Initiative 46

Ensuring Continuity in Learning in a difficult geographical terrain

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The School Context

The Govt. Sec. School Lingi Payong is located in South Sikkim, East District of Sikkim state. It is a co-educational school and offers education in English medium. The school is situated in a rural area and managed by Department of Education of state government

Challenges faced due to School Closure: The sudden impact that the novel Corona virus had induced has also brought up several challenges which were either not in the forefront or had occupied a backstage till then. Some of the major challenges that the schools and school heads had to face were:

1. **Shift from face-to-face learning to virtual learning:** The closure of schools had made it mandatory for the teachers, parents and students to opt for the virtual mode of learning. Most of the teachers and parents were not well versed with the basics of the various online/virtual teaching learning apps/platforms available.

2. **Capacity building/Handholding of human resources:** Although the concerned personnel were made aware about various virtual teaching learning apps/platforms, it was a gigantic task to train them in using and operating the apps/platforms.

3. **Digital Divide in Availability, Access and Use**

   Being located in a remote and network shadow area, there was a gap in access to technology among the parents and the students in terms of its availability of digital devices and access to internet connectivity. Most of the students do not have internet connectivity and equipment's in the form of smartphones, laptops and other apparatus. Interestingly, among parents as well there is a divide as the younger parents had a basic knowledge as how to manoeuvre with a smartphone containing social media platforms and other applications as compared to older aged parents who tend to operate more radio and television

Innovative Leadership Practices for Mitigating Learning Gaps

As necessity is the mother of inventions, various innovations were initiated by headmaster army of teachers and staff in the school in these times of crises Initiatives are listed below.

Social Media Platforms for Teaching Learning

For starters, class wise WhatsApp group for primary classes has been created wherein assignments were given and feedback was taken in a coordinated manner. Subject wise WhatsApp group for upper primary and secondary level has been fashioned so that the students can get proper attention specifically for subjects such as Mathematics, Science, Nepali and many more. The school also had a Facebook page in which video lessons were uploaded by the teachers. Most of parents, guardians and students were listed on the most popular social media page. These educational videos were developed in a bid for the students to comfortably access the study materials.

Home Schooling

With the idea that if a student cannot come to school, let's take the school to the students, the concept of Home Schooling was introduced. This initiative has the following components:

a) The teachers visit the students at their home duly following all the Covid19 protocols.

b) Each teacher visits the students close to his/her own place of dwelling and takes up the topics/subjects for teaching learning.

c) Dedicated time slots/days were shared with the teachers and the students to enable them   to prepare and work effectively.

Home schooling for students

Many of the teachers ply from far-off places and as such, they were not in a position to do home schooling for each and every student. So, an alternative approach to Cluster Teaching was also initiated. It was a sort of voluntary teaching to give a continuum to the learning process. The modus operandi of this initiative is as follows:

a) Each teacher of our school was assigned to undertake classes for students available in their locality.
b) A catchment area or a locality was demarcated for each teacher. The teacher identifies a place termed a Cluster where the students gather for the classes in a scheduled time/day and date.
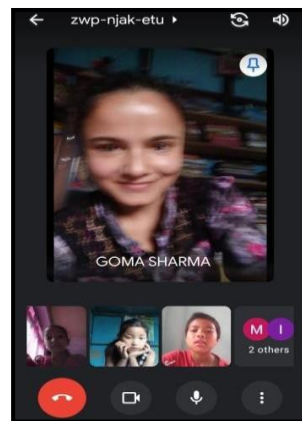

c) The teacher teaches any student available in the locality irrespective of the school, subjects, or class to which they belong to. This way no child whosoever it may be deprived of learning.

Cluster Teaching in different locality/houses

Virtual Classes & Assessments

The school consistently tried to make an optimum advantage of e-learning by conducting classes through applications like ZOOM, Google Meet, Sikkim Edutech, WhatsApp groups, Conve Genius.

Teachers conducting virtual classes through Google Meet and Early Morning Class to meet up with the availability of digital devices

Further, the students are also assessed through oral and written presentations through cloud meeting apps as well as online assessment tools like Google Quiz, Forms App, etc.

E certificates are provided to students after each test conducted through different apps/platforms

Video Link for Home Schooling/Cluster Teaching and Virtual Classes:
https://youtu.be/yaqb2oFpAt4
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WoejBEQVYZc&list=PLSiPjXQ11pfac7VJn9ya1_JxSjbU_p_zQ

Early Morning Classes

Most of the family had only one smartphone which was usually carried by either father or mother or another guardian during the daytime. As such, the students do not have the handset during the daytime and miss their classes. To overcome this, early morning classes were being conducted for the students when their parents stayed at home. This had a dual advantage as the student gets up early and enjoys morning freshness as well as gets time and device for learning.

Sources for E-learning

The headmaster, staff, and students regularly also use other platforms like television, and radio especially AIR Gangtok is also being utilized the students; they are duly informed about any live classes concerning CBSE and NCERT. The school head also urged and guided the teachers and students to use a variety of online resources like DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing), SWAYAM, and many more.

