and a power to retain knowledge for a longer period of time.

Virtual Reality (VR)

VR powered training modules puts the student's/ trainees in a virtual 3D environment, which is related to the subject they are gathering information or gaining training. The VR training has its own advantages by implementing not only to cut out the distraction but also offers a totally immersive environment where students start learning with great virtual practice sessions as if they are doing it in real life scenario.

Mixed Reality (MR)

Mixed Reality innovation is mature enough to offer an expert training program for the people to enhance their aptitudes. Numerous investigations have uncovered that the up and coming age is searching for more trial learning. In the industries, this astute assumes a critical job by enabling enterprises to prepare their staff all the more successfully and rapidly. Mixed reality speaks to the substance as 3D multi-dimensional images which could be set in the genuine condition wherever required with virtual collaborations (AR/VR/MR- yeppar.com 2020).

Student Choice and Independence

Students can now access a variety of content, from multiple sources available in web sites and can choose based on their areas of interest, and even sources of accreditation.

Blended Learning and Collaborative approached to teaching

We are now seeing integration of classroom and online teaching within the scope of blended or hybrid learning where classroom time is reduced with substantial time being used for online learning. During online classes, emphasis was on enabling students to learn through questioning, discussion, sharing of perspectives, analysis of content from multiple sources, and instructor feedback. The faculty is no longer responsible for delivering all of the knowledge or even providing all of the sources for learning – but maintains a critical role as guide, facilitator, and assessor of the learning.

Learning Flexibility {Anywhere- Anytime} Student Self-Directed

Students are fully capable of managing their own learning and have a self-directed approach in education. The availability of free open educational resources, combined with social networking enables large numbers of students to access knowledge and feedback on their learning on real time basis.

Multimedia and Open Educational Resources (OER)

Digital media, YouTube videos such as TED talks are increasingly being used as open educational resources in the form of short lectures, animations, simulations, virtual labs, virtual worlds and many other formats enable instructors and students to access and apply knowledge in a wide variety of ways.

New Assessment methods

Digital learning leaves a permanent record in the student contributions to online discussion the collection, storing and assessment of student online activities. Peer assessment involves students in the review of each other's work, providing useful feedback and promoting competition.

Review of Online Learning literature across various teaching situations

Using Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATS) to gauge student's comprehension and assess student's learning and performance. It is essential for faculty and trainers to use a variety of classroom teaching techniques such as Flipped Classroom making students exposed to content that is shifted outside of the classroom via readings, instructional videos, individual or collaborative activities, or a combination of these. During class hours, rather than lecturing, significant portion of the time is used for practice, application exercises, discussion-based activities, team-based learning, or other active learning techniques. Digitally evaluating written work, use of learning management tools, using Clickers as an interactive technology to enable faculty to pose questions to students, collect and view the responses instantly of the entire class is a new way of engagement and creating excitement around learning. Virtual classroom with use of mobile devices and tablets, teaching with technology white papers is also a viable alternate to other suitable methods. Recognizing who your students are, understanding their prior knowledge on the subject (intellectual, social and emotional dimensions) impacts learning and performance in the virtual classroom.

The pandemic situation demands tech-savvy and highly skilled educators. Students should be encouraged to use different educational apps and should be provided with easy, effective and interesting study materials by the educators to drag student's attention towards E-learning (Vishal, 2020).

In the interconnected globalised world, the pandemic has not only affected lives but also had a strong impact on various sectors. Internet-based teaching is relatively new for most universities in India and has been thrusted upon by the emerging circumstances prevailing due to the pandemic. In response, many educational institutions have started offering online classes/courses and some have shifted their academic calendars to cope with this extraordinary situation. Blended learning models could be a mainstream and take over as the norm in the future learning and education (Takako et.al 2020).

The pandemic swept through the world affected many aspects of human endeavour: from the decline in industrial production to the re-adjustments in the academic calendar of all educational institutions globally. Student's perception of the effectiveness and credibility of the online learning program yielded the highest mean score (3.77), and challenges that students encounter during the online teaching and learning received lowest mean score (3.51); on a 5 points Likert scale these scores are appreciative. E-learning is growing, and the trend is likely to continue as more institutions are expected to join the rest in offering online courses to the ever-growing number of students (John, 2020).

In this pandemic situation of Covid-19, learning can now be realised online and knowledge can be transferred virtually using multiple media. Online learning is beneficial because it is instantly accessible and offers flexible scheduling. In the past, students of rural areas were missing many of the opportunities that their urban and suburban peers had taken for granted. Online Learning encourages more productive use of time which keeps individuals safe (Pravat, 2020).

The students look forward to ICT (Information Communication and Technology) integrated learning and as it enables them to use internet and catch up with lessons from the comforts of their homes. This impetus in students calls for lecturers and administrators to have adequate ICT infrastructure and student support services to make learning meaningful and enjoyable for all. There is no doubt that massive technological advances in the world demand a paradigm shift in way we approach our educational goals and aspirations (Wahib, 2020).

To ensure an effective and productive online program, students must not only know how to cope up with the fast-paced online classes but they also need to have a sound computer and technological skills to learn from online lectures (Adnan & Anwa,r 2020).

When it comes to curriculum development, due to its advantage of using technology for delivery over distance and time, OOL has both the potential and the need to advance to the forefront of the educational sector and can supply a solution for HE curricula to meet the emerging learning needs of DNS (Airina, 2020).

It is important to conduct a usability evaluation of the popularly used tools for the purpose of online education delivery, more so because the education delivery mode has shifted to online only. The usability of the learning tools, therefore become an important aspect for ensuring the online learning to be effective and useful for the students (Pal & Vanijja, 2020).

