



**Reflecting on Teachers' Online Teaching Challenges During the COVID -19 Pandemic:
Interactions during the Q & A Session of a Webinar**

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Abstract

Aim or Purpose: This article aims to reflect and document teachers' reflection on the new challenges encountered by them in their transition from a traditional classroom setting to an online teaching environment in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Approach: This article investigates the interactions that took place between the resource person (the author of this paper) and the faculty members or participants during the Question and Answer(Q & A) session of a webinar held on 7 June 2020, India.

Article Type: Viewpoint

This article offers the author's viewpoints or commentaries, drawing reflections and insights into English teachers' online adaptations, experiences, challenges and opportunities during the COVID-19 pandemic through the Q & A session of a webinar.

Keywords: Teacher reflection, COVID-19 pandemic, education, online teaching, teachers' challenges, webinar.

Introduction

English language teachers and professionals globally have unearthed constructive strategies to impart knowledge by promoting critical, reflective, and skillful thinking in the process of teaching and learning. The 21st century language studies and teacher development

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have taken newer grounds in facilitating efficient teaching practices through a range of contexts. Teaching-learning methodologies have drastically changed in the recent decades, bringing into focus the need for teachers to not only share their knowledge, teaching practices, and personal experiences, but to reflect and respond to ideas and suggestions. With the constantly evolving and changing requirements in the educational field, teachers are leaving no stone unturned to update their nascent teaching methods, techniques, assessment strategies and tasks. Constructive approaches have led to the building of an interactive and cohesive teaching and learning environment, rather than the usual transfer of knowledge from teacher to learner. With the sudden global outbreak of a new coronavirus disease, addressed as COVID-19 by the World Health Organization (WHO, *Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) Pandemic*), the world's unpreparedness to face such a sudden crisis has become the talk of the town. And the global educational system's swift shift from a face-to-face classroom setting to a fully online classroom environment was the least thing educators ever imagined.

Significantly, due to the pandemic the traditional classroom setup has been altered amounting to transitions for teachers both at their professional and personal fronts. Globally, teachers were unprepared for this sudden transition into a fully online form of instruction. Online teaching is not just about using all the features of Learning Management System (LMS), but it is also about good planning and time management. In the light of rising concerns about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the present educational systems, the Government Degree College, Ravulapalem (affiliated to Adikavi Nannaya University), Andhra Pradesh, India organized a One Day International Webinar on 7 June, 2020 focusing on reflective teaching and online teaching techniques and challenges. 350 faculty members attended the webinar which gave us (the resource persons) an opportunity to reach out to a wider audience. As one of the resource persons (the author of the paper), the need to reflect and document teachers' reflection on the new challenges encountered by them in their transition from a traditional classroom setting to an online teaching environment in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, culminated in the form of this paper. The scope of this paper focuses on the diverse ideas, suggestions, queries and feedback shared among teacher educators during the most vital and interesting part of the webinar – the Question and Answer (Q & A) session. The interactions during the Q & A session examined the benefits,



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opportunities, problems and challenges faced by teachers in their shift to fully online teaching due to the suspension of face-to-face classes during this pandemic. An attempt to highlight their concerns that each one of us could relate to as fellow teacher educators, helped us see the big picture.

Across the world, teacher educators woke up transitioning from traditional face-to-face classes to fully online teaching classes. Little were they aware that the online mode that was opted partially as a blended form of teaching and learning to meet the needs of diverse student population would suddenly become the need of the hour. The global pandemic forced people to stay indoors, in order to prevent its spread, and lockdowns with strict rules and regulations put social distancing at the forefront. COVID-19 pandemic has forced more and more people to adapt to a lifestyle with ‘work from home concept,’ in order to prevent transmitting infection from one person to another. With the sudden closure of institutions, organizations, government and private office buildings, public places, amusement parks, shopping malls, entertainment industries, factories and many more, countries in this 21st century installed the urgency of meeting alternate needs of citizens in social, educational, economic, political, and cultural sectors. By implementing social distancing measures to break the chain of COVID-19 transmission, educational institutions worldwide placed emergency online teaching into practice as an alternative mode of instruction.

