Online Education in Post-COVID era from Teachers Perspective: Challenges and Way Forward

Nar Maya Subba[1] and Dewan Rai[2]

[1]Department of Education, Nar Bahadur Bhandari Government College, s.narmaya@yahoo.com

[2]Department of Commerce, Sikkim Government College, Namchi, Kamrang, South Sikkim, raidewaniso@gmail.com

Abstract

Online Education or E-learning plays a significant role in the Indian education system all over the country with the outbreak of covid-19. All the Educational Institutions like Universities, Colleges, and Schools are closed down. There are no other options to teach students rather the virtual mode of teaching. All the teachers started adopting various applications which are available on the phone such as WhatsApp, Google Meet, Google Classroom, ZoomApp so on and so forth. Without any training and orientation, they find technological hardship yet they have been teaching their students since the outbreak of Covid 19. Some students lagged and could not avail these opportunities due to economic constraints, geographical boundaries, and some other reasons. Still, teachers tried to teach their students by providing homeschooling. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to understand the teachers' opinions about online education. For the present study, a descriptive survey method was used. The study revealed that the majority of teachers opined that they have been constantly teaching their students without any training and orientation. Further, it is also found that most students do not have a mobile phone.

Keywords: online education, teachers' opinion, problems, & suggestions

Introduction

Education is one of the main tools. Education has impacted one's individual life. It is a lifelong process. Keeping in mind, Online education or E-learning has started all over the world since the outbreak of Covid-19. Online education has brought tremendous changes in school education. All the children from pre-primary to senior secondary level, students started learning online. Though they faced difficulty in the beginning when the offline class has been replaced by online classes.

There is no physical interaction between students and teachers. All the exams have been conducted via an online platform since the outbreak of Covid-19. Teachers are facing technological hardship to reach their students.

However, they are applying various methods of teaching like homeschooling, sending voice messages, texting in WhatsApp, etc.(Lone, 2017). Hence, the education sector in India is no longer bound to just classrooms. The online learning space in India is growing manifold. The central government's efforts to make digital learning available to students in every corner of the country are also adding the sector. Furthermore, India emphasized online training at the school level, college-based courses, and mid-level professional courses as well (Lone,2017, pp. 951).

Additionally, when the school and colleges closed down from 24th March 2020, the traditional classroom has been accommodated by online classes. However, simultaneously majority of people expressed that online class will converse education. As we know it, it is not encouraging, especially in India, where problems like lack of technology, digital training, and bandwidth, are posing challenges for many families and teachers (The New Indian Express,2020). The survey also shows that online classes are ideal when the class strength is less than fifteen. This

way there is a student-teacher connect as opined by Leena, School Teacher (The New Indian Express, 2020, pp.3). She also expressed that over 80% of teachers found it difficult to connect emotionally with children during online classes. "The teachers are facing difficulties in conducting online classes due to a lack of proper training and development for doing online classes. Technical issues are the major problem for the effectiveness of the online classes" (Kulal, Abhinandan & Nayak, 2020). According to Unified District Information System for Education 2019-20 (UDISE 2019-20) as cited in Radhakrishnan, Vignesh, SenSumant & Nihalani,2020), one in four teachers in India was trained to use a computer for teaching. The share of such teachers was even lower in government schools. Further, in India, only 15% of teachers were trained to teach using a computer in schools managed by the government.

Review of Related Literature

According to Hindustan Times (2020), it is found that over 60% of children are unable to access online education opportunities, the main cause is the non-availability of the network, the inadequate number of smartphones, and difficulty in handling apps for online learning. According to (Kulal, & Nayak,2020) to conduct online classes without training teachers are satisfied with their performance. In addition, smartphones or laptop is one of the main issues of rural students, and network issues is another main problem for both rural teachers and students (Kulal, & Nayak,2020, pp.5). Further, According to (Rahayu & Wirza, 2020) mentioned that the WhatsApp group is the favorite platform used to teach online stated by 93% of teachers. In addition, 44 teachers agree and strongly agree that an online learning system is useful for teaching. (Todd, 2020) "found that initially, teachers rated many of the problems as serious, but that they quickly found solutions such as dividing lessons into a greater number of shorter units. However, problems

remained with identifying suitable stimulating activities and marking students' assignments. Teachers were ambivalent about the benefits of online teaching by citing practical advantages but also highlighting difficulties in achieving some English language objectives and in gauging student reactions". According to (Elsa Rosalina, Nasrullah & Eka, 2020) in their findings, they stated that WhatsApp is only the medium used by the majority of teachers for conducting online learning activities, then google classroom, Zoom app, and Telegram during this pandemic situation. Further, "the teachers felt hardship for implementing online learning and they divide into three parts. Teachers are in the support of facilitation such as internet connection, students' gadgets specifications, and internet quota and the learning process like less communicative when the activities are carried on because the teacher and students have limited time to interact with each other, cannot elucidate in detail about the material, and cannot feel and control students' affective factors when learning process".

