

## E-Learning – A new

### Paradigm

“Technology is an important tool for educators. It can help affirm and advance relationships between educators and students, reinvent our approaches to learning and collaboration” writes Ted Mockrish.

During the Pandemic times, the education system has experienced paradigm shift from “Brick to Click” mode. While this was herculean task achieved by all stakeholders of education, there are concerns that Online Learning is not as effective as Face-to-Face learning. While our experience till now might support the argument but this assumption ignores some clear benefits of Online Learning. In the given circumstances, we can't ignore the fact that live Online learning with teachers and peers is far superior to pre-recorded learning or no learning at all.

While the transition to online teaching in this Covid 2020 year was sudden, experts and schools around the world are sharing incredible work on the ways to redesign teaching -learning with a combination of online and offline modes of teaching. With no visible end to covid free world , the purposefully designed online learning modules are adding whole new dimension to student education. Resources for online learning are exploding world wide and being readily shared among the cadres of educators. Training developers need to integrate technology seamlessly into the curriculum instead of viewing it as an add-on facility. Even the parents of children sitting with their wards during these Online classes seem to have been enjoying these classes which help them to understand the pedagogies being adopted by the teachers. Parent tutoring is now in sync with Teacher tutoring thereby making learning process easier and interesting for the students. We must look at an

overall perspective and arrive at a win-win situation for all stake holders involved.

Digital divide is a challenge for the educators to deal with. With many students from disadvantaged section unable to access online learning through expensive devices, teachers are trying to reach these students through whatsapp on their mobiles which almost every parent has irrespective of their financial background. Such children are being tutored personally on phones and through asynchronous lesson plans sent by their mentors. DDD (Device Donation Drives) have been very successful and many teachers and students have donated their extra devices to enable many students to attend classes. Restricting teaching or use of technology for learning can be detrimental to the most vulnerable population of students. Technology is an important tool for educators which help affirm and advance relationships between educators and students, reinvent our approaches to learning and collaboration, shrink long standing equity and adapt learning experiences to meet the needs of all learners. Rather than avoiding, educators need to be turning towards technology as one of the tools to support student learning specially during such emergency remote teaching times. Live online learning is truly the better option that is needed to keep students on track. Dr Marcus Specht rightly observes “The students of the future will demand the learning support that is appropriate for their situation or context. Nothing more nothing less. And they want it at the moment the need arises”.

The concern of screen time can also be tackled with planning of timetable with a blend of synchronous and asynchronous lesson plans. There can be break of ten minutes between the academic periods wherein the students can be doing some eye and physical exercises and meditation (resources sent by teachers thru asynchronous mode). Online classes can start with a short “Well Being Period” having

invocation of God and some heart-to-heart teacher and peer talks which children miss the most. Although computers are an important component on online education, much of the actual work is completed offline. The students still read books, do their worksheets, write assignments and assessments in their notebooks. They submit their work in number of ways to teachers. Some of them are written, scanned and uploaded via any online “drop box”. There are plenty available nowadays like E-mail. Google Forms, Mentimeters, Padlet Wall. The parents have to , of course, work closely with their children , making sure that the children are understanding and completing the assigned tasks.

Rather than learning in isolation on one’s own, online learning with peer clusters facilitated by knowledgeable faculty is actually quite effective. Students are expected to participate in online discussions and be an active member of work groups. So, independent learners in distance education are not necessarily lonely learners. Without online learning, in emergency times like 2020, young students will miss critical foundational learning related to conceptual understanding, key competencies and development of their wholesome character.

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