Online teaching is not a new mode of instruction and has been in practice as distant education or in blended learning format as an add-on to traditional classroom teaching, and in this paper, an attempt has been made to map the best practices at those junctures where we stumbled due to the sudden shift. Focusing on the faculty members’ online teaching experiences that had inadvertently become a medium of learning, this paper also makes an attempt to encourage resource persons presenting in webinars and virtual conferences to document, showcase and highlight changes or academic interruptions taking place in the educational systems due to the impact of the COVID-19 crisis. The pandemic exposed people across the globe to spaces where it was difficult for them to grapple with changes. And for teacher educators, though during the initial stages they were a bit hesitant, shift to online platforms for teaching was the only alternative available. This was largely due to the fact that,



firstly, the transition was sudden. Secondly, teachers were unprepared to shift from one modality to the other. Thirdly, the lack of technical expertise was coupled with time constraints. Lastly, there was a lack of confidence in handling online teaching platforms effortlessly. Though all these factors might not have been hurdles for some teachers, yet they varied from teacher to teacher. Placed against this backdrop, this viewpoint article draws reflections and insights on the faculty members' online teaching experiences during the pandemic-induced university closures and likewise attempts to understand the challenges encountered in this unexpected time of crisis.

The first section of this paper briefly highlights the online challenges faced by teacher educators as a result of the pandemic crisis and how reflective practice can address in overcoming these challenges. Since the main focus of the paper is the Question and Answer (Q & A) session of the webinar, the second section of the paper presents faculty members or participants questions followed by the resource person's answers or reflections and discussions on those questions. The third section of the paper reflects on the lessons or opportunities learnt from the pandemic situation, and likewise suggest the need to cope effectively and be prepared to face such transitions. The final section is the conclusion.

Reflecting on Online Teaching During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Drawing on Dewey's (1933, 1938) foundational works reflection as a key component of teacher development has established a pivotal role and a noticeable place in teacher education (Clarke and Otaky 2006; Griffiths 2000; Jay and Johnson 2002). Research studies and extensive scholarship on reflective teaching have generated a wealth of literature (Schon 1983; Farrell 1998; Hatton and Smith 1995; Schon 1987; Farrell 2012; Ottesen 2007) specifically addressing the ubiquitous role it plays in teacher education. The changing roles of teachers to enable online teaching mode of instruction during this pandemic crisis has enabled them to rethink their space and place as an educational practitioner. In other words, during the reflective process, teacher educators examined more on *reflection-in-practice* and *reflection-on-practice*. Nevertheless, this paper excludes assessing aspects, approaches, strategies in reflective teaching addressed in the webinar. Instead, it limits to focus on how the reflective practice can help overcome some of the challenges faced by teacher educators



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in an online English classroom. This paper aims to elicit that the resource person's interactions with the faculty members or participants will shed light on the prevailing situations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the educational field and also enable teacher educators to learn, support and be prepared in the event of another such emergency situation arising in future.

Reflection is a vital component that aims to promote teachers' professional development. The two types of reflection – "*Reflection-in-action*" or "*Reflection-in-practice*" simply means to think and reflect on one's behaviour while in action; and "*Reflection-on-action*" or "*Reflection-on-practice*," means to think, reflect and discover after the action is carried out. As teachers, we question ourselves reflecting on our daily classroom lectures. The need for teachers to focus on reflective teaching during this pandemic crisis comes in more demand as we miss those physical spaces of emotional support, sustenance and professional shared learning from our colleagues. In addition to discussions, meetings, exchange of ideas on classroom research, and so on, the lack of face-to-face communication with colleagues has immensely created a vacuum for teachers or teacher educators. Social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, blogs, WeChat, Tumblr, emails are still used to reach out to colleagues, but the proximity we have established physically seems irreplaceable. Our casual handshake, the morning smile, short-talks in the departmental hallways, coffee breaks, dropping by our colleague's office, quick switching of classes during emergencies, committee and departmental meetings that end with surprise parties, exchanging sweet compliments can never ever be supplanted.

Though reflection can take shape in a formal or an informal manner, insight into understanding the delivery of lesson objectives in both traditional and online settings is similar. Yet, online teaching demands knowledge of a set of skills, tools, and teaching methods. Teachers need to be familiar and adept with the latest educational technology and its applications. A teacher's lack of technical expertise can impact his/her instructional design and delivery of course content, thereby inducing him/her to reflect on their teaching. Dealing with online teaching challenges, teacher educators end up reflecting on the differences between traditional and online classroom settings, as to:



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1. How to conduct the delivery mechanism of a course in an online setting?
2. How to disseminate meaningful learning and ensure students' comprehension?
3. How to monitor students and their online interaction and participation?
4. How to conduct online assessment tasks and grading procedures that are time-bound?
5. How to tackle students' attendance in the face of poor net connectivity issues?
6. How to keep abreast with the technology integration issues and skills?
7. How to balance between the demands of online teaching and the stressful atmosphere of the pandemic itself?

