TRANSFORMATION IN INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM: A WAY FORWARD

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ABSTRACT

Education system shapes the future of students and provides a roadmap for their careers they want to pursue. With the time advancement, there are various challenges in quality of education, poor infrastructure, lack of skilled manpower and traditional curriculum followed by the students. So, educational reform is the need of an hour and in this direction the present research has been carried out purposively in three schools of Dehradun district and information pertaining to causative variables and suggestions regarding the transformation in educational system was gathered through an online Google tool survey, which led to 130 student responses in total. The results from the study showed that the majority of the causative variable for transforming education was traditional curriculum of the system, inaccessibility to the digital tools, quality of education and traces of digital illiteracy among the students. Furthermore, majority of the students suggested that there should be student counselors in schools appointed by the government, followed by authentic online courses designed in advance, reconsideration of the delivery and pedagogical methods, integration of personality development and Indian technology knowledge courses in the curriculum like in the field of yoga, Indian medicines, and etc. Students had no knowledge regarding the online portals of MOOCs, Swayam portals and this needs to be created awareness among them for their better development and performances. Thus, it can be concluded that students need to have more exposure towards the outer world and they shouldn't be confined to the bookish knowledge only.

KEYWORDS

Transforming Education, Traditional curriculum, Indian Technology Knowledge and Digital literacy

INTRODUCTION

The Indian education system needs a total overhauling. Indian teaching structure wasn't really well equipped with e-learning and with the COVID-19 outbreak; still students are following that fixed curriculum confined to pages focusing on certificates and degrees. This pandemic situation has significantly disrupted the higher education sector, which is a critical determinant of country's economy as India spent second most money in the education sector after defense. From the second week of March, 2020 state government had locked down the schools that not only affected the education of students but also the cancellation of board exams. India wasn't really well equipped with the e-learning or virtual classrooms but this outbreak has forced the educational system to pretend like it's easy and could be done even after 90 per cent of India's population is digital illiterate.

Indian government is the strong supporter of e-learning and has been actively developing tools to promote it by supporting research and development (R&D) projects at various academic educational institutes focusing on e-learning throughout India. These include content development, R&D technology initiatives, human resource development projects and faculty training initiatives to improve literacy through distance education. The Government of India has allocated around Rs 17,000 crore (US$ 2.55 billion) in 2017-18 towards skilling, employment generation, and providing livelihood to millions of youth, in order to boost the Skill India Mission. For young working professionals with a desire to escalate their careers faster, e-learning is convenient as they can pursue their degrees in their own space and time. But now it could be seen that all these efforts done by the government haven't really benefitted the grassroot people as many of them are still technology driven and haven't accepted the e-learning and virtual classes.

The structure of schooling and learning including teaching-assessment methodologies has been affected adversely with this locked down. Students are feeling anxious about their future as this session made them attend the virtual classes. Education system shapes the future of students and provides a roadmap for their careers they want to pursue. With the time advancement, there are various challenges in quality of education, poor infrastructure, lack of skilled manpower and traditional curriculum followed by the students. So, educational reform is the need of an hour. Keeping above factors in mind, the present study was designed with the objective to identify the causative variables and determine the suggestions for transforming the educational system in India.

METHODOLOGY

The present research was carried out purposively in three schools of Vikasnagar and Herbertpur block of Dehradun district namely St. Mary's Convent Senior Secondary School, CST School and Sapience School. The information pertaining to the causative variables and suggestions regarding the transformation in educational system was gathered through an online Google tool survey, which led to 130 student responses in total. The Statistical methods applied for data analysis were frequency and percentage method.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

MASS MEDIA UTILIZATION PATTERN

High School students were inferred about their mass media utilization pattern which is reported and tabulated in Table 1. The data shows that majority (73.85%) of the respondents possesses the personal mobile phones and 61.46 per cent use the mobile internet as their source of internet. The data regarding respondent's activity in social media reveals that 66.92 per cent are active on social media and all of them use the integrated message system (WhatsApp or messenger). More than half of the

respondents (57.69%) spent less than 2 hours in their social media applications. Furthermore, data also showed that more than half of them uses the Zoom media platform for their virtual classroom and found whatsapp or telegram groups effective in disseminating the information regarding their studies.

Table 1: Maas media utilization pattern of respondents

SN	Usage of mass media	f(%)N=130
1	**Possession of personal mobile phone**	
	• Yes	**96 (73.85)**
	• No	34 (26.15)
2	**Source of using Internet (n=96)**	
	• Mobile internet (3G/2G)	**59 (61.46)**
	• Broadband	25 (26.04)
	• Both	12 (12.50)
3	**Active in social media platforms**	
	• Yes	**87 (66.92)**
	• No	43 (33.08)
4	**Social media platforms where the students are active (n=87)***	
	• Facebook	73 (83.91)
	• Instagram	52 (59.77)
	• Twitter	11 (12.64)
	• Integrated messages (WhatsApp, Messenger, etc.)	**87 (100)**
5	**Time spent on social media applications**	
	• Less than 2 hours	**75 (57.69)**
	• 2-3 hours	42 (32.31)
	• 3-4 hours	9 (6.92)
	• More than 4 hours	4 (3.08)
6	**Tool or application used for online classes***	
	• Zoom	**71 (54.62)**
	• Google Meet	67 (51.53)
	• Skype	23 (17.69)
	• Next learning platform	54 (41.54)
	• Google classroom	39 (30.00)
7	**WhatsApp &Telegram school groups effective in disseminating the information to students**	
	• Yes	**89 (68.46)**
	• No	28 (21.54)
	• Maybe	13 (10.00)

