Post-pandemic Pedagogy: Practices as/with Parents for Performances

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Abstract

Reflecting on this time makes us think more than usual pedagogy and andragogy since over all pass percentage of the students and the quality education especially in Madhesh Province, Nepal seem deteriorating in spite of the huge investment from dynamic facets. However, some specific students from school and campus levels were/are found having better performances in their previous year(s) following the pandemic disruption, and this enforced me to explore the impacting factors behind their better performances. This study is a survey research having quan-qual design conducted using a semi-structured interview with 10 parents of elementary level students performing better. The collected data were analyzed statistically and descriptively. It was found that the parents' involvement in the students' academic activities especially for managing them for their schools, arranging the requirements morning and evening for homework/self-study at home, placing them with nearby tutors and after all having more curiosity about whether they could do any more for better performances of their children's quality education remained its core indicators. Thus, this is the time for education stakeholders to adopt the collaborative actions with the parents for better performance of the students in all levels.

Keywords: Pedagogy and andragogy, parents, outreach programmes, performance

Introduction

COVID-19 has entered into almost all the facets upon the earth leaving intolerable impacts forever, as for the consecutive two years, nothing was seen on their normal pace from out and within. The global pandemic affected almost all aspects of life (Saud, 2021) and the entire system remained paralyzed with the due closure of academic institutions and other foundations. It overturned the natural

settings to suffocate inside the enclosed homes being separated even between couples/cousins/siblings, no matter between teachers and learners. That untrodden volcano drastically changed patterns and practices of our mind-set performances and learning was being a far desire especially for educators and related stakeholders. Meeting the academic grade-level was quite difficult for all concerned as entire two years witnessed the loss of learning as well as the zeal and zest of motivation causing lots of uncertainties and learning challenges in all walks of education system. Since the dark clouds have silver lines, I believe that we can realize some positive impact on education from the current situations and circumstances (Yaseen et al., 2021).

Every hard time dies of lots of innovations and new ideas that we never thought and realized before. Along with the fading power of pandemic, even undeveloped countries tried their best to overcome the losses and they all directed their focus on reviving their education imparting activities to a great extent. As a result, different movements came into practices soon creating new pedagogical/ andragogical paradigms for the fast recovery of the losses on the one hand and searching quality education on the other. Zhang and Gillespie (2023) claims that the pandemic has certainly flipped our education system with some innovative privileges. Across the globe, the fastest groups who adopted the new remote work style were students, teachers and education organizations as they worked hard and came up with innovative learning solutions for the problems they faced during the pandemic. Now, the education system has been fully/partially directed towards the quest for quality even in our contexts as well.

However, the most challenging profession is 'sharing the knowledge and/ or involving in enriching the learners' experiences' as it has been collaborative in its real sense, i.e., if it is to be oriented towards what the outcomes should be for the betterment and enhancement of the communities. There should be the equally involvement of learners, teachers and parents. If any one of them has a little bit indifference for proper steps, the job gets badly affected and the desire goal remains only our imagination, as it is the case being observed in Madhesh Province of Nepal where politics has rooted with every individual converting them from a good care taker to bad politician. However, as I experience the parents about two/three decades back were very interested in caring their children especially for managing them for their schools, arranging the requirements morning and evening for home works at homes, placing them with nearby tutors and after all having curiosity about whether they could do any more for better performances of their children. But, later this tendency or parents' involvement faded out due to many reasons including male outing for earning and female remaining in for handling mobiles during the times their children needed their hands for education. So, in most of the communities,

especially marginalized ones, it was observed that the female remained dominant and escaped from their involvement in caring of their children. On the other side, the teachers were also packed with the traditional ways of rendering their knowledge only inside the schools without being a responsible resourceful professional, causing learners being careless for their academic activities that resulted huge damages for the quality education in the society. Similarly, the Nepalese political arrangement applied since 2074 BS (2017 AD) created another local government as acting parent for managing all aspects of society from the society has also resulted the diversity. Even this government could not address the burning problems; ranging from lack of internet and human connection, unavailability of resources and personalized teaching, to lack of guidance and collaboration. As we experience here in our education system, the government of Nepal in spite of providing free education in school level has the education policies solely aims at increasing enrolment and mostly fails to address deeper issues, i.e., ways of improving the quality of education, imparting the practical soft-skills, reducing the inequalities between rural and urban schools, bringing together parents and teachers, collaborating schools with societies, and so on.

