Planning, Managing and Coping Education Online: A study of Teachers of Higher Educational Institution during COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

The objective of the study is to know how teachers at higher educational institutions are coping with the problems faced during online learning. Another attempt is made to understand how teachers are managing and planning online education. For this study researchers administered online questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent to 200 teachers working in the different universities and colleges of India. Out of 200 teachers 128 teachers filled the questionnaire and submitted online. Assistant professors, Associate professors and Professors replied as per their experience in managing and planning education online during lockdown period. Paper followed the Descriptive Research Design. Analysis of each question is done. Descriptive statistics is used to analyze the data and presentation of data. Findings are presented statement wise at findings section.

Keywords: Planning, Managing, Coping, Online Learning, Online Education, Higher Education.

Introduction

Corona Virus brings drastic changes in the education across the world. In India and other countries, universities have been advised to shift their education from formal classroom learning to online mode, so that the education of the students could not hampered. In this way e-learning poses many challenges to both teachers and students in terms of technology and access. On the other hand it is keeping everyone busy with writing notes, developing modules, video lectures, assignments etc.

Naomi George a teacher at Metro Delhi International School said that “teachers all over are struggling to make online learning work. It is important to just embrace this new reality and work within its limitations and use the opportunities” (The Hindu, 6th April, 2020)
What is online learning?

Online learning is most popular and novel idea to teach the students at very large scale. In online teaching-learning process there is no barrier of region and formal classroom. One can study at very distant place. There are many online courses in India and abroad offered by reputed universities. Students can get a maximum benefits by getting them enrolled in the same. But the consensus of this paper is to reflect on, how teachers are managing, planning and coping, education through various online modes? What problems they are facing to address the problems of their students? How effectively they are making use of technology in education and online teaching-learning? Online learning meets the need of an ever-growing population of the students. It is reflected by Joshua Stern, that it is very convenient to use online platforms for learning. Many researcher shows that it enhance the learning. In this type of learning students take more time to think and reflect. Continuous interaction between teachers- students and students-students create the platform for open discussion and sharing of resources online within second and minutes.

Challenges of Online Learning in India

Familiarity of a stakeholders with online teaching-learning is one of the challenge for online teaching and learning. It requires to have electronic gadgets i.e. computer, laptop, android mobile phone etc. Along with this there are various online platforms which charge the fee for online courses. It is also a challenge in front of teachers that it consumes more time for preparing PPT/PDF and presentations. The country like India where 68.8% of the population residing in the rural part of the country where accessibility of educational facilities are difficult to provide. Problem of internet connectivity at far-flung areas is a major challenge. Sometimes it is also a great concern in online learning as it is difficult to reach at every student without internet. Teachers at higher education are not well equipped with technological advancement, online education/teaching-learning. Another challenge could be proper communication between teacher and student. In this contemporary world, students are engulfed with an array of mobile technology and learning tools such as iPad, mobile, computers, iPhone, interactive audio or video conferencing, webcam and other computer based system (Bonk, 2004), hence it is required to make their effective use in online learning platforms.
Online learning platforms suggested by Government of India during Lockdown