Data in parenthesis shows the percentage
*Multiple Responses Table

CAUSATIVE VARIABLES RESULTING IN NEED TO CHANGE OF EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Information pertaining to the causative variables that felt the need of transforming the educational system has been shown in Figure 1. The results showed that most of the respondents (56.9% each) were agree with the need of cause that was traditional curriculum that was being followed in schools, followed by inefficient infrastructure and accessibility to digital tools and quality of teaching being deteriorated. 53 per cent of respondents strongly agree with the cause that e-learning during the outbreak is not suitable for the board appearing students and their future is at risk. Further, respondents also agreed with the fact that home environment is not suitable for the virtual classroom as it creates boredom and laziness during the study as many of them don't have separate rooms and internet connections that creates hurdle in their education. 44.6 per cent of respondents were neutral about the traces of digital illiteracy among the students and teachers.
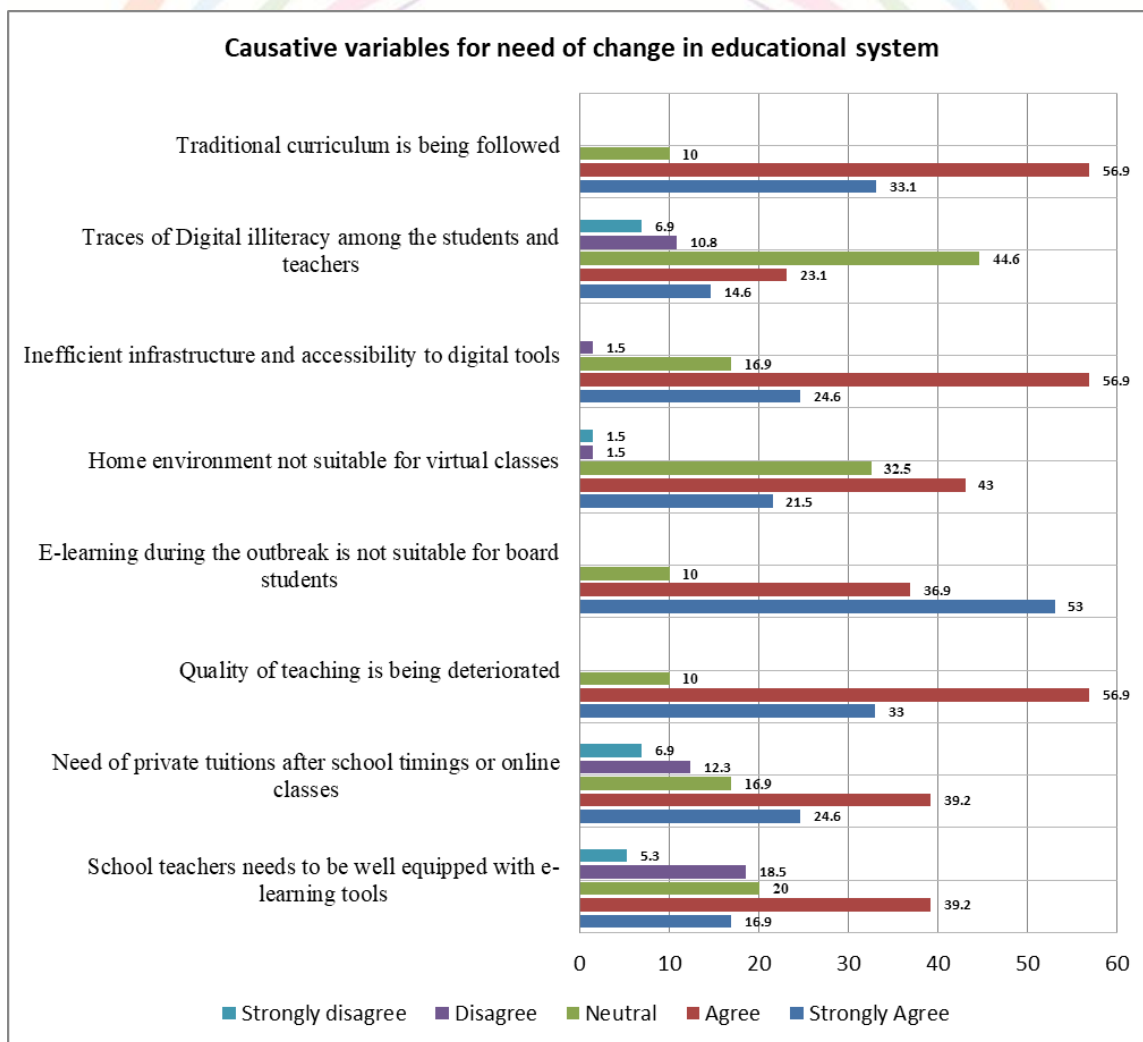

