IAO

JULY 2020

ACCREDITOR

Featured

HOW EDTECH CAN TRANSFORM FURTHER EDUCATION POST-LOCKDOWN

LOCKDOWN, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

Exclusive

SCHOOLS POST LOCKDOWN

- WHAT? WHY? HOW?

CONTENTS

Editor's Note...

Majority of the permanent lockdown was spent in speculations and plans for post-quarantine life. 'When this is all over, we will..." replaced the good ol' goodbye greetings. Safe to say, life post lockdown became something that people were looking forward to.

The much-anticipated post-lockdown is much different than what we imagined it to be. A large area of human life has been permanently marked by quarantine. As much as everyone hated life in cages, people find it hard to let go of many habits that they picked during the lockdown, e.g. Use of digital technologies. Micro devices, social media, computers, and other tech devices acted as a savior for everyone.

Ed-Tech became a new norm. Students and teachers both used the assistance of internet and digital devices to keep the learning up. Now that lockdown is over, everyone is finding it hard to put down their phones. Experts believe that life post down may not ever be the same again. The fragments of lockdown will continue to impact our present and future, and not necessarily in the wrong way. Teachers may finally understand the importance of technology. This would be a positive thing for students, as Gen-Z finds it more convenient to study in a modern way that includes the use of technology.

In our July issue, we are focusing on academic life post-lockdown and a few other matters. We are also covering the challenges that students and teachers may face in a hybrid class and what they can do to overcome them.

Jeff Wright, Editor in Chief

HOW EDTECH CAN TRANSFORM FURTHER EDUCATION POST-LOCKDOWN

By Dana Dabbous

The silver lining of the Covid-19 pandemic could well be a revolution in how further education utilizes the power of EdTech

It has long been accepted that technology in education is vital for filling the digital skills gap. Successive governments have promoted more generous use of EdTech in the FE sector. This includes the Department for Education's 2019 EdTech strategy and, more recently, the EdTech demonstrator schools and colleges programmer. The closure of schools and colleges during the Covid-19 pandemic has only turbocharged this need. In short, the lockdown has focused minds.

Following Covid-19, there is now a greater need for educational institutions to adopt digital tools, and at a faster pace than ever before. Luckily, many FE colleges are already well underway with this transformation. Existing digitalization has helped many to respond well and adapt to the situation we now find ourselves in. This is particularly important for colleges. They are front and center in minimizing the UK's technical and digital skills gap. In turn, this allows the economy to keep up on the world stage.

Because each of the colleges in the study had well-established digital strategies, we knew they would offer valuable insights. But what did we find? And how can these findings help other FE colleges as we emerge from lockdown?
Firstly (and reassuringly) we found that EdTech undoubtedly improves digital literacy. All the colleges in the study showed that, when applied effectively, EdTech can support learning and teaching. It gave students a taste of how digital tools are used in the workplace. Staff were also impressed by how technology could streamline administrative tasks, freeing up time and creating scope for a more excellent range of classroom activities.

Perhaps more importantly, though, the research identified challenges. One key issue, for instance, was staff confidence. Lecturers across all the colleges in the study were often disheartened by tech mishaps, mainly if these occurred in front of students. To tackle this—and other teething problems—constant and consistent support was needed. Where possible, a dedicated digital support team proved highly effective in helping staff and students to adapt. Combined with the on-hand backing, CPD workshops and individual training, this promoted a graded cultural shift towards greater creativity, collaboration and openness.

Anyone who has implemented digital tech knows the practical challenges it can pose. Hardware issues, poor Wi-Fi, and just ensuring that tech-use stays industry-relevant are common factors (all are highlighted in the study). Ultimately though, these problems are manageable. This leads to perhaps the most exciting finding: staff and students needed to understand the transformative potential of EdTech before fully embracing it. A widespread concern—especially among those unaccustomed to digital tools—was that tech 'holds all the power'. But once staff and students understood how EdTech could democratize the learning process (i.e. giving them power, rather than taking it away) then uptake vastly improved.

