From the Normal to the New Normal: Reflecting Metamorphosis in Pedagogies

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Abstract

The study aims to shed some light on pedagogical and learning issues that have cropped up during the pandemic for transitioning from traditional classrooms to entirely virtual learning. The study reflects how the paradigm shift can directly or indirectly affect the soft skills of all parties involved in the success or the failure of an educational system. An in-depth focus group discussion methodology was used to collect information in this qualitative study. Thirty faculty who taught online courses at the tertiary level were selected for the discussions. They provide significant insights about how the fully online learnings continued longer than the anticipated timelines impact the pedagogical value and the futurity of an individual's educational goals. The study shows that embracing the virtual approach in teaching can promote teachers' innovativeness by using various new applications and digital tools but bring new challenges for dealing with diverse learning styles.

Keywords: asynchronous communication, COVID 19, eLearning, extrovert, introvert, modes of communication, synchronous communication, virtual education

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Introduction:

The Covid -19 has grabbed the world so meteorically that the world has found a little time for taking preparation to receive the shock. Its impact in the educational sectors is much more conspicuous as rarely do the educational institutions of many countries have virtual learning management systems, eLearning units, and technically skilled professionals. Virtual education, which was already at play in the educational sector, has momentum like a rocket speed and comes to the forefront overnight by superseding almost all conventional teaching approaches. Pushing the traditional classroom pedagogies abruptly to the sidelines and making virtual education exclusive in mainstream education have forced many educators who have always been more into the classroom learnings to change their typical mindset and acquire a new skill set. They can now see the other side of the coin: some advantages that the physical classroom learning environment cannot offer. Creating virtual classes or teams and working with them remotely, even from hundreds or thousands of miles away from each other, are considered nearly blissful for them. However, many challenges keep cropping up due to the abrupt change of a well-set and broader teaching-learning landscape. The reality is that learners all are agog to go back to the physical classroom where they will have lots of social interactions, kinesthetic activities, emotional and affective responses.

Objectives

The main objective is to explore how prolonged online learning can affect the teaching-learning activities during this outbreak.

The other objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To investigate how the virtual teaching-learning tools can cause stress and anxiety for teachers.
2. To identify how it can impact the social interaction skills of both the learners and the teachers.

The Rationale of the Study

The Corona holocaust has immobilized life's movement, giving birth to a new world full of anxieties, fear, suspicion, and disorder. The existing social order and the trends are now melting before the flux and reflux of Corona's wave. Social distancing is a new phenomenon that has become a norm in every kind of communication. The virulent virus forced us to use all our resources to fight back by reshaping or remodeling many sectors' patterns and systems, including education. During the lockdown, the traditional classroom pedagogies abruptly have taken a backseat, and virtual learning has made its way to mainstream education. The sudden disruption requires many of the professionals to acquire a new set of skills. They start using different free online collaboration apps for working together on joint projects, regardless of their physical location. It is not a comfortable journey for various reasons.

The study will provide us with a new insight into some pedagogical challenges caused by the exclusiveness of virtual learning. Many educational apps have been created to fight the challenges, and they are continued to be upgraded with new features. These apps promise to change the face of education, and teachers are now bewildered by those apps' versatilities and functionalities. However, though endless customization suits both teachers' and learners' needs, whether the education through tech in the New Normal can be exclusive is still a question.

Research Question

The study has been framed around the following question.