By questioning themselves, teachers were able to reflect and decipher that teaching online is a big challenge. This is the time when they have to rethink the nature of their teaching, try to overcome and balance their stress and fears, and chalk out innovative pedagogical approaches. As noted by Heuer and King (2004) online instruction “shares many features with face-to-face classes” with unique attributes underscoring “the need for the instructor to adopt flexible roles” with “a different “rhythm” or way of teaching and learning than face-to-face environments have traditionally promoted” (p.1-2). Teachers need to be prepared for the changing and challenging spaces in education and likewise apply the newly acquired knowledge gained through learning, reflection and experiences into practice. Teachers' reflection and thinking enables them to absorb the complexity of teaching, as well as their personal knowledge and methods of inquiry (Clark & Lampert, 1986). In essence, reflective teaching involves the fruitful combination of experience, thought, action and personal commitment (Coldron & Smith, 1995). Teachers need to tailor-make, modify, or customize some of the techniques that typically work in a face-to-face classroom to suit to an online mode of teaching. Based on their past experience of professional teaching and learning and practical application of skills, given the current scenario, teachers need to adjust and accommodate these changes.

Nevertheless, the common misconception prevailing amongst some teachers regarding the application of digital teaching tools in an online setting was that it is more or less similar to the traditional classrooms where PowerPoint presentations are routinely used.



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Soon they realize the need for assistance and knowledge concerning the usage of online teaching tools, as not all teachers are confident techno-pedagogical users. The first and immediate help they seek for is amongst their peers who are tech-savvy. Peer support and assistance is so important that it helps them improve and learn from each other's experiences as well as exchange and extend support within the network of peers. Peer interaction and engagement guides in opening avenues to improve online teaching skills, generate different methodologies that cater to students' learning needs, share knowledge about usage of diverse teaching tools and adopt agile approaches to teaching and learning. In addition to learning how to teach, peer learning helps in reflecting on what new has been learnt during the entire interaction process. According to Smith (2003), reflective practice is described as the nexus between reflection and practice, where practice encompasses both practice of teaching and learning, in a manner that the practical experience becomes a site for learning.

Teachers tend to reflect on the barriers in online teaching when certain methods that typically work in a traditional classroom are not found in an online setting. In this regard, university colleges and schools need to provide training workshops or orientation programs for faculty members to overcome negative dispositions in an online teaching environment. In addition, constant encouragement, motivation, support and assurance from e-learning coordinators, the heads of the departments, deans and associate deans of colleges are necessary for effective online functioning of educational institutions. Academic interruptions induced due to the pandemic have offered significant opportunities to the teachers to reconstruct and improve those areas that facilitate and strengthen students' learning. By rethinking and reflecting, teachers navigated further into those areas that were unexplored. Assessment is one such grey area that plays a decisive role along with teaching. While in some educational institutions, the exams were cancelled or postponed, a few others chose to replace traditional exams (paper pencil method) with online ones, thus offering the scope for teachers to learn the usage of online assessment tools. The pandemic has undoubtedly accelerated the importance of digital technology in education, where we have transformed ourselves from teacher educators to digital educators. In the first place, the implications the pandemic has had on people's way of living, has caused anxiety and a persistent sense of fear worldwide. But, teachers to a considerable extent were able to manage the change process in



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delivering a successful online instruction to students dispersed in different geographical locations. Teacher educators chose to teach through different online meeting platforms like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, TeamViewer, Skype, Black Board Collaborate, Cisco Webex, Google Meet, etc. Online instruction mode has enabled teachers to engage in new and exciting ways, to critically reflect on and evaluate the design and delivery mechanism, and construct meaning through their learning experiences. Teachers' reflection on day-to-day online situations, the recitation of scripted experiences based on these situations helped them unravel and manage newer situations that co-relate with those previous experiences.