University Grant Commission have advised to all the higher educational institution to take care of the education of the students via online platforms in the lockdown and maintain the social distancing in this pandemic disease. Free online content is offered by the many websites where students can get maximum of its benefit. There are several ICT initiatives of the MHRD, UGC and its Inter-University Centers (IUCs) - Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET) and Consortium for Educational Communication (CEC), in the form of digital platforms. These digital platforms can be accessed by the teachers, students, and researchers in universities and colleges for learning. One of the leading platform is SWAYAM online courses where students can get teaching-learning resources (https://swayam.gov.in/). UG/PG MOOCs hosts learning material of the SWAYAM UG and PG (Non-Technology) archived courses which can be beneficial for the students of undergraduate and postgraduate in different disciplines (ugcmoocs.inflibnet.ac.in). Every educational institution and even teachers are suggested to make use of E-PG Pathshala which provides high quality, curriculum-based, interactive e-content in 70 different post-graduate disciplines (http://epathshala.nic.in/). CEC websites provides more than 24110 modules and content coursework for 87 undergraduate courses (http://cec.nic.in/). Another important platform of online learning suggested by government is Swayamprabha is a group of 32 DTH channels which provides high-quality educational curriculum-based course contents in different disciplines (https://www.swayamprabha.gov.in/). Students can get curriculum based lectures from CEC-UGC YouTube channel totally free. National Digital Library is a digital repository of a vast amount of academic a students can access online (https://ndl.iitkgp.ac.in/). For researchers across the country can get Ph.D. thesis from across the Indian universities. It is a digital repository platform of 2, 60,000 Indian Electronic Theses and Dissertations for research students free and open. e-Shodh Sindhu provides current as well as archival access to more than 15,000 core and peer-reviewed journals and a number of bibliographic, citation and factual databases (https://ess.inflibnet.ac.in/). Vidwan is a database of experts where information about experts to peers, prospective collaborators, funding agencies policymakers and research scholar in the country is provided. (https://vidwan.inflibnet.ac.in/)
Participants of the study:

In this paper college and university teachers were the participants. Assistant Professors, Associate Professors and Professors have participated in the study. Participants were divided on the basis of experience, gender, qualification, and designation. These participants were selected from the different colleges and universities of the country. Figure below is showing the percentage of the participants.

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<th>Participants of the study</th>
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<td>Govt. 56.80%</td>
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<td>Private 24.80%</td>
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<td>Other 2.40%</td>
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<td>Professors 13.50%</td>
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<td>Ph.D. 76.40%</td>
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<td>Associate Professors 23.80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female 59.50%</td>
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<td>MPhil 7.10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Professor 62.70%</td>
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<td>Male 59.50%</td>
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<td>Post-graduate 15%</td>
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<td>Less than ten years 33.10%</td>
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<td>Assistant Professor 62.70%</td>
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<td>Associate Professor 23.80%</td>
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*Figure no.1. Showing the participants of the study*

Methodology:

- Descriptive Research Design was followed.
- All the teachers working at the different higher educational institutions using online teaching learning process were considered as population under study.
- Teachers at higher educational institutions of India were considered as sample.
- Convenient Sampling technique was applied to collect the data.
- Self-prepared electronic questionnaire were used to collect the data.
- For data analysis descriptive statistics were applied as per the nature of the study.
Findings of the study:

The findings are presented statement wise.

1. Which of the following gadget you are using to teach the students online?

   It was found that 25% of the teachers at higher education institution use computer to teach online during the CORONA-19 Pandemic. 73.4% of the participants use laptops, 76.6% used smartphone, 9.4% use iPad/tablets and very less percentage of teachers at higher educational institution use mobile, IWB, chalkboard, kindle, smartboard etc. It was found that maximums of teachers are using smartphone and laptops as they are easily accessible and easy to handle.

2. I am using this application to teach students online.

   It was found that 60.9% of the teachers relied on the ZOOM application to teach the students online. 64.8% of the teachers were using WhatsApp, 30.5% of the teachers relied on the google classroom, SKYPE were used by the 12.5% of the teachers. It is found that 22.7% of the teachers used other ways/applications to teach online. Overall it was found that maximum of teachers are using WhatsApp to teach online as it is easy to operate and every student can easily be available on the application. Print material, audio, videos etc. can be shared with number of students through the application. Another new application ZOOM were also used by many teachers. At third number google classroom is being used and very less number of the teachers use SKYPE.

3. I manage students online easily than face to face interaction.

   It was found that 10.9% of the teachers are strongly disagree and 32.8% of the teachers are disagree with the statement which means they do not support the statement and believed that managing online is not easy, it is difficult to manage them in online education than classroom education. It was found that they believe in managing students in formal classroom and supports classroom education than online. Along with this there were also some opposite responses found as it was revealed that 21.9% of the teachers were agree with the statement which means that they consider online education best to manage the students than formal classroom and face to face interaction. In other way there were 28.1% of the teachers were Neutral to the statement.
4. My work performance is improved by online classes.