1. How can the paradigm shift in the new normal cause disruptions and disappointment in teaching and learning?

Literature Review

The latest buzzword in education around the world during this pandemic is distance learning. In the past, distance learning involved corresponding tools such as correspondence courses, educational television, and video conferencing in the recent past. The postal system was the medium of communication between the educational institutions and the learners. In recent decades, distance learning involves all modern means of communication. These days, distance education, distance learning, e-learning, Web-based instruction, virtual schools, and online learning are used interchangeably to describe this broad, somewhat confusing, and continually changing field of nontraditional teaching (Carnevale, 2001; Saba, 2005 as cited in Rice 2006). It is synonymous with online learning, e-learning, or distance education, where students are physically separated from their teachers during instruction through online technology to facilitate communication and learning. (Foght, 2020). These online learning forms are far from the televised broadcasts and videoconferencing that characterized earlier generations of distance education (Means et al., 2010). Nowadays, distance learning can serve entire students populations that traditional classrooms do not by providing increased opportunity through choice, tutoring, and supplemental services. It can help students who live in remote areas, are hospitalized, or are homebound for health reasons in home school settings. It can also serve those who are professional athletes, are incarcerated, need flexible schedules for employees, to enrich their education, move at their own pace, or experience learning that fits their particular learning style (Bogden, 2003; Chaney, 2001; Patrick, 2004, as cited in Rice 2006). The current situation, in one sense, has forced us to embrace technology in all educational matters. The use of different software tools and applications such as Microsoft Teams, Google Hangouts, Zoom, etc., has soared up high among the team members, including in-office or remote employees. Most educational institutions have moved towards remote working speedily and, in some cases, also permanently. The upending of the prevailing education practices, models, processes, and quick-shifting from in-person to online learning have geared up the online education businesses.

In 1997, the Florida virtual school became the first online public school in the United States (Fox, 2006, as cited in Shaw, 2015). Since then, many online schools and students have flourished as technology advances (Shaw, 2015). Moodle and Blackboard are the two most popular Learning Management systems regardless of their costs and difficulties in implementing the services, and many educational institutions of the world are using them since 2014. According to Wikipedia, "as of January 2014, its software and services are used by approximately 17,000 schools and organizations in 100 countries. Seventy-five percent of US colleges and universities and more than half of K-12 districts in the United States use its products and services, and 80 percent of the world's top academic institutions reportedly use Blackboard tools, according to Times Higher Education Reputation Ranking."

Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment (Moodle), founded and developed by Dougiamas in 2002, is the most popular open-source software based on a freemium business

model. According to Wikipedia, "the stated Philosophy of Moodle includes a constructivist and social constructivist approach to education, emphasizing the learners (and not just teachers) can contribute to the educational experiences. Using these pedagogical principles, Moodle provides an environment for learning communities. It provides the necessary services free of cost, but we need to pay for them using advanced features. It is a great digital tool, but we must consider many hidden fees that crop up in different use phases. An educational institution needs to employ at least an IT specialist to get constant IT support as teachers, as laypeople may find it challenging to administrate it only by themselves. Blackboard, develop by Blackboard Inc., is a full-featured Learning Management System (LMS) but comparatively expensive. It is excellent in creating courses, uploading, and managing the materials for learners. However, the teachers need to be trained to use it correctly, and for ensuring the Blackboard tech support and training, a Blackboard specialist needs to be in continuous service.

The mushrooming of online schools and the overwhelming enrollment in those schools have raised the question of whether we need traditional classrooms. Some educators predict that in the future, teachers will replace online learning with classroom teaching. Research finding says that if learners are provided with the same learning materials, quality of teachers and resources as traditional students, they will achieve the same academic outcomes. (Kearsely, 2000, as cited in Shaw, 2015). Studies have shown that policymakers reasoned that if online instruction is no worse than traditional instruction in terms of student outcomes, then online education initiatives could be justified based on cost efficiency or the need to provide access to learners in settings where face-to-face instruction is not feasible. (Means et al., 2010).

Web-based learning has made possible all the teaching-learning activities just as in an actual classroom. eLearning units are responsible for promoting eLearning in those educational institutions by providing E-trainings to both the learners and the teachers. Along with supervising the electronic transactions' work processes, the eLearning unit helps the administrators and the teachers manage all resources and information on a single platform. The teachers upload the lesson plans, give them classes, make an announcement about the upcoming events, get them engaged in question-answer secessions, conduct examinations, and publish results. The pandemic has hardly obstructed the teaching-learning activities of those schools, colleges, or universities with Learning Management Systems and the eLearning unit. Many of them now are obsessed with the thoughts if, in the future, they need to worry about maintaining the educational establishments and office hours, buying the classroom and teaching materials, paying, and hiring the administrative and supporting staff. Social distancing is a new phenomenon that has become a norm in every kind of communication. A variety of virtual collaborative tools has been developed and used to ease that communication.

