

New Normal Academia: Experiences and Practices: A Case let: MAKAUT, WB

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Abstract

Tremendous spreading of Novel Coronavirus gives rise to serious concern about universal academic structure. We all know Novel Coronavirus has an unfavorable impact on education comprising, study hampering, as well as a diminished approach to teaching-learning and research facilities, but many academicians and learners depend on technology to make sure to carry on with online teaching-learning throughout this crisis period. To the requirement for entire higher academic organizations, academicians, as well as student community to acquire hi-tech, blended learning and enhance their automation ability in line with the appearing international realities and trends in the academic sector. The study investigates the new practices and experiences of higher educational academicians during COVID-19 and after a new normal situation as well as SWOT analysis of new normal academic practices.

Keywords: Covid 19, Technology, Blended Learning, Global Trends, New Normal

1. Concept

Education is the pillar of a developed society. Due to this Novel Coronavirus infection gives rise to serious concern about the entire academic structure along with research activities. From school-level educational institutes to higher educational institutions adopt the online and blended mode of teaching-learning practices to maintain and continue uninterrupted teaching-learning process globally. Now a

day entire academia transmits from non-technological or semi-technological era to new technology-enabled phase. It's a revolutionary change for the entire academia. As the strategic direction of the entire new normal academia becomes a high priority we require mature, well-trained, and properly shaped academicians for the growth of the society. This is essential fundamentally to redecorate academic processes towards the perspective of contemporary technologies, enhancing proactive positive students

to a better quality of education, especially in the present crisis phase.

The Novel Coronavirus widespread has developed various challenges to higher education in the nation. Before higher education operation, conventionally centered on conveying face-to-face high –end interaction has been adversely affected. Smart technology-based teaching learning is introduced from the past of the 21st century and is progressively being explored as well as fabricated by various researchers and educators too. Many institutions, universities implement proper Learning Management System (LMS) & Learning Content Management System (LCMS) to keep records and mobilize academic as well as administrative works. Now maximum academic organizations ensure appropriate utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) & digital library to enhance knowledge development of academicians & student communities.

2. Objective

The prime intention of the paper is to assess the result of the Novel Coronavirus on higher education and analyze the adaptability of new methods and techniques by the national academia for the new normal situation as well as find out major pros and cons which help academicians to identify adequate tools and techniques and implementation of those in an appropriate time for better teaching-learning experience.

3. Literature review

Due to this pandemic, everything goes change rapidly in national academia.

Initially, the change occurs due to the crisis situation in Indian higher education, efforts made by the government, problems faced by academicians and learners in the new teaching-learning process (Bhate, 2020). Now we can truly consider this flow as appropriate Smart Teaching & Globalization in academia. Because many academic institutions and universities start a collaboration with international academic organizations to provide upgraded international standard teaching facilities to the student community as well as they like to offer courses to international students through online self-paced learning mode. When we assess the impact of Coronavirus Pandemic on the educational sector, we found the adverse impact of Novel Coronavirus on the academic segment is huge and the necessity for every academic organization, university, academicians, and students to obtain hi-technology, and upgrade their digital-oriented knowledge and skills in line with the emerging universal drift and actualities in educational guidance. All stakeholders in the academic sector have to develop distributive leadership and vigorous policies to cope with the post-Coronavirus period (Onyema et al., 2020; Zita, 2020).

