

Mobility is game-changer in conventional education. What's next?

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In the past few weeks, the pandemic outbreak followed by a lockdown in many countries is reminding us of the volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity of the world. It is taking us through an experience that will help us rise in our way of work and business processes. The innovation heads have immersed themselves to immune the regular business functioning during a global health crisis.

On the other hand, technology has helped us not to lock down our social connections. While streets and some of the busiest places in our cities have fallen silent, we have begun interesting conversations from home – some in person and some online. Our smartphones have become our window to talk to our neighbours, friends and relatives. The mobile technology is certainly keeping the young and old entertained and engaged with old classic films. And the fourth estate, has become the centre stage for live music artists and stand up comedians. A lot has changed in the past few weeks.

Besides children, learners in higher education are exploring ways to be recreational. Teachers are unlearning and relearning the nuances of teaching online. With this, the audience for online education is surely changing.

Not many years from now, distance education was the only segment in higher education that offered **blended learning**, a mix of online and offline lectures. These students who applied for online programmes mostly came from Tier-II cities. But the demographics of this target audience are now evolving. New users shifting to online education are the management education aspirants who opted for entrance exams and are most likely using online up-skilling programmes. Recent studies show, almost 2.44 lakh students had applied for CAT 2019. The student number from other management exams such as XAT, MAT, ATMA, GMAT, CMAT is testimony to the demand for higher education which will gradually reflect on the need for online higher education segments. The startups in online education that once were connected to school going students will see a surge in the demand for online MBA education. The impact of current lockdowns in the conventional forms of education across the globe is clearly visible. It has made even the conventional classroom study in schools, colleges and B-schools to become accessible from any location on multiple devices. Educational institutes are steadily phasing online education and trying to cope with the academic calendar. The right application of technology could connect educational institutes to 1.3 billion students globally that have been unable to attend school or university as on March 23, 2020.

However, will mobility be the game changer in conventional education and what's next?

The new emerging forms that will keep learning non-disrupted by pandemics and emergency like situations will need a multi-stakeholder approach. Co-creation and collaboration with government, corporate organisations, start-ups and B-Schools have the potential to bring reach, experiential knowledge, technology and academic narrative together. The content will aim at imparting knowledge, improving interactivity and allowing hands-on learning from devices at home. The flexibility will allow the students to learn more in less time. While the impact will need to be measured for conventional schooling, college and university programmes, online education is certainly on cards for the education sector across the globe.

As the world will move to become more mobile in business and education in the coming months, the education reforms in India will witness a refreshing change as well. I anticipate that many educational institutes will explore blended learning sooner than later. The curriculum of the future will include classroom learning as well as online learning, to give students a new experience of knowledge development.

About the author



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Note: The views expressed in this article are solely author's own and do not reflect/represent those of Shiksha