Many educators welcome the paradigm shift and see it as a strength of virtual learning to increase teacher-student contact. However, the educational institutions with entirely traditional learning and outdated faculties are now in trouble coping with the altered circumstances. One of the most significant challenges to implementing a virtual high school is training high school teachers who have experienced only traditional, face-to-face teaching to become virtual educators capable of designing practical Web-based courses (Roblyer & Elbaum, 1999).

Research on virtual learning conducted by Roblyer and Elbaum (1999) reported that many teachers felt that only the students who took responsibility for their learning and could learn autonomously could benefit from it. They also pointed out that although many teachers were concerned about the time required to do online activities, most were enthusiastic about working with other teachers in this new medium. Two significant issues of their research findings are that virtual learning is suitable for some students, and it is time-consuming to conduct online activities.

Physical classrooms' role is unparalleled in building interpersonal skills, instilling in mind a positive attitude, team spirit, leadership, and individual responsibilities. Though an individual's primary socialization occurs at home, secondary and developmental socialization mainly occurs at educational institutions. The in-depth research of Bandura (1977) into observational learning has identified that a great deal of education happens by watching the "live" models (real people around us), absorbing the information, and then later modeling their actions, attitudes, and emotions. Bandura's observational learning involves four distinct processes: attention retention, reproduction, and motivation. The procedures do not start functioning automatically in exact order when someone pays attention to people around him or her. The observer will have to be extrinsically or intrinsically motivated to retain and repeat the model's behavior or action. E-learning platforms cannot broadly represent social models. So, observational learning that encourages learners to take voluntary steps for modifying their previously existing schemas and relearning the mode of life does not happen through watching. According to Shoaf (2007), online learners have limited access to regularly engage face-to-face with their peers due to the absence of the physical classroom.

The mode of delivery in e-learning teaching should be considered to help learners achieve the intended learning outcomes. There are concerns among many educationists about the learning outcomes through e-learning mode of delivery as they find more limitations in e-learning modes of delivery than traditional ones. Still, research finding from 355 comparative studies shows a significant difference in learning outcomes, commonly measured as grades or exam results, between conventional and e-learning modes of delivery (Hrastinski, 2008). However, the teaching and learning activities happen in a physical classroom may not be fully executed in an online class. During this pandemic, as the study mode is exclusively online, many on-campus activities are being continuously redesigned to fit the off-campus activities. From this viewpoint, it is crucial to identify and select the delivery mode to help learners attain the desired learning outcomes.

One of the concerning issues of virtual learning is assessing learners' performances. The methods of assessing in online classes and the methods of assessing in physical classes are pretty distinct. During this pandemic, online exams have allowed learners to take exams from different places simultaneously. The problem arises when learners cheat on non-proctored online exams. Sometimes they use answer hiking software by tempering the webcam to cheat on non-proctored online exams. Online learners will have access to the entire Internet while learning, making high-stakes standardized testing problematic. Learners can look up answers on the web (and proctoring tools that promise security are often easy to get around). Therefore, you might want to move away from multiple-choice tests and consider other more authentic ways of assessing what was learned (Crosslin, 2018).

There is a growing concern if learners' same amount of emotion is found in online learning as in physical classrooms. Learners' emotions in a specific learning environment cannot be considered a different entity as it is an inseparable part of their thoughts, feelings, and actions. Once, people used to think that emotion and cognition activated separate brain areas. However, recent findings show that multiple areas involved in emotional responses and cognitive processing are all active at once. (Durby, 2018). The emotional response of learners in a particular learning situation speaks about their personalities, attitudes, feelings, temperaments, and motivations.

Methodology

The study involved a qualitative approach to collect information from the focus group. Due to the covid-19 situation, the focus group discussions were held online on two different dates. The predetermined sample size was 30, and in each secession, 15 participants attended. The qualitative understanding arose out of studying the individuals and exploring their perspectives in great depth. (Cresswell & Clark, 2013). In the discussions, semi-structured techniques were used, notes were taken, and the sessions were recorded for later use.