Awareness of e-learning (Poster designed by Suraj Kr Sharma, HM)

Weekly/Fortnightly Progress Report

The school head constantly seeks progress reports of online/virtual learning or any other form of teaching-learning strategy adopted by the teachers on a weekly or fortnightly basis as and where applicable. The report is shared with the students and their parents; feedback is provided and necessary support is requested from the parents too.

NAME OF SCHOOL: GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOL LINGI PAYONG SOUTH SIKKIM

DIASTRICT: SOUTH SIKKIM

REPORT FOR THE PERIOD: APRIL 2020 – JULY 2020

DETAILS OF STUDENTS ATTENDING CLASSES DURING LOCKDOWN

SL NO	CLASS	TOTAL ENROLMENT	STUDENTS ATTENDING	% OF ATTENDANCE	REMARKS
1	LKG	3	0	0	
2	UKG	2	0	0	
3	I	0	0	0	
4	II	5	2	40%	
5	III	3	1	33%	
6	IV	9	6	67%	
7	V	5	5	100%	
8	VI	11	7	63%	
9	VII	12	7	58%	
10	VIII	17	11	65%	
11	IX	29	12	41	
12	X	23	10	44%	
	TOTAL	119	61	51%	

Date: 8.8.2020

Mr. Suraj Kumar
Headmaster
Lingi Payong

Curriculum Coverage by Teachers

Name: Lingi Paiyong Secondary School

District: South District

Report for the Period 1st – 15th May 2020

Sl. No	Name of the teacher	Classes Assigned	Subject Assigned	Syllabus Coverage
1.	C.R. Khatiwara	II	English	Lesson 1 to 3
2.	''	IV	Hindi	Lesson 1 to 4
3.	''	IV	G.K	Lesson 1 & 2
4.	''	V	Hindi	Lesson 1 to 4

Remarks:

Due to less attendance I am unable to do the online classes. Further I am planning to start school to home system by making worksheet from each lesson and I will personally visit the student's house and handover the worksheets, after one week I will collect the same and continue the same process.

Report by the subject teacher and compilation by the headmaster

App for English Speaking

The headmaster also developed an app for speaking English correctly using blocks. He acquired the knowledge by attending online workshops himself. The app could be shared through e-mail and WhatsApp which were used by the students and their parents too.

Virtual Competitions / Celebrations

The school under the guidance of the headmaster frequently organised virtual competitions for the students on different occasions. This step was necessary to provide the students a feeling of being in school although virtually. Also, this has helped the students to learn many new techniques and tools of video recording, editing, collage making, photography, etc. Such competitions and the opportunities provided to them for leisure helped them to take a break from the monotonous screen viewing and concentrate back to their virtual studies.

Online competition organised for students

Most Responsive Online/Virtual Learner Award

To motivate the students towards online/virtual learning, the school instituted Most Responsive Online/Virtual Learner Award. The attendance, participation, and performance of each student were recorded by the subject teacher. The students were

awarded prizes and certificates during the end of the session of 2020 which culminated in Feb 2021.

Cluster Level Trend Setter Award Instituted

The head of the school not only initiated various measures in his school only to encourage learning during the school closure caused due to Covid19 pandemic but also devised some strategies to encourage students at the cluster level too. One such step was the institution of Cluster Level Trend Setter Award for the students who excelled in academic performance in the Cluster Level Term End Examination. The aim was to motivate students to perform the best among its peer not only in the school but also in the whole cluster. Cluster Level

Trendsetter Award Ceremony for best academic performance during new normal

Collaboration with Community and Parents to ensure Student Learning

The onset of the Covid19 pandemic and subsequent closure of schools was a bolt in the blue for all parents. To keep the learning pace continued, the headmaster of the school also collaborated with the parents, SMC members, and other stakeholders.

Parents Meet through Cloud Meeting App

Parents and many SMC members were also not well versed with the cloud meeting apps through which teachers were supposed to take classes in most cases. Therefore, parents and SMCs were made used to the use of Google Meet and Zoom by the headmaster, and meetings were held through Zoom and Google Meet. Some younger parents and SMC members who were known to use such platforms also helped and guided their colleagues.

Video Link of SMC Meet: https://youtu.be/uMT8pDgWEo

Sensitizing community about virtual learning platforms

Once the parents/SMC members were well versed with the meeting platforms, they were sensitized about various learning resources available online like e-learning of NCERT, SWAYAM, DIKSHA, Swayam Prabha Channels, BYJUs, Vedanta, etc.

Students Tracking

Some parents and SMC members volunteered to conduct student tracking during school closure. They visited the residence of the students who were not able to attend virtual classes or another alternative mode of teaching-learning, inquired about their problems, and tried to solve their issues. This has also helped to keep a check on the dropout by students due to prolonged school closure.