It was found that 28.1% of the teachers were disagree with the statement which means they do not support the statement and believed their work performance is not improved by online teaching. In this way the opposite responses were found as it was found that 32% of the teachers are agree with the statement which means their work performance is improved by online classes. 2.4% were found strongly agree. In other way there were 29.7% of the teachers were Neutral to the statement.

5. It is easy for me to create presentation through online mode.

It was found that 14.1% of the teachers were disagree with the statement which means they do not support the statement and believed that it is difficult to create presentation online to teach the students. In this way the opposite responses were found as it was found that 45.3% of the teachers are agree with the statement which means they are well versed with the skill to create the online presentation. Along with this 14.1% were found strongly agree with the statement and they also accept that it is quite easy for them to create online presentation. In other way there were 27.7% of the teachers were Neutral to the statement.

6. It is comfortable for me to synthesize online instruction and material.

It was found that 12.5% of the teachers were disagree with the statement which means they do not support the statement and believed that it is difficult to synthesize the online instruction and material. In this way the opposite responses were found as it was found that 53.9% of the teachers are agree with the statement which means they are well versed with the skill to synthesize the online instruction and material. Along with this 10.9% were found strongly agree with the statement and they also accept that it is quite easy for them to synthesize online instruction and material. In other way there were 21.1% of the teachers were Neutral to the statement.

7. Planning lessons online is beneficial.

It was found that 16.4% of the teachers were disagree with the statement which means they do not support the statement and believed that it is not beneficial to plan lessons online. In this way the opposite responses were found as it was found that 53.9% of the teachers are agree with the statement which means they consider that planning lessons online is beneficial. Along
with this 10.9% were found strongly agree with the statement and they also accept that planning lessons online is beneficial. In other way there were 21.1 % of the teachers were Neutral to the statement.

8. I facilitate students’ group work online.

It was found that 14.8 % of the teachers were responded that they always facilitate student’s group work through online teaching. 32 % of the teachers responded that they facilitate the same oftently. 43.8% responded that they facilitate group work online sometimes. There were 7.8% of the respondents who responded that they rarely facilitate students’ group work online. Only 1 respondents responded never which means he/she never facilitate student’s group work through online teaching.

9. I encourage peer-feedback among my students during online teaching.

It was found that 31.3 % of the teachers were responded that they always encourage peer-feedback among their students during online teaching 29.7 % of the teachers responded that they encourage peer-feedback among their students during online teaching oftently. 26.6 % responded that they encourage peer-feedback among their students during online teaching sometimes. There were 10.2% of the respondents who responded that encourage peer-feedback among their students during online teaching. Only 2.3% of the respondents responded never which means they never encourage peer-feedback among their students during online teaching.

10. I have experienced that it is difficult to teach online.

It was found that 10.2 % of the teachers were strongly disagree with the statement which means they do not face any difficulty in teaching students online. 35.9% of the respondent responded that they are disagree with the statement which means do not face any difficulty in teaching students online. In this way the opposite responses were found as it was found that 19.5 % of the teachers are agree with the statement which means they faces some kinds of difficulties in teaching students online. Along with this 10.2% were found strongly agree with the statement and they faces some kinds of difficulties in teaching students online. In other way there were 28.9 % of the teachers were Neutral to the statement.
11. I face difficulty while preparing video lectures.

It was found that 3.1% of the teachers were responded that they always face difficulty while preparing video lectures. 15.6% of the teachers responded that face difficulty while preparing video lectures oftently. 45.3% responded that they face difficulty while preparing video lectures sometimes. There were 11.1% of the respondents who responded that they rarely face difficulty while preparing video lectures. 23.4% respondents responded never which means they never face difficulty while preparing video lectures.

12. I feel more comfortable in classroom teaching than online teaching

It was found that only 2.3% of the teachers were strongly disagree with the statement which means they do not feel more comfortable in classroom teaching than online teaching. 8.6% of the respondent responded that they are disagree with the statement which means they also do not feel more comfortable in classroom teaching than online teaching. In this way the opposite responses were found as it was found that 29.7% of the teachers are agree with the statement which means they feel more comfortable in classroom teaching than online teaching. Along with this 36.7% were found strongly agree with the statement meaning they feel more comfortable in classroom teaching than online teaching. In other way there were 27.7% of the teachers were Neutral to the statement.