Instruments

The research was carried out by using the following tools.

Questionnaires

There were twelve predetermined open-ended questions and unstructured follow-up questions to go deeper into the discussions. The respondents did them voluntarily.

Discussions of the focus groups

There were two focus groups, and in each group, there were fifteen participant teachers. The discussions were held in Zoom Meetings.

Procedures

The time of discussions was preset, and the participants were split into two groups according to their convenient time slots. The links to the meetings were sent by email to the respective participants.

Data Presentation

Data from Focus Group

The group discussions were held online in an informal manner, and the participants responded to the semi-structured interview questions that provided a descriptive account of the study. They mentioned that the virtual classes relieved the teachers from the tedious tasks and time previously taken up by traveling and socializing face to face. Since the lockdown came into effect, they found plenty of quality family time that they never imagined before. It has reduced the overhead expenses with the help of digital network technologies, and they can run their offices and their activities virtually. In response to the Coronavirus pandemic, Google has offered many educational apps, among which Google Classroom is very popular with the teacher and the learners. The Zoom app

is another collaboration tool that is being used profusely for conducting online classes. They mentioned that though the apps are helpful for live-streaming classes, they have some limitations that we cannot ignore. These limitations involve some issues like organizing materials, editing assignments, sharing work, and security problems. The users of these free apps do not control the data or information put on the systems. The biggest problem with these apps is that teachers can export classes but not the courses. The educational institutions which already have the virtual management system and used the blended teaching approach found it relatively easier to move from that approach to entirely virtual learning.

Online education during the pandemic has considerably affected the learners' social activities. The wide-ranging social environments of educational institutions help learners develop their social skills through constant reciprocal interactions with their fellows, teachers, and other stakeholders. In face-to-face communication, learners find a more excellent opportunity to observe other people's behavior and actions and explore the cause and effect of that behavior and actions. Observation, a powerful learning tool, contributes significantly to the socialization process of an individual. In a class, some learners prefer kinesthetic learning or tactile learning. They require physical activities, movements, or hands-on learning for grasping a concept. eLearning classroom does not provide the learners with the environment in which the learners learn kinesthetically or tactilely. Nowadays, for experiencing high-quality teaching and learning activities, both the teachers and the learners like various educational settings. They consider outdoor learning equally important, like physical or virtual classroom learning. Outdoor education is separate, but it fulfills the complementary needs of learners. It is an issue whether the online classes are equally beneficial for the introvert and the extrovert learners because they are two different types of personalities. There are also ambivert and omnivert learners who are different in their characteristic traits. All learners threaten teachers if they do not plan their teaching-learning activities to cater to distinctive learning styles and needs. An interactive classroom is significant for ensuring the participation of learners of different abilities. Individual interests and needs can hardly be addressed in virtual learning as differentiating instruction based on the learners' different styles are almost difficult in online teaching. Teachers usually adopt objective-type methods in computer-based assessments, which are considered less valid, especially while testing the test takers' more in-depth insight, personal opinions, thoughts, and creativity.

Findings

The finding revealed that the opportunity of working from home allowed the teachers greater leeway in setting flexible work schedules. The teachers could also customize the working hours to meet the needs of the students. Nevertheless, many educational institutions not already blessed with online learning platforms could go beyond traditional learning. Teaching during this crisis as eLearning involved some other issues like buying servers, employing technical experts for constant technical supports, availabilities of devices required for online classes, strengthening the cybersecurity of networks, and technical expertise of teachers. Besides, mastering new skillsets is related to the time length and individual teachers' prowess of grabbing technology. Learning skills faster need deconstruction of the craft. Because of the complexities of learning a new skill thoroughly, one must proceed step by step by breaking down the craft into pieces to adopt and absorb it. Many teachers have tech-phobias, and they fear undergoing the metamorphosis. They regarded this change as a disadvantage that might make teaching-learning activities more difficult.