Due to this crisis situation, learners have had no entry to academic campuses for academic purposes. As it is hard to forecast future entry to academic campuses for learners or physical classes, academicians are inspired by the authority to readress all feasible new hybrid educational procedures in order to prosper innovations. New innovation and collaboration in higher education during the crisis period help to face challenges for all educational organizations as well as academicians (Dua et al; 2020). We notice in this new normal situation those new hybrid techniques to apply to present and future trends

of teaching-learning (Iwanaga, Loukas, Dumont, & Tubbs, 2020). A hybrid in-person and technology-enabled instructional approach, which is famous as blended instruction, is likely to remain the most prudent upcoming educational representation for assisting student communities to appropriate learning (Dua et al., 2020). The meta-analysis showed that when a conventional analysis is compared to other lab-based approaches, that is, 3D models, projection, digital media-based approach, and hybrid approaches, the students' scores are methodically as well as statistically identical (Wilson et al., 2018). The academic higher authorities encouraged academicians to select the educational method on the basis of its purpose, not the inherent attributes of the method itself (Iwanaga et al., 2020). The use of new technology trends in education is discussed in line with the industrial revolution eras. Then, the modern extensive technologies' effect on teaching-learning practices are examined within the framework of changing academic patterns and teaching approaches in accordance with the Industry 4.0 period (Keser & Semerci, 2019). Govt. & higher educational authorities must evolve innovative strategies to make sure that all academicians & learners must have sustainable access to teaching-learning throughout pandemics. The post-Covid-19 education is expected to be the digital mode of education that may start a new era in the education sector of India (Jena, 2020).

Many institutions and universities start electronically enabled academic practices in tutelage during the lockdown phase of Novel Coronavirus widespread. In many cases, we notice that various academic institutions and universities offering inter-disciplinary, job-oriented, short-term online courses to the student communities as well

as academicians and corporate professionals to enrich their knowledge and updated them as per new normal situation demand. Draw a holistic delineation of ongoing electronically enabled academic practices during the lockdown phase including initiating the alliance between change management process and electronically enabled online academic summons in the educational system amid the Novel Coronavirus pandemic so as to control the persisting educational disruption and therefore, confirm the continuation of academic activities and discourses as a general course of action in the academic system (Mishra, Gupta, & Shree, 2020). The transformation and flexibility in teaching and learning at national higher educational institutions and universities offer substantial benefits for all learners consolidate into electronically enabled-teaching learning to function well in the digitalized period. Nation's young people can stay at the cutting-edge of contemporary technological trends in the global market ((Pham & Ho, 2020).

In 'new normal' with electronically enabled-learning and blended instruction in national higher academic strata during the Novel Coronavirus widespread, university academicians and learners regardless of their attitude toward self-paced instruction, e-learning, have an upgraded experience with electronically enabled instruction. Many nations take a lead role in the way universally in managing the adverse effects on educational practices due to this Novel Coronavirus pandemic (Quach & Hoang, 2020). The Novel Coronavirus widespread has brought about scope to introduce electronically enabled learning, self-paced learning fully into the national higher education. Encourage the amalgamation of both 'classroom-based face to face' mode and 'distance instruction' mode of delivery

for higher education courses. After the Novel Coronavirus widespread has ceased to be a big threat, many national higher educational institutions and universities will fix into a so-called 'new normal', with refurbished, more flexible, and reformed modes of academic practices. In the higher educational institutions and universities amalgamation of conventional modes, for example, posting or sharing study materials for learners in rural areas and the latest like online or blended teaching-learning, 'distance learning' assure that there is 'No one left behind' in the period of the crisis (Pham & Ho, 2020).

Now VR is another feather in the crown of new normal academia. Academic organizations will be benefited from preferable convenient to potential and practical high technologies; this will assure likely to teach and train in proper virtual ambiances that are absurd to visualize in physical classroom-oriented face to face instructional practices, like accessing into virtual laboratories, envisioning instruments, commercial plants, or even medical scenarios. The huge possibilities of accessible latest virtual technologies will fabricate it practicable to break the extremities of formal traditional academic practices. Potential teaching-learning practices and circumstances should not be just only aimed to capture skill and knowledge, so it is indispensable to plan and design these academic ambiance from a constructivist address to secure full instructional benefits (Martín-Gutiérrez, Mora, Añorbe-Díaz, & González-Marrero, 2020).