During the pandemic, new pedagogical paradigms emerged to innovate to create creativity in the educational institutions. Different types of techno-friendly strategies were brought into the practices that not only compensated the closure losses for the learners but also brought a different move to build the character education in the learners as there remained more involvement of the parents in their children educational activities. Trisiana (2020) in her study analyzed the new paradigm of character education during a pandemic, as part of a comparative analysis towards the digital revolution. 'The strategy of strengthening character education becomes a new challenge' Trisiana (2020, p. 17). The character education is a need of human being and it is more plausible with the family environment if the parents are sensitive about their children and spend more time with them. Similarly, the pandemic period remained fruitful as it forced the learners to be self-dependent on the one hand and on the other they happened to get opportunities to share their problems with their parents. 'Autonomy was forced during the pandemic disruption and due to it, most of the learners are reported to have been autonomous onwards' Yadav (2022, p. 2). Similarly, Trisiana (2020, p. 27) found that the role of parents is getting bigger in the process of teaching children (home-schooling). Moreover, Pareek (2023) states 'During the COVID-19 pandemic, the traditional classroom paradigm experienced a significant shift from teacher-centered, physically interactive instruction to learner-cantered, online learning methods.' Dhami (2022, p.20) also supported 'Indeed, autonomous learning is a part of learners' hard work in both

formal and informal settings.' Aryal and Hamal (2022, p. 78) identified that majority students believe that online classes are more effective due to time flexibility and were positive about learning online. The students found online classes to have contributed positively to their performance due to higher interaction with teachers and inclusion of digital learning materials like videos and audio. During this period, the responsibility of the teachers was a little bit higher as they were involved in guiding the parents to prepare different types of activities for the students within the families. Similarly, Kunwar et al. (2022, p. 13) states 'The repeated onset of the COVID-19 pandemic enforced the HEIs, teachers, students and parents to adapt the online teaching and learning forcefully and has become an emerging practice in Nepalese higher education'. Bhandari (2020, p. 77) concluded 'The COVID-19 pandemic crisis made us speculate some alternatives of teaching and learning where we personally experienced that there is a good future of online or web-based education which includes both synchronous and asynchronous teaching and learning activities.' Jena (2020) states 'Though the outbreak of COVID-19 has created many negative impacts on education, Indian education system got the opportunity for transformation from traditional system to a new era.'

The COVID has left some remarkable opportunities especially for managing the learning activities for the students as the family stayed with them during it working together and guiding them for better performance. Tye (2023, p. 1) found 'Some schools found families to be a valued partner in student learning where other districts chose to use COVID as a reason for shutting the doors to family involvement'. He provides key aspects to include in creating a plan for engaging with families and creating strong reciprocal relationships. He meant to say that the family could be viewed as an equal partner for the learning process. It is observed that the COVID taught the family to be alert for involving in their children learning as the parents are supposed to engage them emotionally for their subject matters and others as well. Tye (2023) further claims that it is because of putting more values for the family involvement encouraging their culture and their experiences that involvement has transformed into engagement. It is very important for meaningful education that there is the family inclusion and parents' participation along with the continuous interaction with their children in and out the home/school setting. Phyak et al. (2022, p. 4) states that the ecological approach to teacher agency can be viewed as an interplay between institutional conditions and individual efforts to act for an equitable learning environment. Overnight, families became the bridge between home and school, delivering and supporting instruction, communicating with teachers, and assisting students in homework completion, being labelled as critical to alternative methods to instructional learning (Rivera-Vargas, 2021, as cited in Tye, 2023, p. 64)). After COVID, researches have revealed an increase in