Their fears and concerns, hopefulness, and reliance have now become major educational issues. The study manifests that many teachers just started experiments with technology. They did not know how many training sessions would help them navigate the apps in systematic ways to conduct teaching-learning activities and how many motivational sessions would be required to adopt the new form of teaching. Though the information technology experts and the education leaders are buckling down to help them with their latest challenge, it can still be rightly predicted that it will take a few months or years to help them get accustomed to virtual system management. Many institutions had to create new funds to ameliorate the teachers' outdated skillsets, buy high-tech products, and ensure technology access. During the pandemic, the teachers started using different free apps for conducting classes, but they complained that many apps are created in social media formats and are not designed as full-fledged Learning Management Systems, and do not have LMS administrators. The apps may satisfy the need of many educational institutions during this self-isolation because they do not have the resources to use the Learning Management Systems like Moodle or Blackboard. Unless those apps are upgraded from free versions to full-featured versions, proper Learning Management Systems will be the better options for the teachers. However, it requires a huge IT investment that many educational institutions may find quite challenging.

It was reported that the learners struggle to cope with web-based learnings, not because of their disliking or fearing technology but because of the virtual learning environment not being compatible with their learning styles, needs, and capabilities. Teachers need to use a low-tech approach for those learners and adjust lessons to their learning needs. In academic institutions, learners with diverse backgrounds, cultures, characteristics, beliefs, and ideas find ample scope to learn about each other. That interaction influences their thoughts, opinions, behavior, attitude, and actions, and they may reshape or remold all those if they feel the inner urge. Alongside academic learning, social learning in educational institutions is occurring continuously. The whole process keeps a socially inept learner on the track of being socialized and eventually ensuring his eventful role in a society or community he or she belongs.

Individual interests and needs can hardly be addressed in virtual learning as differentiating instruction based on the learners' different styles are almost difficult in online teaching. Teachers can steer the conversation suddenly without understanding the emotion behind every action or information of learners. Direct eye contact, meaningful communicative gestures to express various feelings and thoughts, and affectionate touch are considered important vehicles for building rapport with learners absent in the virtual classroom. Teachers' direct interventions and interferences profoundly influence learners' rational- cognitive, and neurobiological aspects, which are impossible in a virtual platform.

It appears that virtual classes tend to be one-dimensional and primarily involve the lecture method. There is little scope for learners to have hands-on education or experience if the lessons are mainly about science and technology and involve a massive lab or fieldwork needed to be guided and monitored physically by teachers. To provide the learners with simulation and training to make them fit for real-life work are found to be absent in virtual classes. Teachers seemed to adopt a flexible approach in taking attendance, especially in two cases. Firstly, if the students face technical challenges and complain about slow Internet or no internet connection and mention any

ailment, they suffer in this new normal. A particular assessment tool is used to measure all kinds of academic abilities or skills in a given subject, so the assessment may not be aligned with the learning outcomes. In that case, the automated assessment process and test scoring give a wrong prediction about a learner's future attainments in his field of study. Though many virtual tools have subjective and objective assessment options, the test givers tend to opt for objective evaluation. Object type tests are easy to construct, less time-consuming, formulaic, and practicable. It can easily be set at random from the question bank once created in a particular course.

On the contrary, it is evident from the teachers' talk that students prefer computer-based assessment knowing that no linguistic ability or stress of cramming huge stuff is required for the test except some degree of retentive power. They also know they can answer in a fluke and get feedback without much delay after the examination. It is reported that sometimes online exams lack backup plans, technology backup kits, and proctoring preparations that include preparing the software, the hardware, and the security software.