A country like India faces some risks, discrimination and also opens some new opportunities and avenues for academic practices during the times of Novel Coronavirus widespread. The augmentation of the web of internet and the surging

demand of hybrid-technology facilitated smart-phones, computers have paved the way to re-consider the theory of online education and different educational institutions, especially in the level of higher education have actualized it in reality, but with passing of the days, this newly universalize mode of teaching-learning seems entwining with considerable significant issues and challenges in the developing countries where poverty and malnourishment are major threat. As it is envisioned as one of the mode of education in near future across the globe, it requires special attention on the part of higher educational department to go with the rhythm of world education ((Das, 2020). Some important measures are taken by Govt. of India to deliver seamless academics in the entire nation during this pandemic Covid-19. Some of the post-Covid-19 trends which may allow visualizing the new standard methods of academic practices in India are outlined. Some effective propositions are also pointed to carry out teaching-learning practices throughout this crisis phase (Jena, 2020). Prioritization, budgetary resources, partnerships with industry-academia, the effective maneuver of the innovative contemporary human surveillance universal solidarity and a non-discriminatory approach, ensuring that enriched teaching instruction is accessible to all and the Govt. of India and different academic stakeholders have explored the possibility of academic practices by acquiring various digitalized technologies to deal with the setback. As of now, India is not yet totally well equipped to make new normal education reach all corners of the nation via digital platforms, the less privileged learners may suffer due to the presently available choice of digital platforms, but various higher educational institutions, universities, and Ministry of HRD, Government

of India are constantly trying to come up with an appropriate solution to resolve this operational complication (Corlataan, 2020; Jena, 2020).

Present mode of higher education has also drastically changed. The technology that we might have adopted 3-4 years later has to be adopted by us urgently now due to Covid 19 crisis. It's high time that the new methodologies of teaching will have to be adopted by both academicians and learners. Both are changing and getting adapted to the new challenges (Sinha, 2020). Initially due to insufficient infrastructural and superstructural issues academicians and learners faced a problem, but later on higher educational authority scrutinize those problems in detail faced by the participants that will also aid the government to adopt the suitable measures and new educational policies to smoothen the education of the next generation (Das, 2020).

Our national higher educational authority's ultimate target is to escalate the proportion of academic lecturers to lead and train a peer group of accelerating, industry-oriented, civilized learners and to keep them up to date with new trends of university instruction. The suitable application of new educational technology not only during the Novel Coronavirus widespread took place, but also through this critical epidemic phase, we realized more and more about the seriousness of information technology in everyone's life, on the whole in the area of academic and training (Nguyen & Chung, 2020).

4. SWOT analysis of new normal academia

Every change has some positive and negative angles. Mainly in the academic sector,

we need to find out strengths and weaknesses to utilize them properly, because academicians are the pillar of national development. If we find out those academic strength areas which are developed due to new normal situation, then, we can easily convert those strengths into future opportunities in the long run basis and try to minimize weakness to deal with upcoming threats.

4.1 Strengths

- 1) Collaboration with various stakeholders from other national academia, business, government, community, and media and breaking boundaries.
- 2) Increase numbers of virtual academic events like FDPs, Webinars, Conferences, etc.
- 3) Proper utilization of distance learning, MOOCs, blended learning & other Skills Development Programme (SDP)
- 4) National academia successfully enters in the globalized market to attract more foreign students.
- 5) Initiate healthy Institutional competition to ensure individual productivity.
- 6) Increase ultimate technological use in the field of academia to ensure a tech-enabled teaching-learning environment.
- 7) Widely exploitation of social media platforms to convey information, proficiency, and skill.
- 8) Govt. also provides handholding support systems & schemes for smooth implementation of new teaching learning ambience.

4.2 Weaknesses

- 1) Social isolation sometimes is a demotivating factor for both academicians as well as student community.