Research Questions

1. How is the Status of Online Education?

2. What is the opinion of teachers with regards to online education?

3. What is the problem faced by teachers with regards to online education?

Objectives of the Study

1. To understand the status of online education.

2. To know the opinion of teachers about online education.

3. To find out the problems faced by teachers with regards to online education.

Methodology

For the present study, 83 school teachers were chosen on a random basis. For the selection of samples. A simple random sampling technique was used. The descriptive method was also used. The questionnaire was set for both headmasters & teachers of different schools in Sikkim. After finalizing the questionnaire, the investigator collected the data via Google forms. The data were recorded in excel sheets and analyzed by using frequency and percentage.

Results

Basic Information about Teachers

Based on the data collected from teachers the present study revealed that the majority of male teachers 65.06% have participated in the survey, while 34.93% are female teachers. Further, 39.75% of teachers are from secondary level, 33.73% of teachers are from senior secondary level but only 26.50% of teachers are from primary level. Moreover, the majority of teachers 47.01% are teaching the age group between 11-16 years of students, while 28.9% of teachers are teaching the age group between 17-20 years of students and 24.09% of teachers are teaching the age group between 5-10 years of students. The results are shown in Table.1.

Platform used by Teachers' regarding Online Education

Based on the data collected from teachers, the present study shows that majority of teachers 90.4% are using e-learning in their teaching. However, about 9.6% of teachers are not using e-learning in their teaching. It may be due to rural area's students might not have a mobile phone. Further, the majority of teachers 60.2% preferred to use the WhatsApp platform, while Google Meet is used by 24.1%. Meanwhile, Zoom App is used by 7.5%, Voice clip is used by 7.2%. However, only 1% of teachers used Google classroom. Furthermore, only 31.32% of teachers have attended online training regarding e-learning. However, 68.7% of teachers have not attended any

online training regarding e-learning. It can be seen from the data that the majority of teachers have been teaching their students online without any training since the covid outbreak in 2019. They also reported that 50.6% of students usually perform tasks like uploading assignments in time to pass the exam; PowerPoint presentations performed by 7.2%, fill out the quiz form performed by 6%. However, only 36.1% of students performed well in online tests to pass the exam. From the analysis of the table, it is interpreted that most of the students may not be serious with e-learning. The results are shown in Table.2.

Techniques adopted by Teachers for Evaluation

From table 3. We can see the techniques adopted by teachers for evaluation. They make their students fail based on the following criteria; those who are inactive and not serious in a class by 31.3%, those who do not fulfill require criteria by 13.3%, those who only put their attendance expressed by 31.3% and those are performing good in the class reported by 15.7% teachers. In addition, the majority of teachers 38.6% assess their students based on active class participation; level of knowledge in a taught content by 25.3%, while by asking questions 24.1%, uploading assignments on time by 7.2%, and by submitting project work on time by 4.8%. Further, the frequency for assessing the students learning within one semester; the majority of teachers 67.5% opined that several times, twice in a year by 20.5%, just once by 6%, and any other by 6%. They also communicate with their students when they are about to fail; 47 (56.6%) teachers opined that they would communicate via voice call, by informing their parents20(24.1%), and they would communicate via WhatsApp 16(19.3%).

Techniques to Make Online Teaching Interesting

From the analysis of data, it can be interpreted that teachers make the online teaching interesting to the students based on sending voice clips which are related to contents expressed by 60.24%; by providing video class presentations and sometimes narrating stories by 48.19%, puzzle's math games by 36.14%, uploading videos, images and animations related to topics by 30.12%, by making interesting PPTs to justify certain concepts by 24.9%, by making them motivates before begins the classes by 21.68%, by engaging them in activities like poem recitation, and singing rhymes by 16.86%, by asking questions in the class by 12.4%, and Share some YouTube videos related to the topics by 12.4% of teachers. It can be observed from the data majority of teachers make online teaching interesting by providing audio and videos which are related to topics. The results are shown in Table.4.