Discussions

Bandura (1977) has pointed out that man's capacity to learn by observation enables him to acquire large, integrated units of behavior by example without building up the patterns gradually by tedious trial and error. He has further mentioned that emotional responses can be developed by observing others' affective reactions undergoing painful or pleasurable experiences. According to Bandura (1977), observational learning also occurs through the "verbal" instructional model (explaining or describing a subject matter for enhancing knowledge) and the "symbolic" model (learning from fiction and non-fiction characters from different types of mass media). More learning happens in everyday interactions with the "live" models in a vast social platform. Many learning theories explain how direct experience, reinforcement, or punishment lead to learning. Bandura (1977) has pointed out that it is difficult to imagine a socialization process in which the language, mores, vocational activities, familial customs, educational, religious, and political practices without models exemplify the cultural behavior patterns. Taking Bandura's theory into account, we may draw a logical inference that suspending face-to-face classes and providing education to learners exclusively online may cause deficits in students' social skills competency. Most teaching techniques in eLearning are either visual or auditory. That technique eventually denies the urge of a multisensory approach in which teachers can present different sensory stimulants to boost the learning activities. Learners grow up in a multisensory environment and, they use one or more of their sensory modalities by personal choice to respond to the requirement of learning or mastering an idea. Providing the learners with the opportunity to process ideas and information by using their touch, taste, sound, vision, and smell simultaneously can engage learners more effectively.

Field research, authentic learning activities, working on projects, and conducting case studies to find and solve real-world problems require outdoor education, and therefore, it has compulsorily been integrated into many curricula. Outdoor education helps learners understand the depth of concepts, enhances their interpersonal, leadership, and social skills, and ultimately makes them fit for all social circumstances.

Extrovert learners prefer social interactions and exploration of the surroundings. They require the outside world to flourish, and therefore, the virtual classes may hinder their social developmental process. Hudgeons (2020) opines that Extroverts feed off external energy and interaction with others, making synchronous courses an excellent option. However, connecting meaningfully with others in a live class of two dozen or more participants can be challenging. On the other hand, introverts prefer to avoid social interactions. They are reclusive workers and selective in choosing peers. A solitary environment is ideal for them as their learning can occur in a less stimulating situation. Online courses can be valuable for them as, in most cases, they can control their learning styles without being manipulated and dictated by other forces. According to Hudgeons (2020), Introverts tend to thrive in asynchronous classes to view, pause, and rewind course lectures as desired. When taking synchronous courses, introverts should consider looking over presentations and materials ahead of time. The ambivert and the omnivert learners need to switch between the virtual classrooms and the face-to-face classrooms because of their personality types. Teachers' primary concern is to plan lessons and develop materials applicable for all kinds of learners considering all the things.

The test measures the cognitive skills, and measuring the conative and the affective skills are discounted. Charman and Elmes (1998) have rightly pointed out that computer-based assessment is much more than multiple-choice questions, but it cannot address every assessment requirement. Among the diverse delivery modes of online teaching, the mode we usually use for communicating is synchronous, almost similar to in-person communication. The synchronous communication procedures and pathways engage learners in learning activities on a planned date at a specific time frame through live-streamed lectures, video conferencing, live chatting, and instant messaging. Communication in this unique virtual setting is held casually and spontaneously, like in a physical classroom. Even if a learner's video mode is off during a session, he can write in the chatbox and have immediate feedback. That kind of communication stimulates learners to be more interactive and focused. According to Hrastinski (2008), monitoring the receiver's reaction to a message makes the receiver feel more committed and motivated to read and answer the message.

However, the synchronous delivery mode's major drawback is that it does not boost learners' higher-order thinking skills. Some learning activities need more attention and time to comprehend and process ideas and finally develop polished products. The learners may tend to show a flippant attitude in synchronous e-learning even when discussing a complex topic. Black (2016) has stated that if responses from learners lack any reflection, their conversational tone will relegate it to the status of an informal answer. He has further mentioned that a reflective reaction involves critical thinking and focuses on what students in the classroom may have learned. Such a response also considers the possibilities and results in a deeper understanding of the issue. The writing activities that require more cognitive processing than other learning activities are challenging to conduct in this mode. Learners cannot work at a pace based on their level of understanding and knowledge as the pace of learning is mainly controlled by teachers and the tech. Teachers are not provided with any specific guidelines for taking attendance of the learners during the pandemic. Teachers feel the urge not to penalize students for their attendance but to grade the learning outcomes based on the end-of-course knowledge assessments. With its health and mental health implications and economic disruptions, the pandemic makes it even more critical to offer support rather than take punitive action. (Jordan & Chang, 2020). Many American districts gave up monitoring attendance

