

IMPORTANCE OF TECHNOLOGY AMIDST PANDEMIC

by:

Ronel S. Asuncion

Teacher III, Sto Niño Biaan Elementary School

We are living in a smart world where everything is just a click away. From education to medical consultancy and from groceries to booking domestic and international flights, we rely on digital devices and the internet. It can be easily said that digitalization has revolutionized the whole world. The importance of technological advancements, although being discussed for the last decade, has never been realized the way before when the world shut down during the COVID-19 pandemic and the whole world shifted to online mode, from little kids attending online classes to adults working from home.

It was technology that helped mankind throughout the pandemic by keeping them updated about the rise and fall of the number of COVID patients, high alert areas, safe areas, and the situation of the lockdown. People used technology to complete tasks, and technological advancements enabled them to have groceries delivered to their door, consult a doctor about health issues, manage their businesses and finances online, and enjoy activities with their children and family such as watching movies and playing games. Meanwhile, it also provided them with the means to stay connected to each other, earn their livelihoods, and have an education.

Students have been using technology since the 21st century to seek help at different stages of their academic life; therefore, it has always been a part of students' lives, but it took over the charge during the COVID-19 breakout. Had it not been for the technological advancements, the students' lives would have been completely different, and they would have been left behind, missing a whole term.

The digital technology not only enabled the teachers to use different applications and tools to teach online, but it also provided a platform where the teachers, students, and parents were able to interact and communicate, have access to the learning materials, along with helpful tools and sites (Starkey et al., 2021). Technology was the only place to rely on when every other place was closed, and everyone was stuck in their houses.

This was the time when everybody, from kindergarten students to university professors, had to use a digital device, be it a smartphone, tablet, or laptop, and get connected to the internet. And online technology never fails anyone out there in need of it. It made sure everyone got whatever they were there for. The Google classrooms and Zoom meeting rooms provided the best means to cater to all the needs of the students, teachers, coordinators, and principals. The concept of using technology was a debatable topic before, especially for school-going children, and many parents had reservations regarding their children's needing and using technology to cater to their educational needs at a young age. They preferred the conventional means of education, which involved face-to-face interactions along with using books, notebooks, and sticky notes, but since the pandemic broke out and all the facilities, including the schools, book stores, the school bus, etc, stopped providing the services, it was the time when parents, students, and teachers all realized the importance of technology and the role it could play in changing our lives. The digital technology was able to provide the teachers with their blackboards, the command to allow students to come inside and even remove them from the classroom, the mode where they could share the screen to present the slides and give lectures, and the ability to turn on their cameras and microphones and observe them in real-time, and hence enable them to keep a check on their students. Similarly, the students were able to interact with the teacher, interact with them, ask questions, and submit the tasks provided to them. The technology enabled them to take notes online, removing the need to have a physical notebook and pen, hence saving the environment and ensuring sustainability. They are also able to learn through recorded lectures and go through relevant literature, case studies, and articles. It allows parents to observe how their child

performs in class. Not only that, but it also provides a means for the coordinators and principals to inspect and monitor the class activities. Technology has provided all these features to mankind in the vicinity and comfort of their own homes.

Different technologically advanced platforms, including television, websites, and applications, were coordinated to provide the students with the best learning material, which was helpful for the professional development of the students as well as teachers (Erümit, 2020).

These resources were not only helpful for the enhanced learning of the students but also provided the psychological support that the students and teachers needed during the ongoing pandemic. It helped them to stay sane, calm, and composed as they were going according to their schedules and their plans were not being disturbed by the pandemic. The technological advancements helped them not lose their valuable time just because of lockdown.

Technology thus helped to control the pandemic because if it was not there in its very advanced forms, people would have to come out of their houses to fulfill their needs, and the whole concept of social distancing and smart lockdowns wouldn't have been possible. This would have led to serious circumstances, and we would not have been able to come out of the pandemic, defeating the deadly coronavirus. It has all been possible because of advances in digitalization. The governments were able to vaccinate their whole population, observe complete lockdowns, have accurate data on the number of COVID patients, death and recovery rates, etc.

Technology has made the life of man a lot easier than it was before, and in ways that are too easy and flexible to adapt to. It has slowly and gradually taken over the world and has impacted every single being on this planet in one way or another. Through the wise use of this technology, we can have miracles in our lives, as we experienced one during the pandemic.

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