

Education in Opportunity: Rethinking the Crisis in a Positive Way

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Most of the words around, are negative in tone when it comes to discussing the impact of the pandemic on education. It is quite predictable because education sector is the single largest sector facing the most of the lock down time, intensity, and spread. While it provided security to our children from mass infection of COVID-19, it created an unprecedented crisis in education as a whole, in a scale comparable only to events like World War. Due to lock down, education stopped for many. A portion of social and economic class has fallen backward. But in a time of wide digital reach, it may not be fully appropriate to explain this phenomenon, from a fully education angle, rather it may be due to new poverty factor. On the positive side, a positive and qualitative transformation is taking place, which would not be possible without this big push of the pandemic. I present such instances and possible scenario from participant observation, as an interested researcher in education, as a guardian myself, and as a managing committee board member' of a non-government, non-profit school. Teaching, teachers and students had to move online, overnight from their traditional class, without any formal preparation. All learned it by doing. Now, since they are publicly exposed to guardians and others, teachers' effort, caution, and self-preparation improved dramatically. Students and teachers both has become accustomed to online materials, which flourished both in quantity and quality. Parents have become more aware of the teaching learning processes' of their kids' schooling. Regulators are analyzing the sector deeper than before and becoming flexible in allowing education sector actors to try innovations in teaching and assessment at institution level. So institutional level reforms uplifting the intrinsic quality of education standards, teaching/learning, and teachers and replicating the successes' will be very much possible now and in future. This is something, which has not been possible, rather paradoxically, despite increasing government commitment and budget. But a key triggering factor will be a combination of smart regulations and effective managing committee, capable of developing governance and management mechanism, system, and processes, and monitoring the operational transformation at institutional level. One possible thing to do is to strengthen the enabling mechanism' education sector regulatory agencies and to focus on capacity building' of managing committee' or governing body' of the institutions.

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