when the pandemic first shuttered schools; states expect them to track the data in the coming year. The problem arises when many learners develop a habit of absenteeism with those two excuses, and chronic absenteeism affects their academic and socio-emotional outcomes. They may find the recorded lectures or course materials in the archive, but they miss the real-time activities. A clearly stated attendance policy and procedures in this post-pandemic situation can help learners be well-informed about the course outcomes and motivated to increase their attendance and participate in learning activities.

With the widespread global disruptions during this Covid-19, we need to consider some other issues of learners-for instance, learners' socio-economic condition, part-time or full-time jobs, daily routine, and life management strategies. According to Jordan & Chang (2020), Tracking attendance can be complicated by family circumstances: New Jersey's guidance notes that some students will have to do their learning in the evening depending on parents' work schedules. Such students should be counted as present if they turn in assignments. To facilitate learning to those learners, teachers can switch to the asynchronous mode of delivery by using the media such as discussion boards, email, blogs, pre-recorded videos and collaborated documents, etc. Another reason for using the asynchronous mode delivery is that asynchronous discussion allows for reflective thought and "talk," components valued in a helpful discussion. These same components make the asynchronous discussion more viable than synchronous discussion in fostering higher-order thinking, the social construction of meaning, and reflection (Collison, Elbaum, Haavind, & Tinker, 2000; Davidson-Shivers, Tanneris, & Mulenberg, 2000; Lapadat, 2000, as cited in Alisan Black 2016). The synchronous mode's nature resembles tempo learning, which allows a learner to work at his own pace. Besides, asynchronous communication increases a person's ability to process information. The receiver has more time to comprehend a message because an immediate answer is not expected. (Robert and Dennis, 2005). Robert and Dennis (2005), in their research "paradox of Richness: A cognitive Model of Media Choice," a critical response to the "Media Richness Theory" introduced by Daft and Lengel (1988), have divided the peoples' abilities of processing complex messages mainly into two categories: Abilities of processing complex messages in a high social presence media (face-to-face, tours, visit, video conferencing, online chatting, etc.) and ability of processing complex message in a low social presence media (texts, emails, voice mails, etc.) According to them, the ability to process information in a high social presence media is relatively low. Individuals have a natural constraint on the amount of information they can accept, process, and recall. As a result, when faced with a highly complex message, a receiver can quickly become overwhelmed with information. The matter can be illustrated through figures (see Figure 1 and Figure 2).

Figure 1. Relationship between motivation and ability to process

Motivation is high, but processing vast and complex information is low with high social presence media. In this synchronous environment, lots of social interactions happen through joint activities. It is essential for collaborative learning and behavior modeling. On the contrary, motivation is low, but comprehending the message is high with low social presence media. Media low in social presence allows receivers to access information frequently for grasping it better. In this asynchronous environment, learners have less opportunity for social interaction, and therefore, learners may have a sense of alienation.

In Media Richness Theory, Daft and Lengel (1986) have classified media into rich media and lean media based on the different media richness criteria in providing information and their abilities to reduce equivocality and uncertainty. They have arranged the media's richness in the following top-down order: face-to-face (group meetings, tour, visit) video system (video conferencing, webinar), audio system (online chatting, telephone, teleconference, 2-way radio), and text system (letters, emails, flyers, blogs, newsletters, memos, reports, etc.).

This categorization media is viewed as very rich, high medium rich, lean, and very lean. Considering different prioritization measures of face-to-face communication, it ranks the top among all of the media. Face-to-face communication is the most effective communication media for dealing with issues that seem equivocal and need more minute details or verbal and non-verbal languages and cues to remove ambiguities or confusions. People use natural language, gestures, text, pictures, sounds, and video clips in this communication. It involves an individual's feelings and emotions, eye contact, smiles, head tilts, and body alignment, and all those signals help a recipient get a message through.