Virtual Teams are different in that they are goal oriented or outcome-related compared with conventional online teaching where there are discussion posts, and students respond to teacher prompts (Angela, 2020).

Resistance to change will not help any educational unit across the world. They will be judged on their pace to adapt to the changes in such a short period and their ability to maintain the quality. The reputation of educational units is on stake and under scrutiny (Shivangi, 2020).

Strategies are urgently needed to build a resilient education system in the state that will ensure to develop the skill for employability and the productivity of the young mind. During the lockdown period, around 70% of learners were involved in e-learning. There should be made a uniform academic plan for the universities and colleges and also initiated a proper education continuity plan (ECP) to continue the learning process during pandemic. The Infra structural facilities should be availed to the education institutions which can regulate the digital learning process during future health emergencies. Interventions should be initiated through a targeted approach to create a positive space for study among the students from the vulnerable section of society (Nanigopal, et.al. 2020).

The problem with making any generalizations from research concerning blended learning is that it involves, well, blended learning. Not only has very little research to date focused specifically on blended courses or programs, blended learning itself encompasses a wide range and variety of implementations. The altered learning environments created by web-based technologies, not only eliminate barriers of time, space and arguably learning styles, providing increased access to higher education, they challenge our traditional notions of teaching and learning, and indeed higher education itself (Karen,2020).

Covid-19 has brought out a drastic change in the educational system not only in India but rather the entire world. Universities across India as well as around the globe have moved to the virtual classes suspending physical classrooms. Online education in India is at an early stage of development. In India, while this transition has been a mixture of both positives and negatives for most private universities, the government colleges and universities are still adapting.

While technology makes things accessible and easier, it can also be limiting, especially in India, where many students face a challenge in terms of access to the internet. Educational institutions and management who would be the future deliverers of online learning need more understanding of how students as well as teachers perceive and react to online classes as a learning mode to apply these approaches most effectively (Deepika, 2020).

CONCLUSION

The faculty, students and participants had to adapt to a complete shift in the learning process while the assessment, evaluation methodology and teaching methods underwent a sea change. Poor internet connectivity or infrastructure, parental pressure and increased work load added to the problems of all stake holders. Motivation was taking a beating owing to industry and economic trends and employment-job market indications. Inability to pursue practical field training and internship was seen a show dampener. Universities were clear they had to deliver the teaching solutions and complete the assessments and courses as per the calendar and hence the students had no option but to comply and go through the process to stay on float. Unlike the Universities, the corporates designed flexible learning solutions for their employees and linked it with on-the-job experience, productivity as well as engagement. The participants had to seriously commit to the learning process to remain competitive and survive during the turbulent times. Technology is changing the way we teach and learn, leading to the emergence of a new pedagogy, which continues to be the most popular feature as we master the art in the changed scenarios.

The new paradigm has many innovations and trend setters. The first is the continuous development of new knowledge, technology tools and applications for learning in the virtual world, analyse, evaluate, and apply the knowledge as it demands. The second issue is increased peer learning, self-directed and focus on symmetrical and asymmetrical learning methods! The increased emphasis on applying knowledge to meet the demands of the students, using skills such as critical thinking, independent-deep learning methods, the use of relevant information technology, software, and data. Thirdly, it means educating students with the skills to manage their own learning throughout life, so they can continue to learn after graduation. Life-long learning, especially given expectations about rapid developments impacting the future of work, developing a skilled workforce. With the pandemic likely to induce a global recession, demonstrable and certifiable skills will become key to securing and remaining employable in a VUCA world (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous). Making learning fun by gamification the so-called educational games can be very effective for solving some problems of virtual class rooms (Mariela, 2020) in a distributed or dispersed virtual classroom to address engagement and other problems;

1. Disciplinary problems
2. Concentration problems
3. Persistency problems
4. Motivation problems

Extended Reality (XR) is now a buzz word that is covering several new and emerging technologies being used to create immersive digital experiences. Use of virtual, augmented, and mixed reality will enhance the learning experience, as always, student engagement is critical to success. Providing the best possible experience for the learners, leveraging AI-powered learning platforms will spur personalization, development of content, and answer key questions (www.immersivelearning.institute).

Prior to the pandemic situation, most Indian universities had not invested adequately in online and virtual platforms and neither laid emphasis on faculty development in the online-virtual world and hence had to catch-up and adapts to avoid disruptions.

The case study highlights the high attendance for online-virtual classes, higher engagement with experienced participants, the corporate participants making best use of flexible learning platforms. The MBA graduates and diploma students were motivated to complete the course and pursue a career in the corporate. Online classes have increased the load on learning, more peer to peer interactions, enhanced pace of learning and hence student motivation is key to achieving course outcome. Adapting to new tools and technologies, bringing variety and gaming is the essence for engagement and student experience. This practical experience and case study is a case for enhancing the profile of Faculty since the old methods and competencies wouldn't work in the emerging world of education and learning. Lastly, the shift is to outcome-based learning in an evolving world with technology driving learning and results.

Questions from the Case Study

1. What impact does internet connectivity have in the learning process and evaluation?
2. Are changing teaching methods and access to learning sources is making teaching complex and calling for new dimension in faculty skills?
3. Technology is taking over the human element in the teaching process.
4. The flexible learning styles and expectations are driving university education in to R&D mode to stay relevant?
5. Student motivation and needs required to be factored to deliver tailor made syllabus and curriculum
6. Traditional teachers are being replaced with technocrats with basic knowledge by good facilitation skills to engage students in online class rooms?
7. Has Covid driven a permanent change in the teaching delivery process?
8. Do students prefer digital content to text books and other traditional reading material for learning? If true what is the change expected going forward.

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