family involvement and overall communication between parents and teachers during the pandemic (Klein, 2021). Our experience in Nepalese context shows there is no tendency or policy for parents' involvements fairly as engaging parents was/is a very difficult problem because they are less educated themselves and do not see a role for themselves beyond enrolling a child and ensuring attendance, having lack of time for their children/students, lacking the materials for teaching and after all not realizing their importance for it. But during the COVID and post-COVID, it was/is observed that parents care about their children's education and now even at the cost of their busy lifestyle, they are willing to pay for it that has added something more for creating a quality culture even within a marginalized community. Thus, the COVID has intensified the involvement of the parents giving a role, i.e., taking more interest about their students progress and encouraging them to be systematic for their study at home, a role for the learning process. Balakrishanan (2021) claims that both as a child and a parent confirms my belief that the academic outcomes of a child is directly proportional to the engagement of parents in the process of education. It is obvious that the parental involvement has been a very important element as its benefits for students range from increased school attendance to improved behavior, more positive perceptions of the school and classroom, increased self-regulation skills and greater educational aspirations; greater involvement better performance.

As I have been involved in teaching profession for two decades in the higher institution and is visiting my own village during pandemic and post-pandemic period, I happened to have two striking experiences, i.e., the school level students around my home were/are found to be more interested in their study and the passing rate at JS Murarka Multiple Campus Lahan was/is also found to have increased comparatively in the Bachelor level. Such experiences arouse my curiosity to explore the causes behind their good performances, in spite of the intolerable impacts of the pandemic over the teaching and learning systems in both levels: school and campus. What actually are/were the indicators behind fast compensation of academic losses? How do/did the students develop their learning strategies that they did not apply/adopt before the pandemic? Teachers are still the same persons in both settings (school and campus) who were actively sharing their knowledge to their related students for a long time but there seemed still lacking good outcomes before the pandemic, and conversely the students started performing better later, why/how? Beside e-learning and technological innovations, what reinforced and motivated the students for being better? All these created some rooms for me to find out the affecting factors for such a scenario which could be helpful to improve the current trends in teaching-learning activities.

Madhesh province has been listed as the least educated one in Nepal and the scenario at present shows it is going down more rapidly as the academic institutions are found to have involved in earning the benefits rather than creating learning settings for the meaningful education for the students and this tendency is vivid almost in all types of institutions including higher ones as well. Policy and practices are in the place for them to cater the required quality of the education but the desired outcomes are being far away. However, there are some cases after the COVID impacts that the parents are showing more engaged for their children education. This seems even with the female members of the families for the school level on the one hand and for the higher level on the other. So, the paper aimed at exploring the impacting factors for the students' better performances in the school of a particular community of Rajgadh Municipality, Saptari, Madhesh Province, Nepal.

Methods and Procedures

This is a survey research with a combination of quan-qual design carried out using semi-structured interview and a questionnaire to the participants of two different places and different professions: farming/housewife of a marginalized community (Manadal, Paswan and Chamar/Ram), Purwari Tole, Nargho, Wada No. 3, Rajgadh Rural Municipality, Saptari, Nepal. A set of interview for the parents was developed having the provision of collecting the information about how the students have improved their performances including the involvement of the parents for their supports inside the family settings for the academic performances. Altogether 10 parents whose children are the students of Elementary School of Rajgadh Rural Municipality. Similarly, the secondary sources including the previous works were also used. Besides the pandemic disruption and being irregular class attendees, these students have been found as good performers in their classes/levels. The collected data have been analyzed using inferential statistics and descriptive language to understand the participants' practices for the academic performance.

Results and Discussion

In the context of Elementary school children, the responses of the selected 10 parents regarding the ways they acted for their children during and after the pandemic period, how they paid attention for them, what they actually they did, how worried they were about their children' education, whether or not education was/is important for living healthy life, etc. are presented in the table 1 below.