As staff confidence increased, they were keen to share their newfound skills. One college highlighted how lecturers shared blended learning techniques with staff from other disciplines. This included traditional teaching, video feedback, learning apps and games to support students. This led to entirely new approaches. Ultimately, integrating digital tools in and out of the classroom increased student engagement. Staff remarked how students' enjoyment of learning visibly increased.

The challenge for other colleges, then, lies in reaching this goal. How do we break down resistance to change, and help staff and students understand the benefits that digital tools can bring?

The full report details each college's digital strategy, offering insight for how others can follow suit. It explains how they developed their digital frameworks, the technologies they adopted, how they created physical and digital spaces, and—crucially—how they supported their staff and students. While each college had different objectives, a common aim was to create a culture of openness, support and experimentation. Before the pandemic, this was desirable. Today, it is essential. To discover all these insights, you can download the full research report here.

In these uncertain times, ready-access to education is more important than ever. The events of the last few months have only highlighted this fact. Despite the pandemic, though, I believe there is a glimmer of hope. The silver lining in all this could well be a revolution in how further education utilizes the power of EdTech. Because if now is not the time to fully embrace it, when will be?

IAO LMS - VENTURING INTO THE WORLD OF ED-TECH

A comprehensive e-learning platform for teachers and students that makes the dream of advance online learning a reality!

IAO's new learning management program is the ultimate learning platform for students.

LMS makes learning easier for;

- Students abroad
- Busy professionals trying to learn
- Students stuck in lockdown
- Online learning institutions

Get IAO LMS and learn from home now!

✉ Email - care@iao.org

📞 Call - 1-855-5237-426

www.iao.org

LOCKDOWN, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

There are no quick fixes - moving beyond tokenism requires time and understanding.

By Hannah Jepson

As someone who has worked in education for most of their career, I am not surprised by the way many in the sector have responded to this most challenging of times. I am proud to belong to a community so committed to ensuring everyone, including our most vulnerable young people, get the support they need to thrive in the world. I have been heartened and inspired by the innovation and unrelenting dedication during lockdown by so many schools who have been much more than teachers and colleagues for their communities during this time.

A SAFE PHYSICAL SPACE

When we think about the word community we often think about the psychological aspect of the word – It's the knowing that you belong, but another essential part of feeling like you belong to a community is physical – having a physical space which feels safe, affirming, where you see yourself reflected and where you can spend time with your chosen family because many of your actual family may have rejected you for whatever reason. The withdrawal of this physical space for minoritised or marginalized communities during this time will most certainly be having an impact on identity, on self-worth, on well-being and on that sense of belonging we all need.

Part of the puzzle that's so often missing in schools is a meaningful focus on diversity, inclusion and belonging. Education is way behind where it needs to be in terms of this work, and I think now more than ever is the time to take stock and think about the changes that are necessary to ensure staff and young people feel indeed included at school and work.

We must use this time to reflect and come back better.

As part of the work, I do I am continually reminding schools that they are the key to sending young people out into the world as accepting, open-minded and open-hearted citizens, especially if the messages they are getting at home form something of an echo chamber for bigotry, intolerance and discrimination. My fear at the moment is that lots of young people will have left diverse pupil communities and found themselves locked down in homogeneous environments where at the most significant difference is absent and at the worst difference is ridiculed, minimized and outright denied.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION WORK TAKES TIME.

As a Diversity and Inclusion specialist, I've been fortunate to have been involved in several exciting conversations with schools following recent events in the world that have further highlighted without a doubt the vast inequities that exist for specific communities. Schools have noted the burning platform here, and I'm pleased to say that for many this is the start of a programme of real change. But a word of warning from someone who works in developing D&I strategies across sectors – this work takes time, diversity and Inclusion is not a bolt-on activity. This work is as critical as ensuring that we have food on the table at lunchtime for our young people and the heating is on in our schools over the winter months.k.