Staff, SMC members and volunteers compiling data for students tracking
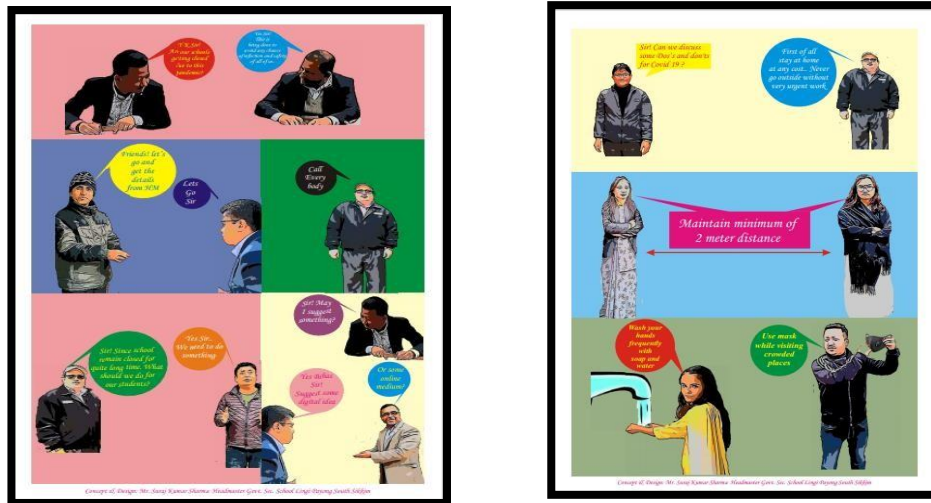
Organizing Virtual Competitions

SMC members and some parents coordinated with the school to organize various competitions during the lockdown and subsequent school closure. They guided the parents and students of certain houses/areas and encouraged them to participate in various competitions to keep them in touch with school and fellow students.

Covid19 Awareness

Parents and SMC members also collaborated with school teachers to generate awareness on Covid19 among the villagers as well as the students. This initiative helped to keep the students and parents informed about various dos and don'ts of Covid19 that prevented students from falling sick. As a result, the students continue to attend classes through various modes. In this regard, headmaster of the school also conceptualized

and designed an awareness comic for the students and parents.

Comic on Covid19 awareness designed and developed by the headmaster

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WoejBEQVYZc&list=PLSiPjXQ11pfac7VJn9ya1_JxSjbU_p_zQ&index=19

Way Forward

It is quite obvious that Covid19 is going to stay for quite a long time or unless a vaccine or any drug is being developed to cure the disease. Therefore, the alternative must be sought for coming days to keep the teaching-learning process continuous. Following plans are being proposed to ensure continuous learning in coming session (2021-22)

Creation of Wi-Fi Zone

Our students are scattered across a wide range of area under five 'panchayat' wards. There are certain places where the mobile connectivity is very poor. Therefore, plan is proposed by school to create certain Wi-Fi Zone where the students may gather to undertake classes. For this, one staff from school (or any other staff of nearby schools if they agree) will be designated to operate and monitor the Wi-Fi zone within his locality.

YouTube Channel of School

You tube channel of school has already been created and videos on Covid19 awareness, leisure activity of students has been uploaded. Plan is made to upload video lessons on various topics made by teachers of the school itself so that the students may feel more connected. The link to the school YouTube Channel is: https://youtube.com/channel/UCA9oTn8y0f7H1h_zDz0zFxQ

School Website Launched

Under his own initiative, headmaster has been able to develop a website for school www.govtsslingipayong.com at his own expense. The website has been made rich with

various contents required for the uninterrupted teaching-learning process. Alternative Academic Calendar (AAC) by NCERT/CBSE for secondary level and AAC by SCERT Sikkim for elementary level have been uploaded in the website. Video lessons through YouTube have also been uploaded in the website for easy access by the students and parents, if required. Talks are being made with the developers to make the website more interactive by providing login access to teachers, parents and students. https://youtu.be/eJ1x-SmjQN0?list=PLSiPjXQ11pfac7VJn9ya1_JxSjbU_p_zQ

App for School

Efforts are being made to develop an app exclusively for school which may run in offline mode as there is connectivity and power issues in the area. The app is planned to incorporate all teaching learning activities by students, and teachers and will also have monitoring mechanism. For developing the app, talks are on the way with the Alumni Association for providing the fund as a part of their initiative of 'Giving Back to My School'.

Volunteer Teaching

Due to the uneven distribution of the teachers and students across wide area, some students may remain unreachable due to various reasons. Therefore, the school has made a plan to identify volunteers from the community to take up the responsibility of providing learning support to such deprived students. A request has been made to the SMC members to identify and appoint such volunteers. It is decided to felicitate and honour such noble souls during annual result day in the school for their selfless services.

Contribution for Generator, Dongle, Tab and App

SMC members, parents and guardians, members of Alumni Association has agreed in letter to contribute to purchase a generator, dongle, Tabs for school which will be used to provide an uninterrupted learning experience to the students. The generator will be used for power backup for mobile, laptops, tabs, etc in case of prolonged power failure whereas the dongle and tab will be used in the development of the Wi-Fi zones. The community members and other stakeholders have also agreed to provide funds for the development of the offline app.

Conference Presentation

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1fc_j7WsMmw29qMMRZjN7HKvyLMKzhhPC/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=10370547766060522301&rtpof=true&sd=true