- 2) Unable to develop teacher-student bonding.
- 9) Academic institutions and universities provide essential academic support and when they are closed, learners are become deprived of a chance for overall growth as well as development.
- 10) Lack of access to hi-technology & effective internet connectivity for continued teaching instruction practices.
- 11) Unequal adaptation to digital teaching-learning practices was also noticed.
- 3) Mental blockage of different stakeholders. Mentally unprepared teachers students interaction for online education was also noticed.
- 4) Sometimes students get bored and feel monotonous during online classes. It's a challenging job for individual academicians to develop an interest in this mode.

4.3 Opportunities

- 1) Enhance the scope of more collaborative research programs.
- 2) Ensure availability of more interdisciplinary courses for knowledge development as per industrial need.
- 3) Enhance the use of more remote labs as per requirement.
- 4) Open new avenues of job opportunities in the field of academic and related sectors.
- 5) Promote the scope of hybrid teaching-learning.
- 6) Promote tech enable international standard teaching-learning environment.
- 7) Ensure more demand for MOOCs.
- 8) Encourage academicians to learn new courses for better qualitative teaching.
- 9) Through virtual platforms enhance more international educational programs and events participation.

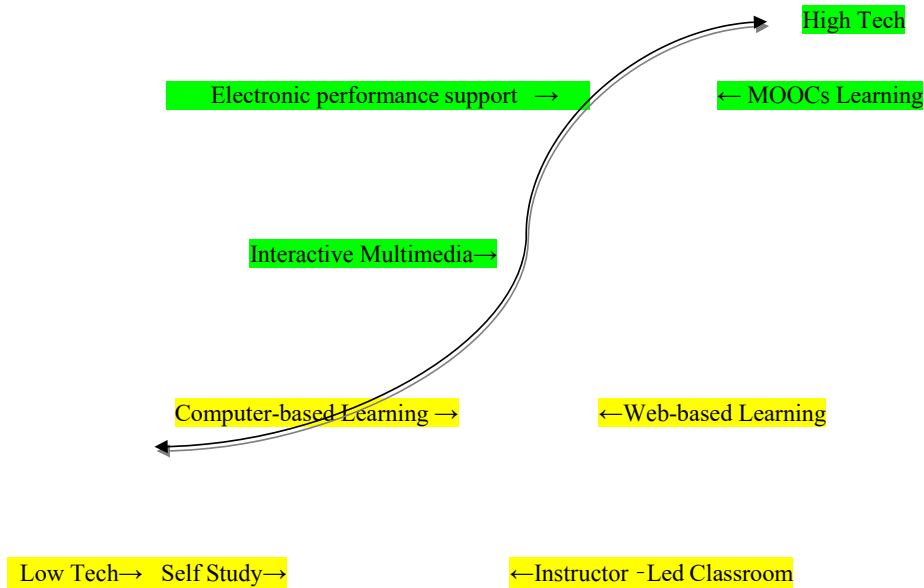
4.4 Threats

- 1) Weak internet connectivity.
- 2) Inadequate technical knowledge and mental blockage of electronic equipments usage.
- 3) Due to new work frame mostly maximum academicians facing work time related issues. Which a major reason of psychological depression.
- 4) Facing new challenges to deal with work life & personal life balance.

The above diagram explains the progression from low technology-based teaching-learning to hybrid teaching-learning. It also illustrates the different electronic enable teaching-learning solutions –from web-based learning to computer-based learning, to interactive multimedia, to MOOCs learning system (Source: Course Communication; Electronic Enabled Training Systems, ISTD)