Opinion regarding Online Education

While considering the overall opinion of teachers about online education, it can be seen from Table.5. Teachers have various opinions like online education is not useful for those students who belong from destitute family backgrounds and remote area's students opined by cent percent teachers. The state does not have well-trained teachers for online education reported by cent percent of teachers. Further, difficulty in teaching them practical based subjects expressed by cent percent teachers and internet connection is very poorly responded by 93.97%. Furthermore, online education is not helping the majority of students, especially in the village area opined by 90.36%. Meanwhile, in our State where most people are still below the poverty line and students cannot afford mobile phones opined by 80%. However, online education is somehow good for upper-level students and for those who have their phones. At the primary level, it is tough for both students & teachers reported by 75.90%. It lacks the concentration of students because everyone has a

different studying environment and if they need any clarification on a certain topic then if the parents are illiterate the students lack on studies expressed by 75.90%. Online education is not completely explainable to slow learners opined by 74.69%. It is very hard for teachers as even if they give their best, the students take it very lightly and think they are on vacation. We are not able to assist students individually stated by 69.87%. It can be also interpreted that students are not interested in listening when the teacher starts to explain the contents reported by 66.26%. It is helpful in this pandemic time but offline is more convenient expressed by 63.85%. Meanwhile, online education is not effective & students do not take the class seriously opined by 60.24%.

Further, they also expressed those offline classes are by far easier for the teachers stated 51.80%. If the online education model is being used in the education sector first of all the students should be aware of the technical use of the systems and they should be provided the necessary training etc. opined by 50.60%. In addition, most places face power outrage reported by 49.39%. It is kind of a good experience but not able to connect with them all at a time expressed by 39.75%. It is not effective; it decreases the knowledge of a child stated by 39.75%. Meanwhile, lack of knowledge with regards to handling mobile phones especially parents in rural areas expressed by 39.75% of teachers. According to the analysis of data, the majority of teachers are not content with online education, they opined that it is only for this pandemic situation rather they prefer to teach offline. Further, they also expressed that one of the reasons is the majority of students do not have a mobile phone. It can be seen from the data that the main reason may be internet issues and power outrage.

Teachers Helping their students

The data from the survey found that teachers helped their students by homeschooling cent percent; the majority of students use their parent's phones expressed by 92.77%. In addition, making a personal call, peer learning, taking help from neighbors and panchayats responded by 91.56%, and providing notes regarding the respective lesson reported by 69.87%. Meanwhile, supply a hard copy of explanations once a week expressed by 60.24%. However, contact their parents opined by 49.39%, meanwhile, ask them to use others phone which is available nearby opined by43.37%. Furthermore, by contributing of old phone stated by 24.09%, and managed through their cousin's contact no reported by 18.07% teachers. Based on the analysis of data it can be observed that the majority of teachers are helping their students by providing different sources like mobile phones, a hard copy of notes, homeschooling, etc. So, the students may not feel that they are lagging in terms of their education due to shortages of mobile phones, etc. The results are shown in Table.6.

Problems faced by Teachers with regards to Online Education

Based on the table. 7, it can be interpreted that problems faced by teachers with regards to online education; while, poor internet connection stated by 38.6%, of which student rarely attend the class expressed by 36.1%, and some students do not have mobile phone reported by 36.1% of teachers. However, irregularity in the class stated by 26.5%, students are not serious in online teaching opined by 22.9% of teachers. Furthermore, the lack of concentration was expressed by 18.1%, and students use to be inactive in online class 14.5% of teachers. In addition to this, teachers faced challenges due to online teaching stated by cent percent of teachers; students do not listen to teacher expressed by 4.8%, power outage opined by 1.2%, and irregularity in online class 1.2% of

teachers. From the data, it can be observed that these problems may make it teachers inconvenient to teach their students though they showed a positive attitude towards online education.

Suggestions were given by Teachers with regards to Online Education

Teachers have mentioned some suggestions for making online education effective as highlighted below. To ensure proper training to teachers and availability of e-learning materials at root level suggested by 80% of teachers. If students and teachers will be given training and providing good internet connection. Online education would lead to better ways recommended by 50% of teachers. Further, the support from parents, stakeholders and policymakers also played a significant role to strengthen the online education suggested by 30% of teachers. In addition, 45% of teachers further suggested that to ensure audio-visual class pictures and conduct the online test, as well as exam, must be taken frequently.

