



DIGITAL LEARNING EMPOWERING EDUCATORS TO TRANSFORM TEACHING AND LEARNING -A CASE STUDY

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Education and Technology: An Overview

Technology plays an important role in imparting education during this global pandemic era. There are bigger challenges faced by the educational institute to facilitate teaching and learning due to the changing pattern of education, the introduction of blended learning and the advanced use of technology in the entire education ecosystem. The traditional model of teaching has been taken over by modern blended teaching and learning or hybrid culture. There is a need that due to the new system of education, administration including IT-staff, in collaboration with academic leaders has to learn and transform by adopting new ways of doing things. Earlier there was only limited use of technology by the faculties in the management institute, which was only confined to delivering class and more on accessing information through computers for preparing the material for teaching. But now it is evident that the process of digitalization has changed the mindset of the instructors.

XYZ institute is renowned for imparting quality education to the students. Well known for grooming professional, inculcating ethics and values among the student, preparing them to be a good professional and a human being too. The Institute ranked good among the various leading institute, but after the COVID -19 the educational system was put to a halt, as the students could not turn up for the regular classes. Dr. Ritika, Assistant Professor in the Department of Management was working with the XYZ Management Institute for the last 6 years. Her performance was good and she was known for her honesty and dedication. But, gradually she felt that her competency mismatch with the changes in the delivery of education during COVID 19 pandemic. She was disturbed that she might not be able to match the growing need of adapting to technology. But unfortunately, this was not only her problem, but the challenge was for the entire faculty fraternity to learn and perform in this challenging situation in a limited time period. The management has also smelled this issue and was planning to take-up the charge of grooming their teaching and non –teaching staff to handle and use the digital mode of operation.



Digital technology and Challenges faced by the education sector

In fact, this crisis brought a paradigm shift in the entire education delivery system. The management discussed the issue and convinced the employees that COVID 10 has also opened up the opportunity for many of us to learn, unlock our minds for growth and is the time for becoming more flexible and adaptable for survival. The pivot of discussion was to find a solution for the bigger challenge i.e to handle the uncertainty about resuming the regular classes for the students. There was also a big challenge to maintain the good mental health of the students which is an equally important concern for the educational institute. It is oblivious that students' engagement in the regular class will keep them active, mentally fit and physically too. So, now that there was a great role for faculties to play in terms of mentoring and regular counseling of the students.

Emerging technologies shaping the future of education for sustainability

In order to handle these challenges, the institute decided to plan the strategies for the benefit of the students and the faculties like Dr. Ritika, The management arranged online classes for the students so that they may not miss their academic sessions. The faculties were trained for applying teaching tools for imparting learning among the students. There have been a lot of efforts in exploring new ways of doing things in the new digitalization era. The management has introduced the use of digital learning platforms in their processes of teaching and learning. Initially, many questions that arise in the mind of the Dr.Ritika as to how to upload the study materials, how these materials will be prepared and most important as how to use the different learning tools for making the class more interactive and lively manner.

Management in their meetings discussed that there is no denying the fact there are some limitations in taking the class online but still, the decision was taken to train the faculties to handle the problems related to guiding the students, monitoring their performance etc. and as there was dependence on the technology in the delivery of the class.

Educators using the Tech Solution for imparting education:

To overcome this situation the management has decided to utilize the in-house IT team and faculties for this purpose. Planning was done to impart faculty development programs for the faculties of different departments. The faculties also took it as an opportunity to learn and groom and cooperated in this in-house FDP session. Dr.Ritika took the personal interest to actively participate and attend the FDP session to learn about how to use the ICT tools in the classroom. The FDP focused on imparting training, the FDP session was designed logically to move from problem to the solution. Dr.Ravi, as Associate Professor of the Management department, took the lead role to impart the training for enhancing IT Skills among the faculties. Dr. Ravi was the



most trust employee and he was a very energetic person always come forward with a solution for organization. It was acknowledged for his dedicated efforts and continued to win 'Employee of the year' awards from the Institute for many years. Hence, the management trusts him and other IT experts of the Institute to find a solution to this problem. Their team decided to first know about the requirement and problems of the faculties of every department. The faculties discussed their difficulties in adopting the online mode of teaching. The faculties were made aware of the moodle and Learning Management system. Hence a Practical training session was planned to provide hands-on sessions for uploading contents, using interactive features of moodle and doubt clearing. The uploading of contents includes PPT, video, Lectures, Assignments, case studies, bullet notes, class notes, hand notes, MCQ for the students, journals and articles so that the students can access as per their convenience and time.

