



The Hybrid Learning And Teaching: A Teachers' Perspective

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Abstract

The entire education system across the globe has undergone a drastic change during the period of novel coronavirus or covid-19. The online mode of education has been adopted as an effective and sounder mode for conducting classes. The alleviation and potential resurgence of the situation has led everyone to think about alternatives that widely supports education system and make it available to the vast population. Technological advancement in education sector has brought a revolution in the transaction of teaching learning in the form of flipped learning, blended learning and hybrid model of learning. Teaching models such as blended and hybrid learning has been identified and preferred for distance as well as regular courses in National Education Policy-2020. Hybrid learning is not a new concept in the field of education/ it has been used in higher education institutes, distance and open learning programmes for quite a while in India in the form of MOOC's. Due to the prevailing unavoidable pandemic situation, it has been adopted as one of the solutions for transacting education in regular school curricula as well. The paper seeks to study the challenges faced by school teachers adopting hybrid model.

Keywords: digital initiatives, hybrid models, hybrid learning, teachers' perspective, hybrid teaching, hybrid model challenges.

Theoretical Background

The unavoidable pandemic covid-19 made it imperative to adopt technological blend in school teaching system when physical distancing was a major and essential requirement for curbing the virus spread. It was a clarion call from learning system to bring about a change where no child will remain unlearned impairing the future of our globe. The technological adoption made it possible for students to attend the classes when pandemic was at its peak. A study conducted by UNICEF found 247 million elementary and secondary students' studies got affected due to the pandemic in India. It was only possible through technological approach that made teachers to transact their teaching even in this complex situation. Many countries including India adopted hybrid mode of teaching in school learning system for the first time. This kind of integration has been there from ages where digital resources have been used for transaction of curricula, however this was the

requisite phase where integration of remote learning and onsite learning takes place simultaneously. Methods of integrating technology like blended learning, flipped learning, hybrid learning have been used in distance learning programmes. But this time adopting hybrid teaching for regular schooling was new and challenging, not only for the learners but teachers as well. Teachers globally had to adapt themselves to this paradigm shift wherein they had to combat the complexities and challenges regarding remote and hybrid teaching.

According to UNICEF study (India Case Study) UNESCO, the most challenging measures of remote learning during covid-19 were access to students particularly in rural areas, classroom management in terms of maintain discipline while teaching online, lack of skills among teachers needed for teaching through online mode, availability of online content and resources such as time and money.

Hybrid Learning and types of hybrid models

Hybrid learning is an amalgamation of onsite and online (remote) learning. It is a synchronous and asynchronous learning approach that is a mix of both digital and on-campus teaching simultaneously. It is a comprehensive approach that requires a balance between various components of teaching-learning process that includes self-paced and class paced learning, collective and individual learning, formal and non-formal learning, synchronous and asynchronous learning. Hybrid learning is a new step towards digitalization of education system where curriculum transaction can be redesigned and recreated as many times as possible depending upon the learning outcomes and satisfaction level of teachers as well as students.

Several types of hybrid models are stated in Covid-19 response—hybrid learning, vol.2, UNICEF, 2020. The types include homework model where teachers need to instruct students in school premises and then students are given homework for their self-paced practice and revision. The second type is flipped classroom model that involves teachers instructing new concepts in the classroom and students to complete their assignments and exercises at home to be reviewed and facilitated by teachers. The next type is synchronous live where teachers instruct in the classrooms with few students in the classroom and few via video conferencing. Furthermore, the type also includes asynchronous hybrid model that is a mixture of flipped and homework model where classroom is a platform for providing instruction, practice and feedback and students have to go through learning material revising the classroom content given by teachers which is to be reviewed again in the classroom and lastly remote model wherein the entire curriculum transaction takes place remotely.