13. I Manage time well during online teaching.

It was found that 32.8% of the teachers were responded that they always manage time well during online teaching. 29.7% of the teachers responded manage time well during online teaching. Oftently. 29.7% responded that they sometimes manage time well during online teaching. There were 3.9% of the respondents who responded that they rarely manage time well during online teaching. 3.1% respondents responded never which means they do not manage time well during online teaching.

14. Students participate more actively during online teaching.

It was found that 5.5% of the teachers were responded that Students always participate more actively during online teaching. 29.7% of the teachers responded that students often participate more actively during online teaching. 29.7% responded that they sometimes participate more actively during online teaching. There were 3.9% of the respondents who responded that students rarely participate more actively during online teaching. 3.1%
respondents responded never which means they do not participate more actively during online teaching.

15. Students’ progress can be track continuously in online teaching.

It was found that only 3.1% of the teachers were strongly disagree with the statement which means they believe that Students’ progress cannot be track continuously in online teaching. 30.5% of the respondent responded that they are disagree with the statement which means they Students’ progress cannot be track continuously in online teaching. In this way the opposite responses were found as it was found that 32.8.7% of the teachers are agree with the statement which means Students’ progress can be track continuously in online teaching. Along with this only 1.6% were found strongly agree with the statement meaning Students’ progress can be track continuously in online teaching. In other way there were 32% of the teachers were Neutral to the statement.

16. I am available all the time to address students’ queries.

It was found that only 77.3% of the teachers replied yes for the statement which means they are available all the time to address students’ queries. Along with this rest of them replied no which means they are not available all the time to address students’ queries.

17. I invest my maximum time in preparing online classes.

It was found that only 1.6% of the teachers were strongly disagree with the statement which means invest my maximum time in preparing online classes. 14.1% of the respondent responded that they are disagree with the statement which means invest my maximum time in preparing online classes. In this way the opposite responses were found as it was found that 48.4% of the teachers are agree with the statement which means invest my maximum time in preparing online classes. Along with this only 9.4% were found strongly agree with the statement meaning invest my maximum time in preparing online classes. In other way there were 26.6% of the teachers were Neutral to the statement.

18. Every student access my online class without any difficulty.

It was found that only 7.8% of the teachers were strongly disagree with the statement which means every student face some kind of difficulties while accessing online class. 34.1%
of the respondent responded that they are disagree with the statement which means every student face some kind of difficulties while accessing online class. In this way the opposite responses were found as it was found that 32. % of the teachers are agree with the statement which means every student access my online class without any difficulty. Along with this only 5.5% were found strongly agree with the statement meaning every student access my online class without any difficulty. In other way there were 20.3 % of the teachers were Neutral to the statement.

19. Students do not feel bored during online class.

It was found that only 2.3 % of the teachers were strongly disagree with the statement which Students feel bored during online class. 15.6 % of the respondent responded that they are disagree with the statement which means students feel bored during online class In this way the opposite responses were found as it was found that 32. % of the teachers are agree with the statement which means students do not feel bored during online class. Along with this only 8.6% were found strongly agree with the statement meaning students do not feel bored during online class. In other way there were 41.4 % of the teachers were Neutral to the statement.

20. I plan well in advance the assessment procedure for the students.

It was found that 32.5 % of the teachers were responded that they always plan well in advance the assessment procedure for the students. 43 % of the teachers responded they often plan well in advance the assessment procedure for the students. 19.5 % responded that they sometimes I plan well in advance the assessment procedure for the students. There were 3.1% of the respondents who responded that they rarely plan well in advance the assessment procedure for the students. 3.1% respondents responded never which means they never plan well in advance the assessment procedure for the students.