Question and Answer Session During the Webinar

Faculty Members' or Participants' Questions and Suggestions

1. In future, we need to make online classroom learning more active, considering the lack of physical presence of the teacher. What is the best way to keep students and teachers engaged in an effective manner? How can we sustain students' interest in an online classroom?
2. The crisis came up overnight and we had to cope up with it. This reminds me of a line from *Ulysses*, "To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield." Though, we cannot change the direction of the wind, we have been able to adjust our sail. We have been teaching online for the past three months with a large strength of about a hundred students and have been facing difficulties, along with our students. When I asked the students whether they were noting down what is being explained during my online class, one of the students responded that he was standing in a queue at a government ration shop, to collect supplies for his family. No doubt practical difficulties do exist, but people's lifestyle has drastically changed due to the pandemic.
3. Students who come from rural backgrounds and rural areas do not possess smartphones or basically have a lot of network issues. So how do I as a teacher deal with my students' problems?



4. Is reflective teaching helpful in an online classroom? How far will teacher's reflection reach the hearts of the students in an online classroom, when students are not properly motivated?

5. I am facing challenges in online teaching, as most of the students are not interactive? It looks as if it is one-sided. I am finding it difficult for the students in my online class to interact?

6. If taken the scenario in middle-east countries, how are teachers able to manage and sustain interest without having access to the facial expressions of students (video being disabled) in an online classroom, because face-to-face or eye-to-eye contact is a kind of prerequisite for any teaching process to occur?

7. Our teachers and students are conditioned in such a way that they think that learning can only take place in a face-to-face classroom. At this point of time, we should think of opportunities and possibilities. In the webinars that I have attended in the past couple of months, I have often heard about threats and challenges of online learning. I would say to a particular extent, the pandemic is a "blessing in disguise" for teachers and students, or else they would have never taken up this type of teaching and learning process. In a post-COVID world, with social distancing as the norm, all students cannot sit together in a class. In future, educational institutions may run in shifts and students might be visiting colleges once or twice a week and take the rest of the classes online. So, classrooms will be alive with discussions. The pandemic has given us time to reflect and make positive use of online teaching learning process. Regarding the digital divide, the government in the state of Kerala, India has hired some channels to deliver online teaching through television in schools and likewise in colleges they have begun to adopt this method. In addition, some teachers are worried whether they will be replaced by Information and Communication Technology (ICT). But believe me, ICT can never replace teachers. It is time for us as teachers to recharge our students, as teaching is also about reaching. So, it is our duty to recharge our students about online methods. In most of the states in my country, people are very much into teaching process, but not into online testing process. They have not even seriously thought about online assessment process, because people think



everything will get back to normal and we will also get back to traditional paper-pencil method of assessment. It is time for all of us who have not employed this online teaching learning to incorporate it in our teaching process, because soon there will be a transition from '*Brick Universities*' to '*Click Universities*' or brick and click universities are going to exist in future. That would be a big role-change for the teacher as a facilitator, collaborator, coach etc. On the other hand, students have to be self-motivated, self-directed and self-regulated. Students as digital natives and multimedia learners spend a lot of time on electronic gadgets and not on learning. Both teachers and students have to be trained for online teaching learning platforms.

Resource Person's Reflections and Discussions

The above seven questions/suggestions from the faculty members or participants in the webinar opened doors for discussions. The questions connected us in understanding similar challenges and opportunities and allowed us to relate, share, and realize what we all felt as teachers during this pandemic. The resource person's reflections on the participants' questions are given below in a similar numbering format.

1. Activities play a vital role in keeping the students engaged providing them with choice and flexibility. Pre-learning activities can stimulate the learners to be creative, collaborative and competitive. The transfer of activities from a traditional face-to-face to an online environment can be carried out through platforms such as Microsoft teams, Zoom, etc. Students can display their activities as a group (3-4 in each group). Working in groups or teams will create interest, stimulate thinking and encourage them to emerge with developing ideas and concepts. Similar to a face-to-face setup, the students can display their activities through ppts using the screen sharing feature in an online classroom. To keep them engaged and sustain their interest, marks need to be awarded or they need to be graded. A reward system can give them the enthusiasm to be actively engaged in the assigned activities.
2. This faculty member's suggestion enabled us to reflect on the prevailing critical situation in the world stimulating further discussion on how students battled



with real-life circumstances, whilst simultaneously making best efforts not to miss out their class sessions during the pandemic.

3. For students who come from rural areas or rural backgrounds, access to internet facilities is mediocre or the network connection is not strong. Local connectivity issue is something that is beyond their control and is bound to be a big disadvantage for these students. So, the recorded sessions of the missed classes can be uploaded and sent through mail for these students so that they can go through them when they resume good internet connection. Another method could be through sharing a link using any of the free cloud sharing platforms such as Google Drive, One Drive, Dropbox, etc. It is also crucial to overcome diverse educational challenges in rural areas through the support of local governing bodies.

