Initiative 19

Leading Learning with the support of Teachers and Community during the pandemic

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The School Context

Dr. Sarup Singh Govt. Model Sanskriti Sr. Sec. School is located in Sanghi Village in Rohtakin Haryana. The school is managed by the Department of Education. It is situated in a rural area. The school is co-educational.

Challenges faced due to School Closure

In March 2020, due to a surge in Covid 19, the final exams were in progress but a sudden closure made everyone stunned. There are many challenges before us when it comes to
-Online education/E-learning‖ because usually the population is not completely equipped with utilities like fast internet, uninterrupted power supply and electronic devices. Challengesfaced during school closure are listed below

Limited Availability of Technology Devices - Many of our students did not have access to even smart phones, what to talk of computers and phone servers are not conducive to long learning homes. Also, data packs and their costs were determined for both teachers as well as learners etc. For live classes students who have smartphones had them for limited time so learning remained restricted with the limited availability of technological devices

Digital Literacy and Infrastructure Support - Though rural India has a wide network of power and network infrastructure, the infrastructural facilities have not developed fully to become at par with what online learning requires. Steady flow of electricity and lack of high speed internet posed major problems before students

Lack of familiarity with Digital Tech - Shifting from traditional pedagogical methods to digital ones was not an overnight task. Both teachers and students used it for the first time in urgency and both were not well trained and equipped.

Dependency on Parents - As the students were from rural backgrounds, mostly belonging tolower strata of the economy, the students had to wait for the whole day for their father and could have reached the android mobile only when their fatherreached home.

Supervising The Ward - Biggest challenge before parents was also to supervise the kids who were supposed to be doing study with smartphones. Full day in front of the screen was a lot for kids and teachers, especially for families who had only one device. Not all students were able to cope up easily, especially those with small children. Students who were less comfortable with digital tools needed help/someone to talk to

Remain Healthy: Mentally as Well as Physically - Utmost concern was to maintain health both on physical and mental level

Innovative Leadership Practices for Mitigating Learning Gaps

Innovations (along with teachers and community) brought about to ensure school functioning and student learning as a school leader.

School head encouraged teachers, students and parents to be enthusiastic in implementing online learning and reminded them to take care of not only mental health but also their physical health. Parents were asked to devote time with children, play and talk with them and also ask them to wash their hands with soap frequently, wear a mask if they leave the house, and avoid crowded areas. Personal connection and relation with students and parents helped a lot.

School leader coordinated the school team to take the action from WhatsApp groups, conduct online classes, give feedback, conduct online PTMs and remain in regular touch with parents and teachers. The staff cooperated a lot and very soon all the students got connected with their teachers and were performing their studies well. They started enjoying online teaching. All the programmes and related apps as instructed by Haryana Government were always shared with the students and witnessed a high participation rate. Soon joyful activities were also introduced by the Haryana Govt. Education Dept. Competitions were held online and students participated actively in various activities. Various teachers created their YouTube channels for effective teaching.

Attendance of students was marked online by class teachers. For convenient learning the study material was bifurcated into smaller chunks. Providing immediate / frequent feedbacks was open for students regarding study material shared. School management

witnessed that individual and team planning helped in smooth implementation of the curriculum.

Start and close time of school was staggered as per Govt. norms. Mid-day meal preparation was avoided and the related amount was directly transferred to students ' account / distribution of dry *ration.*

Water and hygiene facilities were taken care of, including hand washing, sanitization and maintaining physical distance. Mental health and well-being challenges among teachers and students who had suffered from anxiety, depression and isolation and mal-nutrition were taken care of.

To cover up learning losses among children we anticipated the losses of the students who have already been on the lower side and started rapid remedial lessons. School ensured an educated supply of textbooks and learning materials. Administrative staff was trained for physical distancing and school hygiene practices.

Catch up lessons were made to help students back up to speed. Supplement assignments were given to be done at home. Students were asked for self-study through home given exercises, Online learning/TV.

It was ensured that students take regular breaks during online study, limit themselves from distractions, keep a regular sleep schedule, set daily and weekly goals, takeout time to socialize, take out time to exercise

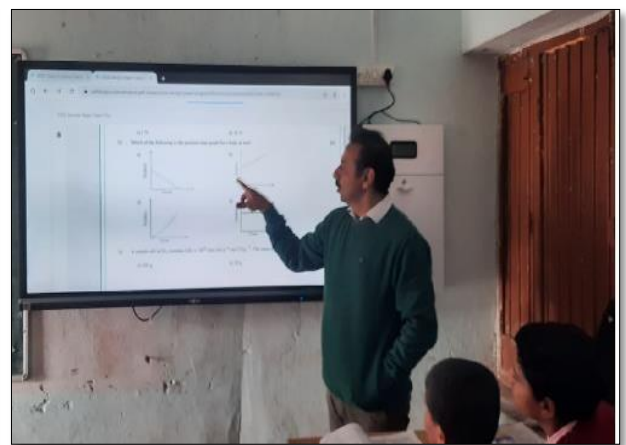## Collaboration with Community and Parents to Ensure Student Learning

To facilitate learning of students through collaboration with SMC, community members and parents/families, teachers conducted online PTMs and SMC members always promoted all the members of the village to participate actively in it. SMC members also provided backup for such parents who were not aware of technology, did not have enough resources and also helped them in procuring least resources needed for the education of their wards. They were also made aware of necessary Govt. guidelines from time to time. SMC members tried to share all resources available with them and teachers also shared online book material, study material, practical

learning aspect and also evaluated notebooks and assignments online. The role of SMC members was very effective because they were the members who continuously motivated children and their parents.

Way Forward

All the students still have their class and Subjects WhatsApp groups during the current session and apart from school study can consult and share their problems anytime with teachers. Parents can frequently communicate with teachers apart from PTM and we assure them about the progress of their wards. Subject Teachers often still evaluate and make their students practice online tests. This helps them in gaining knowledge and evaluates them in short syllabus from time to time. Apart from guidance provided by their teachers they have now learnt how to access various useful apps for their queries.

While providing online learning it will be kept in mind that parents either be at work or they work from home and are unable to help much, therefore it is important to design learning that does not require a lot of support from parents. It is very important to provide guidance to the parents on how they can be supportive to their kids during online learning. Teachers who are not already using online learning need to learn and dive into the online system so that there will be no interruption in communication in the wake of sudden closure of schools. Teachers

and students should train themselves on apps and technology tools. They need to be used. Communication between administrators, staff, parents and students should always be regular.School prepared a step by step guide on how to assess and use online learning tools and curriculum. School asked families to make sure all students, especially the younger ones know how to login to the Apps they use. They promoted learning through video- conferencing, Zoom meetings for both students and teachers so that they can share the knowledge on a common platform and also ask questions. It was also thought that we should avail this opportunity to make the students learn digital etiquettes.

Conference Presentation

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1wF6ZPOKQi2u8TWzlijP9KUBINiscuvmk/edit?usp
=sharing&ouid=103705547766060522301&rtpof=true&sd=true