21. I plan well in advance the learning points.

It was found that 57 % of the teachers were responded that they always plan well in advance the learning points. 25 % of the teachers responded they often plan well in advance the learning points. 14.8 % responded that they sometimes plan well in advance the learning points. There were 2.3 % of the respondents who responded that they rarely plan well in advance the learning points.
22. I teach the students with daily lesson plan.

It was found that only 3.1% of the teachers were strongly disagree with the statement which means they do not teach the students with daily lesson plan. 5.5% of the respondent responded that they are disagree with the statement which means they do not teach the students with daily lesson plan. In this way the opposite responses were found as it was found that 52.3% of the teachers are agree with the statement which means they teach students with daily lesson plan. Along with this only 16.4% were found strongly agree with the statement meaning they teach the students with daily lesson plan. In other way there were 22.7% of the teachers were Neutral to the statement.

23. I face problem in receiving the assignments from the students.

It was found that 7% of the teachers were responded that they always face problem in receiving the assignments from the students. 22.7% of the teachers responded they often face problem in receiving the assignments from the students. 36.7% responded that they sometimes face problem in receiving the assignments from the students. There were 20.3% of the respondents who responded that they rarely face problem in receiving the assignments from the students. 12.5% respondents responded they never face problem in receiving the assignments from the students.

24. I planned examination pattern in advance as it will be easy to conduct exam after lockdown.

It was found that only 68% of the teachers replied yes for the statement which means they planned examination pattern in advance as it will be easy to conduct exam after lockdown. Along with this rest of them replied no which means they do not planned examination pattern to conduct exam after lockdown.

25. I motivate the students to use online learning platforms.

It was found that 51.6% of the teachers were responded that they always motivate the students to use online learning platforms. 32.8% of the teachers responded they often motivate the students to use online learning platforms. 12.5% responded that they sometimes motivate the students to use online learning platforms. There were only 1.6% of the respondents who responded that they rarely face motivate the students to use online learning platforms. 1.6% respondents responded they never motivate the students to use online learning platforms.
26. I respond student’s queries with positive vibes.

It was found that 78.9% of the teachers were responded that they always respond student’s queries with positive vibes. 16.4% of the teachers responded they often respond student’s queries with positive vibes. 3.1% responded that they sometimes respond student’s queries with positive vibes. There were only 1.6% of the respondents who responded that they rarely respond student’s queries with positive vibes.

27. Students feel free to discuss with me their queries.

It was found that only 3.1% of the teachers were strongly disagree with the statement which means Students do not feel free to discuss with them their queries. In this way the opposite responses were found as it was found that 46.1% of the teachers are agree with the statement which means Students feel free to discuss their queries with them. Along with this 43.8% were found strongly agree with the statement meaning Students feel free to discuss their queries with them. In other way there were 7% of the teachers were Neutral to the statement.

28. I spare some time in counselling the students when needed

It was found that 60.9% of the teachers were responded that they always spare some time in counselling the students when needed. 26.6% of the teachers responded they often spare some time in counselling the students when needed. 10.2% responded that they sometimes spare some time in counselling the students when needed. There were only 1.6% of the respondents who responded that they rarely spare some time in counselling the students when needed.

29. I am empathetic with my students and staff.

It was found that 63.3% of the teachers were responded that they always are empathetic to their students and staff. 24.2% of the teachers responded they often empathetic with their students and staff. 11.9% responded that they sometimes empathetic with their students and staff.

30. I encourage this approach while online teaching.

It was found that 78.9% of the teachers were responded that they encourage student-centric approach while online teaching. 7% of the teachers responded they encourage teacher-centric approach while online teaching. 3.1% responded that they encourage authoritarian
approach while online teaching. There were 10.2% of the respondents who responded that they encourage other approaches while online teaching.

31. It should be compulsory to teach some portion of any regular course through online.

It was found that only 22.8% of the teachers were strongly disagree with the statement which means they do no support to teach some portion of any regular course compulsory through online. 10.2% of the respondent responded that they are disagree with the statement which they also do no support to teach some portion of any regular course compulsory through online. In this way the opposite responses were found as it was found that 41.7% of the teachers are agree with the statement which means they support to teach some portion of any regular course compulsory through online. Along with this only 22.8% were found strongly agree with the statement meaning they support to teach some portion of any regular course compulsory through online. In other way there were 20.5% of the teachers were Neutral to the statement.