4. Reflective teaching can be worked out in any setting, whether online or offline, because you are a teacher irrespective of the mode of teaching. Reflection involves understanding what has gone right or wrong in your class on a day-to-day basis. It helps you question and reflect on your teaching experiences, think and respond to changing learners' needs and create tailor-made solutions to problems. Open-ended questions can help to keep students motivated in an online class. In addition, if your students react and respond well in your online class, it means that you are on the right track.

5. It is true that not all students participate in discussions in an online classroom. During the online classroom discussions on specific topics or during the question and answer sessions, at least 20% of students do not interact. This scenario is present even in a traditional face-to-face classroom with students not actively participating. Some students are shy, or afraid that their answers might turn out to be incorrect and they might end up being embarrassed in front of their peers. While in an online classroom, such students have a better scope of not answering by simply remaining silent by muting their audio, disabling their video or blaming poor connectivity issues and so on. On the other hand, if 100% active participation from students in discussions were taking place in an online classroom, then there must be really something amiss. Either they could be looking into the book, or browsing the web to search for answers, or



being helped by elders at home. A classroom with a smaller group of students is more likely to interact than those in a larger group. The delivery of the lesson through diverse methods such as audio-visual aids apart from the textbook builds up their interest. As teachers, we motivate them; and we deem it as our duty to encourage, but again we can't force them to interact. Students should develop their readiness for becoming autonomous learners. In addition, announcing the topic to the students a day before the class also works out in enabling them to be prepared for the class and participate and interact actively in the teaching learning process.

6. Flexibility is one trait a teacher should possess, given any classroom environment and be prepared to adapt to any situation. I always begin Classroom lectures with a recap of the previous lecture followed by allocating some time for questions. Based on the students' understanding and grasping of the content, only then would I proceed to explain further. This practice is common in both traditional and remote teaching. I believe in delivering a highly dialogic classroom (with teacher as a facilitator), as it will harness the power of talk and create a more robust interactive synergistic atmosphere, irrespective of whether students are physically visible or not. Flipped classroom is also one strategy that can sustain interest in any setting. This inverted type of teaching or approach works well to keep students' disposition to learning with increased student participation.

7. This faculty member's suggestion opened discussions for benefits of online teaching. It is true that students need to become self-regulated and self-paced learners. Self-directed or personalized learning is the need of the hour. Students need to develop confidence and commitment in addition to cultivating the habit of personalized learning that stimulates and promotes their growth as learners without the need for a facilitator.

The COVID-19 pandemic has immensely accelerated the usage of online educational platforms across the world. The plethora of questions and discussions on teaching never end. Webinars provide instant feedbacks, but are time-bound, as organizers need to stick to time and be prepared to encounter technical issues or glitches. The smooth functioning of a webinar depends heavily on technology. Poor or slow broadband connection can disrupt the



delivery process of the presenter. At times, bad network connections have disabled participants and even resource persons from entering the webinar room, leaving them with no options. Also, the number of registered participants' entry into a webinar or a virtual conference is limited. In case, the number exceeds, they are notified to watch the recorded sessions of the webinar or virtual conference on Facebook or YouTube at a later date. Thankfully, this webinar went smoothly and the participants' or faculty members' shared experiences during the entire session was rewarding. They were able to discover many issues, rethink, reassess and reflect about the nature of online pedagogies, future research and opportunities. Future research should strengthen, assess, plan and evaluate the needs of the educational systems arising from the impact of the pandemic, and likewise be prepared to generate instructional replacements in case of an outbreak of another pandemic in future.

Discussion and Further Suggestions

Educational systems worldwide have witnessed challenges in switching from traditional face-to-face to online mode of teaching in an unprecedented scale as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Extending physical closures of universities for a long time can have an adverse impact on the employment opportunities of the students who have already been selected through on-campus recruitment and further training prior to the pandemic. Though the physical return to campuses is unclear, there is a possibility that students from certain streams such as the Sciences might be given preference to return earlier than others, based on the necessity of vital practical applications in their fields. Building a safe, supportive, healthy and resilient environment with effective cooperation from all stakeholders in such times of distress is more important. Such cooperation can have a significant impact in coping with the global crisis. In view of the existing uncertainty about the physical opening of schools and universities, the need to devise and execute proper planning of future semesters by curriculum and syllabus designers, course planners, textbook evaluators, teacher educators, and administrators to meet the required demands is a big challenge for educational institutions.