Figure 1: Causative variables for need of change in educational system

SUGGESTIONS FROM STUDENTS IN TRANSFORMING THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

The perusal of Figure 2 infers the suggestions collected from students in transforming the educational system. Data in figure 2 revealed that majority of the respondents suggested that there should be designing of authentic online courses (65.4%) and appointment of student counselor in schools (60%). More than half of the respondents (51.5%) suggested that there is need to rethink of higher educational system through integration of courses like Indian Technology Knowledge in the field of Yoga, Indian medicine, Architecture, etc. There should be the adoption of unique approach of amalgamating strong, basic, more practical based and applied courses involving the participation for overall development of students. Further, resulted also highlighted that there should be open sessions for career counseling of students (48.5%), transforming the traditional curriculum to more practical based solution (46.2%) and integration of e-learning through making the students accessible to digital tools and online platforms. According to Jain (2018) there is need to add entrepreneurial education among the students to add weight age in practical based and self-directed projects. There is also a need to add industry specific skills to provide them industry exposure and making them self-reliant.
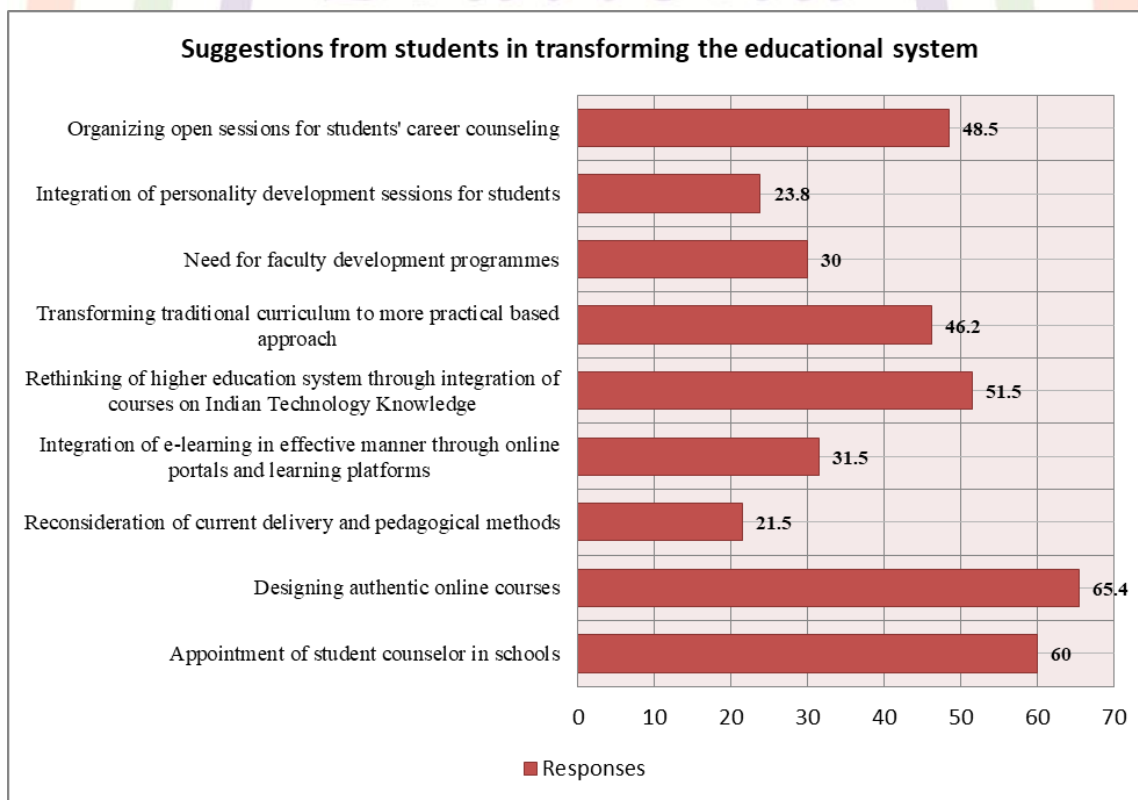

Figure 2: Suggestions from students in transforming the educational system

CONCLUSION

The data collected presents a very grim picture of high-school students and the traditional curriculum that was being followed from centuries. The structure of schooling and pedagogical methods needs to be transformed by reducing the burden from the students and integrating some new courses that are actually helpful in their lives like personality development, courses on Indian technology Knowledge, etc. Practical and solution centric approach should be adapted to studies that will broaden their knowledge and thinking making them leaders of tomorrow. Furthermore students also suggested that there should be authentic online courses designed by subject matter professionals and open sessions for their career counseling. Also, there should be a presence of student counselors to deal with various issues of students and guide them in a right direction. Lastly, there should be a spirit of coordination that is needed to prevail among the students over competition as students are only focusing on rat race when they can broaden their perspective in various other unexplored fields also.

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