Discussion:

Unuakhalu M, & Kumar, A. (2013), conducted a study and focused on the teaching online programming courses using collaborative methods. In this way researcher suggested various methods to provide cooperative programming. Betty A. Barr & Sonya F. Miller, (2013) conducted a study entitled “Higher education: The online teaching and learning experience”. In this endeavor author have addressed the online education, its strength and limitation. The researcher also focused on various online teaching tools, professional development through online learning platforms, best practices in online learning and teaching is also discussed. So it can be discussed here that number of studies have been conducted in the field of online learning and it is promoted at every educational site. One of the teacher replied that “Actually I have recently started using this technique and I encourage students to message me their queries, only a few are responding. I am so busy preparing ppts which require lot of time that I haven’t talked to student, one to one, which I plan for the next week when all my lectures are delivered. I also plan to use zoom for group discussion on different topics.” McShane, K. (2007) conducted a study entitled “Integrating face-to-face and online teaching: academics' role concept and teaching choices”. Well it was found in the study that academics became more conscious of their teaching as a result of the decisions they have had to make in combining live and online modes. Therefore academics were enthusiastic
about web-based teaching which has its great importance in online learning. Online discussion was conducted by educationalist, Principals, participants were ABRCM national Secretary, DU, NC Web Director Dr. Geeta Bhat and other members have participated in the discussion. It has been focus in the discussion that in this difficult situation of lockdown across the country it is required to increase the morale of the students, teachers and society. At this difficult time the responsibility of the teachers become more crucial to aware the society and educate their students through possible efforts as much can teachers do. In this way online learning is only an important platform to continue the study of the students without any interruption (Prof.R. K. Mittal, 2020, Bansilal University). Along with this it was reflected by NDTF Secretary Dr. Rakesh Pandey said that along with formal education it is quite important in some areas of study and students have to give priority to online learning. It can be supported here from the responses of the respondents as “some of the respondents replied that “Online teaching can never replace class room teaching. But in unusual situation the institution can encourage the teacher to prepare some online recorded lectures for students consumption followed by one discussion platform for clarity which can be held with smaller groups. Addressing large scale students is difficult”. In this COVID-19 Pandemic every educational institute is promoting online learning through various technological platforms. In this way every government and educational agencies at state and national level realize the importance of online teaching and learning. As it was found in the study that 60.9% of the teachers have used the ZOOM application to teach the students online and video-conferencing but in a fresh blow to Zoom, India's Ministry of Home Affairs issued an advisory on the use of the video conferencing app. It has said the use of the platform is "not safe. Hence it can be discussed here that teachers should avoid the ZOOM application to teach students online. The results of the study are given in the findings section.

Recommendations and Suggestions:

It is required to ensure the good internet access in every educational institution and government should provide internet access to all educational institution. Training of teachers with regard to technological advancements is required to promote online learning. To benefit all the learners it is suggested and recommended that SWAYAM, MHRD and other educational bodies should work on development of e-contents in all regional languages. More focus of the
higher educational institution to develop MOOCs can be beneficial in this regard. It is observed in the study that remote area students and poor students are facing a lot of difficulties accessing online education. So strong vision is required to tackle the problem of these affected students at very distant places. As it has been observed in the study that some subjects are hard to teach and theoretical subjects are required more discussion in the class. To have an effective system of online teaching, there are certain measures to be adopted: the institution must have a unique system of LMS, there is a mode of assessment that is feasible to be committed online adequate technical support and internet speed. In a country like India, where students still faces network issues. Along with this, teachers must motivate students for self-disciplined, self-directive and make them responsible for positive attitude towards online learning. Proper time management is required that should be reflected in the time table for conducting online classes. It is required and recommended to government and educational institutions to provide useful and proprietary online lecture software to the students and teachers.

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