THE BUILDING BLOCKS FOR PROFOUND CHANGE

So, if you're thinking about embarking on this work in your schools next year here's my advice around diversity and Inclusion:

- **Act now but take your time:** As a school, you may have been triggered by recent events In the U.S. and the pandemic has further highlighted inequities for you. However, it is not the right response to do something one-off, tokenistic and knee-jerk here. Think deeply about the work that needs to happen for your school, take your time to see what the issues are within your context and set about sustainably doing the work, investing in expertise to help you along your journey. One training session will not solve the problem, and each action must be part of a broader change piece.

- **Data-informed action:** Before you take any action to gather as much data as you can – both qualitative and quantitative, stories and statistics. You need to get a clear idea of the current state before you can move forward with the right solutions. Use the data to inform your inclusion journey meaningfully.

- **Move beyond tokenism:** It isn't enough to say we have two black women on our board and three of the board are gay – you need to listen, learn and understand others' lived experiences to make real change happen in your schools. Consider how you can amplify those voices and ask yourself: What is it that those people bring to your board that means you have diverse thinking?

- **Inclusion as a priority for everybody:** I'm sure that as schools continue to plan for the new academic year diversity and Inclusion will not be top of the list of things to think about, but that doesn't mean that when this is all over, and it will be at some point, the issues around the significant lack of diversity and Inclusion in education will remain. To quote Gerry Robinson, an openly gay headteacher at a school in North London, *'Children's lives can't wait'*, and as we have seen so clearly during the last few months, diversity and Inclusion is a matter of life and death.

For me it's simple: diverse teams are better at solving complex problems, and people perform better at work and school when they can be their authentic selves when the culture of that school creates the conditions in which people don't have to hide who they are. When that happens people are happier, they are more productive, they're more committed, and they are healthier. This isn't my opinion. The research tells us this is the case and in education now more than ever, we need to be prioritising diversity and Inclusion for our staff and young people, we need to show them that there is a richness in society that they can be a part of and we need to be investing in developing diverse, open-hearted, open-minded leaders of the future.

IAO

IAO'S MONTHLY PUBLISHED MAGAZINES

Get yourself or your institute featured in IAO's prestigious magazine published monthly!

5 e-Learning Trends that will Shape 2020

With the beginning of the new year 2020, a lot of new educational trends were introduced. Safe to say, 2019 was the year when online learning/distance learning thrived. Technocrats and educationalists were quite glad about new developments in the educational sector. A lot of progress was made which was attributed to new technological developments and discoveries.

Although, this progress was not only attributed to technological development but the cooperation and coordination of teachers as well. There was a huge shift among teachers as they became more inclined and flexible towards online learning. Teachers' professional development also become a norm among educators which resulted in birth of a new group of modern teachers. At the beginning of the new year, all the educationalists were looking forward to the technological changes and development that would take place. Although the unfortunate circumstances due to COVID-19 may have sped up the process of technological development in the educational sector.

Traditional ways of learning such as face to face/proximal learning are rare sites as they have been replaced with distance learning. The developments that educationalists were looking forward to are finally here. Here are a few e-learning trends that are going to shape 2020;

14

WHY TR ARE NO

The word "back pay attention covers the c transformati students. T modern stu motivation The backb of the cu student rates in mone impo the

www.iao.org

SCHOOLS POST LOCKDOWN - WHAT? WHY? HOW?

BY DR BIJAYA KUMAR SAHOO

The need of the hour is to adopt a hybrid model for learning with fully equipped online tools and assessment for evaluations; redesigning and restructuring the curriculum is now a necessity.

When schools reopen with restrictions fearing concern of safety, it might be easy for high-end schools to adhere to all precautionary measure, ensuring social distancing. Still, it is a real challenge for regular schools.