Fostering interactions among teachers and students and between students in an online classroom is of paramount importance. Interactions enable students to get motivated, become



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actively engaged in classroom discussions, work collaboratively in group tasks, stay connected with co-learners and likewise learn to make learning easier. The teacher or instructor can create vibrant interactions in an online environment by delivering course content through creative methods, through specific examples from real-life situations, through open-ended questions, and through appropriate feedback that can enhance students' self-efficacy. In addition, teachers need to set guidelines or instructions about online classroom etiquettes, time-management and online submission of tasks, and regularity in attendance. Interactions among teachers or faculty members either formally or informally through webinars, virtual conferences, live lectures, mails, WhatsApp, video chats, or phone have ensured a learning environment of support and assistance, thereby facilitating teachers to reflect on their teaching practices and combat challenges in online teaching. Faculty-faculty support has in one way resulted in faculty members donning the roles of consultants, mentors, coaches, techies or tech-gurus etc. Such faculty-faculty support is of utmost importance because, despite existing or forthcoming challenges in the educational field, peer support goes a long way in creating a successful teaching learning experience. Both students and teachers should develop a culture of learning and be proactively engaged in upgrading themselves with emerging technologies, for online mode has showed us brighter opportunities to learn and grow. In addition, this calls for attention, the need to reflect on the usage and role of digital education tools that is largely deficient in most developing countries.

Countries should focus on facilitating better education or bridge the gaps in education magnified as a result of the pandemic and provide guidance and support in deploying online teaching learning solutions. Addressing the case of students from rural areas, the pandemic has enabled us to reflect again on the socio-economic gaps in the educational systems and the plight of economically challenged student communities. Students from less affluent families are left behind (in remote/online learning) because of the cost of digital devices and data plans, and the digital divide could widen if educational access is dictated by access to the latest technologies (World Economic Forum, *3 ways the coronavirus pandemic*). Government authorities should strive to meet the dire needs of these students through provision of low-cost desktop computers or laptops or tablets with good broadband connections. Non-profit organizations or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can also extend a helping hand to



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people in this aspect. Financial assistance or support resources in the form of special scholarships for such students can prove to be a great source of help.

In addition, there is also a necessity for universities to provide mental health support to students through online guidance and lectures that offer strategies to manage stress in order to cope with the pandemic (Sahu). The pandemic crisis has taught and alerted us to stay prepared for academic interruptions, while simultaneously conditioning us to compare, contrast and improve our current and future teaching practices. Alongside teachers, students also need to reflect in order to combat academic challenges during this global pandemic. With hands-on access to apps such as Messenger, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Telegram, and a lot more, students are quick in reaching out to express their problems, provide solutions, and are capable of handling global educational challenges in the near future. The exposure to the COVID-19 pandemic is teaching them to be resilient and adapt accordingly. Teacher educators, students, researchers, policy makers, and educational reformers need to engage and focus on expanding research on the existing studies related to online teaching and learning.

Conclusion

We need to strengthen ourselves, our communities, and nations in order to tackle, map and address solutions to problems of global importance. Due to the drastic increase of COVID-19 cases day-by-day to almost 20 million globally (WHO, *Coronavirus disease (COVID-2019) situation reports*) as of writing this paper; and around 1.2 billion (UNESCO, *Education*) students and youth affected as a result of school and university closures, things have changed enormously. So, universities and schools need to chalk out a path forward for well-structured, organized and effective online teaching platforms for the upcoming academic sessions. Apart from learning to seek new ways for communicating with students away from classrooms and lecture theatres, it is good time to reflect on how this disruptive crisis can help define what learning should look like for future generations and beyond (World Economic Forum, *4 ways COVID-19*). As the world battles the COVID-19 pandemic, Shelley's lines keep echoing sending hope "If winter comes, can spring be far behind"? Hoping that when things get back to normal, surely, we might have learnt lessons from our



experiences, learnt how to reflect on efforts taken up for teaching, and learnt how to overcome physical and psychological stress from a time of crisis. As a matter of fact, what we teach during these (COVID-19 pandemic)times can have secondary importance for teachers, but students will remember not the educational content delivered, but how they felt during these hard times, and on how they narrate these times (Bozkurt and Sharmav). The lessons we leave behind for future generations during this COVID-19 pandemic could prove beneficial in resolving upcoming challenges in the online educational milieu.

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