5. A case let :- MAKAUT, WB

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad University of Technology (MAKAUT), W.B is a West Bengal-based state govt. technical university, formerly it's known as West Bengal University of Technology (WBUT, W.B). In the past, the university was provided with the power to affiliate the private colleges. Few years onwards they start in-house academic programs as well. MAKAUT is trying to move towards the direction of future global teaching-learning patterns and create a multi-cultural global environment. They are trying to make differences between other states' universities. The higher authority of the university makes collaboration and sign MOUs with various public & private organizations for realistic



knowledge exchange, which is beneficial for students and helps the students' community to frame their careers in a useful manner. Not only student-centric activities, but MAKAUT also encourages the teacher community to pursue various courses online to brush up knowledge as well as make prominence in an interdisciplinary approach. Two months alteration academicians have to submit the completion of online courses reports to the respective authority. They also encourage the research activities and provide scope to the students as well as academicians. Not only academic development, but the MAKAUT also encourages employee's extracurricular activities like cultural skills, etc. for the development of team-building spirit but also reduce communication gaps with higher authority. Sometimes these kinds of activities motivate the employees because everyone wants recognition within the organization. The Management Department of MAKAUT also offers MDP & contributes to various survey activities associated with various

private and government organizations for well being of society. During this new normal situation MAKAUT, many times has organized webinars, FDPs, SDPs, orientation programs, and many more. MAKAUT is also associated with various community development related activities & they successfully lunch a community radio station within the campus. Many more activities which make a unique identity of MAKAUT. They encourage some projects of virtual labs as well. The university encourages local schools and affiliating colleges for various kinds of projects preparation and presentation of those projects. During Covid 19 pandemic the university makes huge sanitizers and distribute them among the local people, which meet the scarcity of the demand for hand sanitizers & develop a community kitchen, prepared food, and distributed it to those needed persons.

University higher authority provides many assignments to academicians and helps them to realize the requirement of individual up-gradation is mandatory now

a day for long run visibility of the organization. Because new generation's demands are different as well as their visions are also different, because job environment changes every day frequently and they have the right to learn new approaches for long-run survival. MAKAUT makes association with Coursera & Edex platforms for teachers-students mutual learning for continuous development. A selective group of academicians is assigned to analyze the SWOT analysis of individual students in multi-dimensional angles as well as psychometric analysis. Which help academicians to identify individual student's characteristic based on that they counsel and teach the individual student in an appropriate manner. The higher authority of the university provides adequate technical out-source guided support to the academicians to develop high technology-based academic contents for students for better understanding and generate interest for the development of each topic. University organizes required training program for academicians to deal with the meet the need of new normal academic practices.

Due to this pandemic situation all are suffering from psychological pressure as well as panic-stricken about uncertain future, to deal with this psychological crisis MAKAUT has decided to give some extra effort to build up effective interpersonal relationships with all departmental academicians and students' community, which is effective for deal with this pressure and it's also kind of lesson for students to learn as a would-be professional 'how to handle a crisis, develop a mentality of teamwork as well as maintain a good relationship with team members and lesson for emotional leadership for the development team spirit.'

In the present educational world, private-government institutions' co-existence

is an important factor. The government institutions also have to compete with private institutions for existence as well. Govt. job off-course gives job security, but for organizational visibility and long-run existence, the employees have to enrich their knowledge and encourage various activities and events which may help the students' community to learn practically many things.

6. Conclusion

Education is a fundamental right for all. Without the solid foundation of good qualitative educational support, society is going to lagging behind day by day. Academicians need to play a role like 'a guru' not only a teacher like ancient times. Academicians should help their students to develop moral values, ethics and equip them for the new normal requirement of the industry. In this new normal academic sector, all academicians face new challenges for delivering services to their students. This new normal era is significant for 'Globalized academia'. Geographical boundaries are no more hinder for global certification. The wide scope is open for continuous up-gradation for all academicians for smooth survival. Stakeholders in the academic sector have to emerge robust strategies to deal with after-Covid- 19 periods.

All stakeholders' mutual harmony is a key way for success in the new normal academic sector. Immediate measures should be taken by the institutions to lessen the effects of the pandemics of various internship programs, on-the-job offers, and research-based projects of required fields. Encourage the amalgamation of both 'distance instruction' and 'classroom learning' way of delivery for most higher education

as well as interdisciplinary courses. This helps higher education institutes, academicians and the student community prepare a trouble-free adaptation towards the digitalized era.

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