

## COVID-19 and Paradigm Shift in Education

Mehraj Ud Din Bhat\*

### Abstract

*Education is a process of human enlightenment and empowerment and helps in the emancipation of mankind. Being ignorant is not shameful, but being unwilling to learn is. We are living in a technological era where everything is available on one mouse-click whether it is education or something else. Nowadays, entire world is suffering from corona virus which compels us to confine at homes. As we are battling with the worldwide coronavirus outbreak, the education sector is going through a huge change. Students across the country are being tutored via e-learning with daily classes and online school programmes. Corona virus brought a paradigm shift in the way professional and non-professional courses are being taught. Online learning is gaining more ground as most countries begin to introduce online platforms for continued learning. The adoption of the digital platform to impart teaching is gaining significant traction. This is the necessity to secure the future of education. Therefore, the need of the time is to change the process of teaching and learning according to the needs of the learner with careful cultivation of experiences. Researcher has used secondary sources which include research papers, videos, articles and books in order to collect data. The present paper focuses on how paradigm shift has taken place in teaching leaning phenomena amid Covid 19. The paper also attempts to draw attention on the role of ICT in paradigm shift of education. This research study reveals the robust innovative changes in the teaching and learning phenomena.*

**Key words:** *Paradigm shift, Education, Corona virus, Teaching, Learning.*

### INTRODUCTION

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) (Lai, Shih, Ko, Tang, & Hsueh, 2020). The disease was first identified in December, 2019 in Wuhan, the capital of China's Hubei province, and has since spread globally, resulting in the ongoing 2019–20 coronavirus pandemic (Lai et al., 2020). The global outbreak of the coronavirus has caught us completely off guard, so much so that even our day-to-day activities have been disrupted. Within no time it spread like a wildfire in all over world. Till date, this virus

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\*Mehraj Ud Din Bhat, Department of Education, University of Kashmir.

has taken thousands of lives forced to the world to shut down its schools, colleges, offices, and all other institutions as well (Tam & El-Azar, 2020). In our day-to-day activities, education is one of the main institution of our life which has been completely disturbed by the circumstances raised by COVID-19 (Broz, 2020). In such circumstances, we have to ensure that educations must be delivered by one means or other. A key aspect of coping with Covid-19 is to ensure that services are being delivered to whatever extent possible. While for professionals across industries it has been an easier transition as many of them work on their laptops and smart devices even in office. They can simply plug in at home now. Of course, what is missing is face to face personal communication which will get restored as and when things are back to normal. But students have had to make far bigger adjustments as learning has always been in classrooms which they cannot go to now. Besides, many of them may not be that well equipped with technology tools to avail of remote learning (Srinivasan, 2020).

### **Paradigm shift in education**

The corona virus (declared pandemic by WHO) has changed the means for the education for the millions around the globe. New solutions for education are coming forth and bring forward much needed innovation. The Education sector has seen a huge change and will see much more in the near future. Children across the country are being tutored via e-learning with daily classes and online school programmes (Roy, 2020; Sharma, 2020; Srinivasan, 2020).

As schools across the globe grapple with a health crisis, an unprecedented number of students, families, and faculty have been disrupted. According to UNESCO, more than one hundred sixty countries have closed schools worldwide, impacting millions of children and youth, With the hour-by-hour changes in response to this global health crisis, universities across the globe are making drastic changes in a very short period of time, shifting traditional face-to-face course content to online content, seemingly overnight. This is a paradigm shift that is potentially shaping the future trajectory of campus life (Broz, 2020; Collegepond, 2020). COVID-19 may bring in a complete paradigm shift in the way professional courses are taught. The adoption of the digital platform to impart teaching will gain significant traction (Chomal & Saini, 2013). Virtual master classes and interactive sessions, free access to global courses and various databases, career mentoring, counseling support are some of the options premier education institutions offer to boost the skills of current and prospective students (Sharma, 2020).

Till today, universities have been making the transition to online learning over the past few decades with some institutions leading the charge: Ohio State University (since 2008), University of Illinois-Chicago (since 2007), and University of Florida (since 2001) are among the universities that have primarily offered their well-known brick-and-mortar campus environments with limited supplemental online courses to often a few thousand students and some institutions utilize an online learning platform like Coursera to offer online courses, specializations, and degrees. However, with a drastically different scale and with a much quicker speed, precipitated by precautionary measures taken by schools and governments over the past few months, universities and colleges have closed and announced plans to move classes to online/remote learning by utilizing digital platforms such as online learning management systems, email, and video conferences (Bhat, 2020). As we look back in history, when we have faced momentous changes like this in the past, we never quite go back to business as usual. The internet, and with it, online shopping, changed the brick-and-mortar retail environment; the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers forever changed the banking and mortgage industry; and 9/11 forever changed air travel.