About 60% of teachers recommended that teachers need to coordinate with one another to make online learning effective. Furthermore, teachers have to work hard and give ample knowledge by using several unique techniques to make effective online education. Meanwhile, 20% of teachers recommended that phone distribution to poor students.

Discussion

The present study observed that only 31.32% of teachers have attended online training regarding e-learning after the covid 19 outbreak. However, 68.7% of teachers have not attended any online training to date. It can be seen from the data that the majority of teachers have been teaching their students online without any training since the covid outbreak in 2019. A similar finding was found by (Yang, 2020) who found a lack of training in online teaching skills among primary & secondary school teachers before the outbreak of covid-19. Further, the finding also

showed that the full adoption of online teaching methods and comprehensive training in online teaching skills was only conducted in response to the control of this epidemic. In addition, findings reported that 55.3% of the teachers received relevant training. However, 36.07% of teachers had not yet received training.

The present study revealed that the majority of teachers 90.4% are involved in e-learning. Further, the majority of teachers 60.2% preferred to use WhatsApp. This is also found by Rosalina, Nasrullah & Elyani (2020) who reported that "WhatsApp is the media that is mostly used by the teacher for conducting online learning activities". In addition, the present study indicated that cent percent of teachers expressed that online education is not useful for those students who belong to destitute family backgrounds and remote area students. A similar finding was revealed by Rohaya & Thirza (2020) majority of teachers expressed that online learning is not effective. The present study also reported that 50.6% of students usually perform tasks like uploading assignments in time to pass the exam. It is contrasted in the study of You & Kang (2014) as cited in Rahayu & Wirza (2020) who found that students who are less passionate about learning online have also substandard quality work or they submit their assignments lately.

Furthermore, online education lacks the concentration of students because everyone has a different studying environment and if they need any clarification on a certain topic then if the parents are illiterate the students lack on studies expressed by 75.90%. Somewhat finding is revealed by Savenye (2005) who found that to maintain the students' "motivation to keep active in online learning is one of the challenges". In addition, the present study observed that lack of knowledge with regards to handling mobile phones, especially parents in rural areas expressed by 39.75% of teachers. It is contrasted in the survey conducted by The Times of India, which shows

"the growing acceptance of online education across various rural areas in India. Further, it is also reported that 11% of rural families brought a new mobile phone during school closures. While, 2% of students in rural India received study material through WhatsApp" as cited in (Seth, 2021).

Summary

The data of the 83 school teachers of Sikkim revealed that the majority of teachers are in favor of online education till the COVID situation gets normal. However, they also stated that online education is not effective for students who belong to destitute families and especially those from rural areas of Sikkim. Findings also indicate that majority of teachers expressed that they are finding it difficult to teach practical-based subjects. The study also observed that the main problems and challenges faced by teachers are internet issues and frequently power outrage, especially in rural Sikkim.

Table 1

Demographic Information of Participants

Variable	Category	Frequency (Percentage)
Gender	Male	54(65.06%)
	Female	29(34.93%)
Level of School taught by teachers	Primary School	22(26.50%)
	Secondary/Elementary school	33(39.75%)
	Senior Sec/Higher Sec	28(33.73%)
Age Group	5-10	20(24.09%)
	11-16	39(47.01%)
	17-20	24(28.9%)

Table. 2

Participants Responses regarding E-learning

Questions	Response	N(Percentage)
Do you use e-learning in your teaching?	Yes	75(90.4%)
	No	8(9.6%)
Which e-learning platform do you usually use?	WhatsApp	50(60.2%)
	Google Classroom	1(1%)
	ZoomApp	6(7.5%)
	Google Meet	20(24.1%)
	Voice clips	6(7.2%)
Have you received any online training regarding e-learning?	Yes	26(31.32%)
	No	57(68.7%)
Which task do your students usually perform to pass your class?	Upload assignment	42(50.6%)
	PowerPoint Presentation	6(7.2%)
	Fill out the Quiz form	5(6%)
	Performing good in online test	30(36.1%)