Table 1

Responses of the Parents about their Children during the Pandemic

SN	Indicators	Parents' responses			
		A	S	O	N
1.	How long did you spend with your children during pandemic?	8	2		
2.	How often did they stay out?			9	1
3.	How often did they watch TV/Mobile?	6	2	3	
4.	How often did they remember their school and teachers?	1	5	3	1
5.	How often did you set them for their study?	7	2	1	
6.	How often were they sent for tuition?	9			1
7.	How often did they do their works themselves?	5	5		
8.	How often did they talk to their friends?	6	4		
9.	How often did they ask for your help?	4	2	2	2
10.	How often did you compel them for their study?	7	2	1	

A (always), S (sometimes), O (occasionally), N (never)

The questionnaire applied for collecting information from the elementary level children' parents consisted of only ten items having four options; always, sometimes, occasionally and never. All these items were set with the purpose of gaining the information about the family engagement for the children during the pandemic period and how that responsibility has come in practice even after that period, i.e., post-pandemic. The selected parents were found that they were very interested in their children even after the pandemic period and they also realized the value of the quality education for which their role has been very important. Regarding the item no. 1, 8 parents replied that they always took care of their children including their study and 2 of them selected sometimes that indicated the fact that they cared of their children' study sometimes only. In the regard of this question item, one of the parents replied, "I did not go myself anywhere during the pandemic and also not let my son go out of home. We all family members remained together for whole day and night and I especially used to manage my son for doing study mostly in morning and evening regularly as I thought he would be poor with his study because of the long closure of the school. I always wanted him stay at home

and manage his own study as he is the student of grade eight." As my observation and experience suggested me that such parents were not taking any notice to their children' education at all before the pandemic but they changed themselves due the outbreak of such a pandemic worldwide. Similarly, 9 parents responded that their children occasionally stayed out and only one replied with never. This also shows that the Pandemic situation forced all parents and children stay at home together and consequently brought a change for children' care by their parents. During the pandemic, many children were causing troubles to the parents as they were more interested in watching the TS/mobiles most of the times. In this regard, when they were asked how often their children watched TVs/Mobiles, 6 replied with always, 2 with sometimes and 3 with occasionally. In this regard, one of the parents (out of six) responded, 'Yes, my children always liked watching the mobiles whenever they were not found their mother working the mobile but later they started solving some problems of their books using mobiles as the sister was advising him to do different activities from the mobile'. Similarly, when asked whether they remembered their teachers, 5 parents selected the option sometimes, 3 with occasionally, and 1-1 ticked with always and never respectively. Here too, a parent said, 'My child was not talking about his teacher but after one month of the COVID he set himself for doing most of the works from the book and developed his habbit for doing his study timely as I was always supporting him to set for the study'.

Very remarkably, 7 parents replied that they always set their children for study, 2 set sometimes and only one never set them for this very purpose. This suggests that there developed a close engagement atmosphere for the family to be involved in their children' study. What I experienced from my village three decades back is that every parent forced their children to sit for their study at every morning and evening that supported their school assignments well and also developed self-study tendency. But this scenario disappeared later due to many factors including male outing for earning and female mobile attachment.

From the table 1, 9 parents replied that they always sent their children for tuition with the nearby tutors and only one of them never sent for this provision. Even during the pandemic, in the rural areas, the people did not need to maintain physical distances as tightly as it was with the urban context. The school teachers were requested to teach the students as tutors by forming small groups, hence the tuition system once again appeared for the small children in the rural areas. The

children were found to have been doing their works themselves under the guidance of their parents as they were interested much in their children education. From 9 parents responding very positively for sending their children for tuition, one of them uttered, 'I have set my child for the tuition at nearby home where some of his friends gather and take tuition regularly for three hours'. It was found that 5 parents responded that their children did the works always and 5 others replied with occasionally. In the time of solving the works of their books, 6 parents told that they always talked to their friends and four with occasionally. That is to say, the children kept on taking helps from their friends as well for doing their book works. Similarly, regarding the help from their parents, 4 parents told that they always helped them as they are educated to some extent, 2 replied with occasionally, 2 with sometimes and again other 2 with never. This suggests that the parents played important roles for creating the study environment for their children study within the family during the pandemic period. Finally, most of them were found to force the children for their study as they (parents) always stayed at home and there grew their interest for quality education.