As the world changes around us, and time seems to move faster, the ability to start continue education is increasingly being limited by the ability to shift to a 100% in-person learning engagement. Due to covid-19, students and the teachers are unable to move onto campus and have embraced online learning. This move to online learning has proven to be not only a place-shift, but also a time-shift and a speed-shift (Singh & Mishra, 2017). It allows people to learn at their own pace, but also at their own place. Just in the past few months, we have witnessed universities make some immediate and fundamental shifts. These short-term adaptations could have profound long-term implications for how we plan for future learning spaces. We need to allow for our universities to not only address the crisis at hand, but also to plan for a long-term vision to evolve the higher education environment while looking to a future state of a more blended learning experience (Collegepond, 2020). If we take the best practices, we have learned from institutions that have successfully implemented blended learning programs, harness the knowledge base within our university system, and amplify the impact for our future generations of workers, this would be a true paradigm shift in higher education that would transform its trajectory for generations to come (Sharma, 2020).

### **Role of ICT in Paradigm shifting**

Technology has stepped into the breach and is playing vital role in educating future generations (Mair, Barnett, Warren, & Brunner, 1998). The Digital India vision of the

government is emerging as a vital instrument for solving the present crisis due to Covid-19. The lockdown has accelerated adoption of digital technology. Business houses, educational institutes, analytics, computer, data management methods, and online education solutions have been forced to work in tandem and improve in quality and delivery time to handle such situations (Ratheeswari, 2018). This is an ideal time to experiment and deploy new tools to make education delivery meaningful to students who can't go to campuses. It is a chance to be more efficient and productive while developing new and improved professional skills/knowledge through online learning and assessment (Chomal & Saini, 2013; Gunjan, 2014; Sharma, 2020 ) It is also a fact that use of technology in education is resulting in different concepts in the system, for instance the move from teacher-centric education to student-centric education. Teachers are taking virtual classrooms and various online tools today allowing them to make the engagement between the teacher and students as close to a real in classroom type experience, as possible. These tools are also making the teachers and parent meetings as well as staff/management meetings more time and cost saving while providing the necessary interactivity (Singh & Mishra, 2017).

Pedagogy in digital education is a significant link between course content, educationists, technology, and course-takers. Democratization of technology is now an important issue, comprising internet connectivity, telecom infrastructure, affordability of online systems, availability of laptop/desktop, software, educational tools, online assessment tools, etc. But it is a fact that technology-based education is more transparent and does not make a difference in front and back benchers or girls and boys (Bhat, 2020).

Looking at this challenge of colleges and schools being shut, Government of India, as well as state governments and private players have regularly been publishing information on various initiatives undertaken by ministries like MHRD, Department of Technical Education, NCERT and others to support and benefit youth/students.

A few of the initiatives are SWAYAM online courses for teachers, ZOOM online courses for UG/PG and other students, MOOCs for nontechnology courses, e-Pathshala or e-content containing modules on social science, arts, fine arts, natural and mathematical science, CEC-UGC (Consortium for Educational Communication) YouTube channel, Vidwan – a database of experts who provide information to peers and prospective collaborators, National Educational Alliance for Technology (NEAT) – an initiative by AICTE based on the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model to enhance the employability skill among students, in collaboration with Education Technology Companies and National Digital Library (NDL), a repository of learning resources with

single window facility. Many noteworthy initiatives have been taken up like Spoken Tutorial, Free and Open Source Software for Education (FOSSEE), e-Yantra, and Google Classroom (Srinivasan, 2020).

It is fact that the government of India as well as state governments, through their various ministries/departments, have created infrastructure to deliver e-education. These include National Knowledge Network (NKN), National Project on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL), National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NMEICT), National Academic Depository (NAD), among others. All these improve our ability to connect easily with institutions and enhance our access to learning resources. For instance, NKN provides high speed network backbone to educational institutes in India.

The online assessment agencies/private business houses are also improving the product, considering the limited bandwidth and social distancing, by managing remotely proctored examinations/skilling assessments. Even GMAT like examination is gone online (The Hindu, 2020). Basic requirements like sturdy education delivery platforms, IT infrastructure, PC/Desktop/Mobile for end-delivery, and assessment tools have been planned and more improvement is underway. The use of technology in teaching or recruitment is leading to a new era wherein the best of faculty will be available from across the globe to students. Education quality will be gauged not just by the quality of faculty but will also have quality of IT infrastructure and familiarization of the faculty with digital teaching technologies as important parameters (Pearson, 2003).

The physical infrastructure of academic institutions will have less impact on the quality of education and thus directly on the cost of education. Review meetings, parent-teacher meetings, subject conferences will be location agnostic. The real vision of the new education policy for liberal education will get executed. It is possible that in times to come, a student may be allowed to carry out courses from any College/ University based on quality of teacher and fees for the course irrespective of his location and finally will get degree from the home university where he / she got registered or from the university where he has taken maximum courses, resulting in a balance of economics of good education (Singh & Mishra, 2017).

## **CONCLUSION**

Covid-19 has risen tough and challenging times in which much of the business of the entire world is disrupted. Among all, the education sector has been badly disturbed due to the closure of all educational institutions for the precautionary measure. In such

circumstances, we have to ensure the teaching and learning phenomenon does not stop. For this, ICT has played vital role till date. ICT has helped to improve the educational environment while providing enrichment in the learning experience. The infusion and integration of the new information technologies in the teaching and learning have had an immense impact on the educational environment. We have seen from the last few months the robust innovative changes in our teaching learning process which leads paradigm shift in education.

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