Table.3

Participants Suggestions

Questions	Response	N(Percentage)
What would you say, which students are most likely to fail your classes?	Those who are inactive and not serious in class	26(31.3%)
	Those who do not fulfill the required criteria	11(13.3%)
	Those who only put their attendance	26(31.3%)
	Those are performing good in class	13(15.7%)
How do you assess your student's progress?	Uploading assignment on time	6(7.2%)
	Submitting project work on time	4(4.8%)
	Level of knowledge in a taught content	21(25.3%)
	Active Participation in class	32(38.6%)
	By Asking questions	20(24.1%)
How often do you assess your student's learning within one semester?	Just once	5(6%)
	Twice	17(20.5%)
	Several Times	56(67.5%)
	Any other	5(6%)
How do you communicate when a student is about to fail an internal exam?	I would communicate it via WhatsApp	16(19.3%)
	I would communicate via Voice call	47(56.6%)
	By informing their parents	20(24.1%)

Table.4

Participants Responses

Question	Response	N(Percentage)
How do you make online teaching interesting to the students?	Share some youtube videos related to the topics.	10(12.04%)
	By making interesting PPTs to justify certain concepts.	20(24.09%)
	By asking questions in the class.	10(12.04%)
	By engaging them in activities like poem recitation, and singing rhymes.	14(16.86%)
	Uploading videos, images, and animations related to topics.	25(30.12%)
	Puzzle's math games	30(36.14%)
	By sending voice clips that are related to content.	50(60.24%)
	By making them motivated before beginning the classes.	18(21.68%)
	By providing video class presentations and sometimes narrating stories.	40(48.19%)

Table.5

Participants Responses regarding their Attitude towards Online Education

Question	Response	N(Percentage)
	Online education is not effective & students do not take the class seriously.	50(60.24%)
What is your opinion regarding online education?	Internet connection is very poor.	78(93.97%)
	It lacks the concentration of students because everyone has a different studying environment and if they need any clarification on a certain topic then if the parents are illiterate the students lack on studies.	63(75.90%)
	Online education is not useful for poor people and remote areas.	83(100%)
	Students are not interested in listening when the teacher starts explaining the contents.	55(66.26%)

In our State where most people are still below the poverty line and 80% of students cannot afford a mobile phone.	83(100%)
Online education is not helping the majority of students, especially in the village area.	75(90.36%)
The state does not have well-trained teachers for online education.	83(100%)
It is helpful in this pandemic time but offline is more convenient.	53(63.85%)
Most of the places are facing power outrage.	41(49.39%)
Online education is not completely explainable to slow learners.	62(74.69%)
If the online education model is being used in the education sector first of all the students should be aware of the technical use of the systems and they should be provided the necessary training etc.	42(50.60%)
It is kind of a good experience but not able to connect with them all at the same time.	33(39.75%)
We are not able to assist students individually.	58(69.87%)
Online education is somehow good for upper-level students and for those who have their phones. At the primary level, it is tough for both students & teachers.	63(75.90%)
Difficulty in teaching them practical-based subjects.	83(100%)
It's very hard for teachers as even if they give their best, the students take it very lightly and think they are on vacation. Offline classes are by far easier for the teachers.	43(51.80%)
It is not effective; it decreases the knowledge of a child.	33(39.75%)
Lack of knowledge with regards to handling mobile phones, especially parents' rural areas.	23(27.71%)

Table.6.

Participants Response regarding affordability

Question	Response	N(Percentage)
How do you help those students, who cannot afford mobile phones?	Homeschooling	83(100%)
	Contact their parents	41(49.39%)
	Providing notes regarding the respective lesson.	58(69.87%)
	The majority of students use their parent's phones.	77(92.77%)
	Ask them to use other phones who are available nearby.	36(43.37%)
	Making a personal call, peer learning, taking help from neighbors and panchayats, etc.	76(91.56%)
	By Contributing of an old phone.	20(24.09%)
	Supply a hard copy of explanations once a week.	50(60.24%)
	Managed through their cousin's contact no.	15(18.07%)

Table .7

Participants Responses regarding Challenges of Online Education

Question	Response	N(Percentage)
What are the main problems usually faced by you in online education?	Students do not listen to the teacher.	4(4.8%)
	Students rarely attend the class.	30(36.1%)
	The lack of concentration.	15(18.1%)
	Irregularity in the class.	22(26.5%)
	Any other	12(14.5%)
Do you face any challenges due to online teaching?	Yes	83(100%)
	No	00
What might be the reason?	Power outage	1(1.2%)
	Poor internet	32(38.6%)
	Students are not serious….	19(22.9%)
	Some students……	30(36.1%)
	Any other	1(1.2%)

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