Figure 2. Media Richness Theory

To remove ambiguities or confusion of the issues that seem equivocal, we need more minute details or verbal and non-verbal languages and cues. People use natural language, gestures, text, pictures, sounds, video clips in this communication. It involves an individual's feelings and emotions, eye contact, smiles, head tilts, and body alignment, and all those signals help a recipient get a message through.

Conversely, "lean media" includes only text, and according to "Media Richness Theory," they are best for reducing uncertainty. It is asynchronous, and the learners who do not prefer socializing much and have inertia in participating in group work or discussion both in the virtual world and the real world can benefit from these media. This "lean media" is helpful for introvert learners as they do not feel any social anxieties in the isolated environment.

Pedagogical Implications

To differentiate instruction in virtual platforms, teachers need to switch to different modes. Using different types of asynchronous and synchronous communications ensures collaboration between students and between teachers and students. In the asynchronous mode, learners' considerable latitude in their learning activities may create a sense of alienation. Teachers will have to plan when and how to apply the appropriate means of communication. Teachers can hold discussions and manage groups both asynchronously as synchronously for successful transitions and interactions.

To ensure the learners' attention and attendance, teachers should announce in advance that there will be a knowledge test at the end of the session. The teacher can offer a kind of moral incentive by developing holistic rubrics to motivate learners intrinsically. A promise of providing incentives in the form of compliments, rewards, encouragements, and others increases students' performance.

Learners' emotions in a specific learning environment cannot be considered a different entity as it is an inseparable part of their thoughts, feelings, and actions. In educational psychology, motivation is viewed as intensely connected to emotions, and so, understanding emotions and actively addressing them are vital factors for boosting motivations. The Covid-19 has caused diametrical changes in pedagogical skills and processes and thus influenced learners' and teachers' psychological phenomena. Garrison (2007, as cited in Cleveland-Innes and Campbell, 2012) has mentioned that the face-to-face environment can more easily provide socio-emotional support. Such support is essential online, beyond socio-emotional support to negotiating emotion that exists in and of itself, about teaching and cognition. The study of O' Regan (2003, as cited in Cleveland-Innes and Campbell, 2012) has pointed out that learners express their emotions about different online course matters. They express their emotions about design and organizational issues (i.e., a lack of clear instructions), cognitive issues (i.e., learning materials, success), social issues (during communicating), time management, or technology. Similarly, Cleveland-Innes, Garrison, and Kinsel (2007) also found that learners show their emotions regarding the social, teaching, and cognitive presence in an online course.

Cleveland-Innes and Campbell (2012) have suggested that one can create emotional connections to content by playing an evocative video or song. Showing a moving image help

students understand or better connect to a class concept. Those techniques can stimulate learners and engage them in learning activities in virtual classes in more impactful ways.

Conclusion

The study aimed to find out the disruptions faced by the teachers due to the move from traditional classrooms to entirely virtual learning during the pandemic. The study shows that replacement of the physical classrooms with virtual classrooms are mixed blessings. Conducting virtual classes from home or office is highly convenient for many as it saves time, reduces the stresses of a working environment and traveling. However, the mental or emotional response to the virtual learning of many teachers shows their distress and disappointment. The impact of virtual learning on social and affective skills is a concerning issue. Complexities of online assessment, lack of proctoring preparation, cyber insecurity, tech-phobia, learners with different learning styles and preferences provoke the thought of getting back to a blended approach in the physical classroom.

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Appendix : Teacher's Questionnaire (Online Interview)

1. What are the significant benefits of virtual classrooms?
2. What are the collaborative tools used during this pandemic?
3. What are the limitations faced using the collaborative tools?
4. What are the problems teachers faced using collaborative tools?
5. What are the problems educational institutions facing during this pandemic?
6. How does online education affect teaching-learning activities?
7. How can learners feel involved in online classes?
8. How does virtual learning affect kinesthetic learners?
9. Why are various educational settings necessary?
10. Why do we need to consider the personality types of the learners?
11. What are the limitations of assessing the students' performance online?
12. How does virtual learning affect social skills?