The results regarding the parents' engagement for their children education during the pandemic period indicates that there developed natural homely environment for them in which the parents started taking more interest for it and that brought a good impact on the parents to involve in learning activities of their children at home even after the pandemic. My observation about the selected students also shows that some of their school teachers visiting them at their homes and caring them as their parents in some contexts on the one hand and on the other they suggested the related parents for taking care of the children especially for their education. Based on what happened during the pandemic, the parents have remained more involved in educating the children including sending them to school, setting for their home-works, checking their performances in the school, comparing them with boarding school children performances, engaging themselves more in school activities related to the parents, interacting with the teachers about their children problems, etc. All these indicate that parents' roles along with the teachers' supports are key indicators for better performances of the selected students and at present the teachers do not need to teach them in the school only but move to the society and start caring of them as parents in stead of sharing the knowledge/information. As I selected these 10 students' parents, they all responded that they started caring of them more after the

pandemic, and therefore their performance is being better. Previously these parents were not taking more interest in their children education thinking that the school was everything for their quality education and also there was not any tendency on the part of the teachers to move to the society for caring their students, rather their duty was only confined with the school compound. But as the teachers mobilize themselves from school to society, there has been homeschooling environment that reinforced the children for quality education after all.

Whether the parents were/are well educated or not was not the matter of this research concern but how actively they were/are involved in caring their children remained the core centre for the pedagogical/andragogical reformation in the days to come.

Conclusion

As the study aimed at exploring the impacting factors behind the better performances of the school level students, the researcher selected 10 parents of the elementary school level of Rajgadh 3, Saptari who were asked using semi-structure interview that intended to gain the information about their children's better performances after the pandemic, in spite of the drastic disturbances for consecutive two years. Altogether the interview consisted of 10 question items having four options; always, sometimes, occasionally, and never. The data shows that the parents grew their interest in their children's education activities more during the pandemic as they spent more time with them. They (parents) also managed the tuition as the school opening was uncertain, started forcing them to sit for their study at every morning and evening, realized the value of quality education to survive the healthy life, etc. Due to the growing interest in their students during the affected years of pandemic, the parents later also were/are found having similar interest in the students on the one hand and on the other some teachers still have kept giving them the home tuition: caring them as parents. All these indicate that parents' roles along with the teachers' supports were/are key indicators for better performances of the selected students and at present the teachers do not need to teach them in the school only but move to the society and start caring of them as parents instead of sharing the knowledge/information. Thus, the students should not only be in the school, teachers should also be in students' communities.

More importantly, they are found staying with their parents who took more

notices for their academic activities. The students got inspired more from their parents and started working independently. This suggests that they found better environment at their home as there is more caring by their parents than sharing by them. They also learnt a very moral lesson from the Pandemic during which they were forced to work themselves under their homely environment, i.e., the pandemic created the forced provision of being independent during the two consecutive affected years that has also caused them being so later on. Whether their parents were/are well educated or not was not the matter of this research concern but how actively they were/are involved in caring their children was a key point for the pedagogical/andragogical reformation. Thus, those students whose parents took care of them more performed better, even irregular students who were/are found under the good guidance of their parents are better performers in the school level. So, in a nut shell, caring is more important than sharing at present time for quality and quantity education.

This is the time for the education stakeholders to adopt some society-oriented activities in which the direct involvement should be of the teachers for inspiring the parents to care of their children for their academic activities. We education stakeholders do not only share the information in the classes but need to care the students as their parents by taking responsibility of the individual students and organizing different types of community outreach/extension programs at least every week in surrounding/catchment areas. Thus, we need to adopt parental pedagogy/andragogy for sharing our courses with the students. This is the time to move from the academic institutions to the society and share our knowledge with the students in the collaboration with their parents under the homely environment along with creating learning and earning together for higher level. Makovec (2018) found that 'the role of a teacher is defined by cultural and social events and the environment, and they influence the differences that occur in the concept of teacher roles within different cultures, societies, including the geographic environment.'

Acknowledgements

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