Another problem for management was also to conduct the examination online and evaluating the papers of the students without the physical examination. To resolve this purpose the discussion was conducted and a demo was given for uploading Question papers in LMS. The hands-on session was arranged for easy learning and implementation. The new approach of rubrics for evaluation of papers was introduced.. This approach was really appreciated as it gives a lot of transparency to the marks which were allotted to the students. This kind of preparation and training by the management helped Dr. Ritika to cope up with this situation and now that she was more confident to work as, she was techno-savy to work in the changed methods. The management decided to organize various events in the online platform so that the student can be engaged and provide ample opportunity for the students to grow and learn through an online activity like poster competition, creative art, speech competition, debate, and quiz through different online events. It was an excellent step taken to groom the students and develop along with the continued online education so that they can develop their skills and become ready for industry and corporate fit.

Imparting creative ways of guiding students for adopting the digital learning route

Looking into the need for the changing phase of learning and teaching Dr. Ritika and other faculties were trained as to how to set an online meeting, recording sessions, uploading on YouTube etc. These initiatives enabled the students even after the class, so that they can access the material if they missed the class of the concerned faculties. The faculties were guided to use the online tools for taking the class like the use of Mentimeter, answer garden, quizzes, testmos, Kahoot The emerging ICT and the Internet has influenced the strategy of imparting the knowledge among the students. The institute successfully launched the advanced version of its Digital Education Platform to provide a better quality of Education with a focus on Out-comes based education, more Interesting Classes using Digital Education Tools, like Polling, Quiz



program, Group Discussions etc. and Virtual Labs. Regular training of the faculty members for the modern and engaging ICT tools like Kahoot, Answer Garden, FlipGrid, Padlet, Podcast, Moodle, Slido, Vevox quizizz and many more breaks the monotony of the classroom and keeps the flow of learning smooth and engaging. With these initiatives Dr. Ritika learned to use the tools effectively in her classroom. Now that she was quite confident in her delivery. The development of E-Learning is a dynamic learning mode. Dr Ritika, also got the chance to learn the different tools during her classes of UG and PG program.

The institute was not only limited in providing online education but also provided internship to the students, so that they may enhance hand skills experiential learning experience. The students performed very well and learned a lot to get real-time industry exposure.

Dr. Ritika and Dr. Ravi in the guidance of the university guided the students to attend the MOOCs and make the students qualify the online quiz competition and participate in the extracurricular activities to keep them active and engaging. With the support of the management, they took the responsibility to organize different online panel discussions. The students got the opportunity to learn from industry experts and specialists.

This is how the institute has adopted the new digitalized way of imparting learning and guidance to the students. These initiatives were from academic delivery to the evaluation, placement and internship and grooming. Though in this time COVID 19 has brought unprecedented damage to the society and education sector, with smart thinking and quick decision of management, the situation has again adapted itself to the New Normal. This has been possible because of the good leadership of the management board and the creative thinking of the faculties and the students.

Technology transformation empowering the education model

It is advent that technology has made a lot of innovations in the field of teaching and also brought drastic changes in the education system. There has been a paradigm shift in the entire teaching and learning. The institute is a live case as to how in an adverse situation, the in-house people and resources were effectively utilized for combating the challenges of teaching and learning. There is no doubt that technology- enabled to use of interactive teaching. The changing role of education is inevitable with the introduction of multimedia technology and the spawning of a technology-savvy generation of youths.

Dr. Ritika was really proud of her institute that how fast the management has helped to train her and she can also overcome the mental stress from which she was suffering from. She discussed with her colleagues regarding the changing educational system. There have been rapid changes



from the conventional education system of teaching and learning to the new modern methods of technology- based learning.

Future of Education in Digital Era: Smarter Learning tools and technology

The management and the faculties discussed further that is the hybrid model will match the need of the students? Can this model be the future of education, where student learning is the prime motto? What will the future of education? Will this digital learning tools and technology fill the gaps where traditional classroom teaching falls behind? The question to our policy-makers are looking for an answer that if this ‘Digital Learning’ adopted by the institute makes students educated enough and make them corporate fit? Is smarter Learning tools and technology enable students to develop effective self-directed learning skills. Do you think the purpose of engaging students with the digital learning tools and technology will sharpen critical thinking skills, which form the basis for the development of the intellectual capacity of the students

Discussion Question:

1. How the institutes handle the challenge of filling up skill and competencies gap among the faculties to involve in the teaching-learning process? Can digital learning be the future of education and imparting skills in the digital age?
2. Discuss how the XYZ Institute has handled the crisis and use it as an opportunity for developing employees and students? Do you think the learning tools and technology enabling the digital Learning to Makes Students Smarter?