Few outlined significant measures
- Taking adequate steps to Upgrade School and technology Infrastructure
- Define safety, hygiene, and behavior protocols
- Training all staffs on COVID related regulations
- Digitalize all admin paperwork and fee payment
- Educate students, parents, on skills for surviving a pandemic safety
- Restructure class schedules, curriculum including digitalizing assessments
- Set up counselling sessions for students and staff for managing stress/ anxiety
- Collaborate with health workers and help with contact tracing

A model for Government Regulations in the schools that can be emulated - School may follow a 50-50 model wherein learning can be between School and from home; children can also be allowed to study from home. I suggest that the 45 minutes could be truncated to 30 minutes for effective learning. I believe that a child's emotional wellbeing is fundamental, and hence two days in a month must be allocated for personal counselling. Pen-paper assessments need to discontinue, and promotion of non-stressful assessment formats need to adhere. Children with special needs should be provided with adequate help to overcome constraints.

Following the Government guidelines during the Lockdown, post-Lockdown Schools should adhere to the same, that is, school building needs to be deep cleaned, disinfected and sterilized periodically, there should be thermal screening for all at the entry points of the School, wearing masks at all times should be made a compulsory affair, hand-washing to be made mandatory during breaks, all the rooms should house sanitizers, including labs, play areas and office areas, however limiting visiting hours by external parties will also lead to less contamination. Sharing is caring, but post-pandemic it can be scary, so no food/stationary sharing should be allowed in school. If COVID positive case is detected, then School should collaborate with health officials to track the contact history immediately. Above all, regular training sessions on sensitization for students and staff should be conducted in intervals.

Under the infrastructural guidelines, improving building ventilation is essential, reducing human touch points such as door handles, taps, trash cans some areas in the School premise could be labelled 'safe/prohibited zones', mark entry and exit routes with 1-meter distance. The School infirmary should be fully equipped, including an isolation room. The entry and exit areas should be increased with staggered entry, exit checkpoints and break timings. Classrooms to have limited seating with 1meter distance between desks.

The need of the hour is to adopt a hybrid model for learning with fully equipped online tools and assessment for evaluations; redesigning and restructuring the curriculum is now a necessity.

Long Term Measures

"COVID is not a challenge, but a new opportunity for school education in India". Below are the measures for all the four stakeholders.

- **Students**: Hesitated that in the long run, a hybrid model will emerge which will have a substantial portion of the teaching delivered through online and a new system of student-driven education will emerge. Providing real-life learning through flipped classrooms and make subjective and objective assessment both in physical and online mode.

- **Teachers:** Teachers are the actual drivers, and it is highly significant to build their capacity to align with the changing needs of tech-enabled education. One to one mentorship, designing new tools for assessment and enabling teachers to address the learning gaps through customized intervention.

- **Parents:** The involvement of parents has always been inversely proportional to the age of the child, but in today's time, parents should be more involved in the education of their child. Training of parents is paramount as they must be both parent and teacher at home, empowered with tech knowledge so that they can guide the students and track their progress. Parents must play a much more significant role in coming days with perfect sync with schools without which learning process for children will be severely impacted. Parents must support the school system for the holistic development of children.

- **Management:** There are five critical areas where the government needs to provide further emphasis on, such as planning budget for strengthening technology and ensuring safety, supporting human resources, so that if a situation arises, they can work comfortably from home, bringing in new technology, not compromising with the happiness index of parents and students and to track new regulatory changes closely; appoint personnel to liaise with the government closely.

New Elements of Future Schools

As schools navigate their path post-lockdown, they need to incorporate some new elements like small groups of online classes, online doubt clearing, third party online content, one to one mentorship via learning mentors, online co-curricular courses, daily morning online yoga for family, online students collaborative project, virtual teacher training, personalized counselling, website up-gradation for NCERT e-books, frequent parent communication, virtual assemblies, enhanced teaching for NTSE/ Olympiads, online clubs and ECAs, personalized learning, global projects and partner schools, online summer camp, virtual conferences and competitions, virtual celebrations, online practice tests and assessment, and virtual lab classes.

All the stakeholders of education need to work in cohesion to develop an enhanced system of education for the successful coexistence of the educational institutions.

Did You Know?

IAO Accredited Institutes Enjoy an Increase of 42% in their Admissions

Apply for Accreditation
visit: www.iao.org