Digital Educational initiatives by Government of India

The Ministry of education made several initiatives regarding remote-learning solutions. It was difficult to cope with the transitioning phase from traditional tools such as textbooks, blackboards, white boards to wholly dependent on technology without face-to-face facilitation and unpreparedness to teach digitally on the part of teachers in India (UNICEF study (India Case Study) UNESCO). Digital India Programme that was launched

on July 1, 2015 by the Prime Minister of India, has been one of the true and helpful vision of government of India for creating a digitally empowered society that was the need of an hour at the time of pandemic (Responses to Covid-19, India case Study, UNESCO, p:13). Due to this vision of Digital India, the ministry of education also created a repository of online content such as: NROER (National Repository of Open Educational Resources) is a portal that provides video lessons, audio lessons, books and STEM-based games for students to make learning interactive and innovative. DIKSHA (digital infrastructure for knowledge sharing) is a digital initiative which consists of around 80,000 e-books (diksha.gov.in) from classes 1-12 available in different languages and can be accessed offline too through its application. Swayam is a national online platform that provides educational and vocational courses for classes 9-12, graduate and post-graduate. It also provides e-certificated depending upon the credit system and course completion. Swayam Prabha is one of the platforms which has 32 DTH TV channels available all days consisting of e-learning audio-visual content for classes 9-12, graduate and post-graduate programmes. e-Pathshala is an online learning application which consists of e-books, audios, video lessons and flip books from classes 1-12. The e-content is available in various languages to accessed by students, teachers and parents. e-PG Pathshala is also a digital platform which can accessed offline made for post graduate programmes consisting of learning material in the form of e-books and online courses. The Ed-Tech initiatives by government of India brought about a digital revolution and proved as helpful resources for teachers as well as students in India. The ICT initiative by Ministry of Education is a platform that combines all resources available digitally for online learning.

National Education Policy (2020) also emphasized on extensive use of technology in teaching and learning at all levels of education. Suggestions and recommendations regarding digital libraries, standardized digital training programmes for teachers, quality-based adult learning options such as phone applications, online modules, TV channels based on satellites, e-books etc. have been provided in the policy. For implementation and improvement of digital education, creation of an autonomous body, the National Educational Technology Forum has also been stated in the policy which will help in digitally empowering the Indian educational system.

Review of related literature

Hybrid learning is a flexible approach as it can be adjusted according to the needs of the learners in terms of time, space and pace. It is also applicable in collaborative learning in terms of interdisciplinary approach, non-formal environment and in institutional bridging. But it is still one of the less adopted approaches in education because of the problems related to its integration, economy, applicability and social effects on learners. (Mosa Alnaidi, 2014). Different teaching strategies are needed for effective teaching through technologies. The synchro modal classes require balancing between pedagogical strategies, class management, students and troubleshooting induces stress among teachers of higher education. (Bell, Sawaya, Cain, 2014). Learners' perception about online learning was taken amidst pandemic covid-19 in one of the research projects

conducted by Marcus Deli Girik Allo, 2020. The researcher brought the problems faced by students when attended online classes. The problems such as internet accessibility, lack of resources, less facilitation by teachers, lack of group tasks and uneasy while using instruction and material used by teachers. Hrastinski (2008) stated that the online learning can only become effective when instructors are known to the benefits and limitations of different types of synchronous and asynchronous types. The online teaching brings both advantages and disadvantages of its kind and the instructors need to get aware about these challenges and limitations comprehensively, only then they will be able to take advantage of online mode of teaching and learning. Zaharah and Kirilova (2020) in their article impact of coronavirus outbreak towards teaching and learning activities in Indonesia explains that collaborative teaching, innovation, creativity and effective communication can help teachers in attaining efficiency while teaching online in this pandemic situation. Using different technologies and methods is helpful for students but according to teachers, it is not easy to make students participate in activities and taking their classes seriously at home environment. So, teachers expect parents to be involved and encourage their children during online education system for their sincere and disciplined participation towards studies at home. Tyagi (2020) in their research online teaching in Delhi-NCR schools in India during Covid-19 pandemic found out that internet connectivity was the major issue faced by both teachers and students during the time of pandemic. According to PK Jena (2020) the pandemic is fruitful and has worked as a catalyst for education system of India where various digital initiatives and pedagogical practices are adopted and continued as a medium for transacting education at various level which were never used and thought of using before.

Need and significance of the study

The global pandemic period demanded innovative and flexible mode of teaching for smooth functioning and transaction of teaching learning process. With the outbreak of second wave of covid-19, the new mode adopted for teaching in this situation was hybrid mode of education which made students to attend the classes at their own ease. Since 2020, remote learning was adopted as one of the best alternatives and solutions for uninterrupted teaching learning process. With the improved conditions, schools invited offline or onsite learning to students keeping in mind the guidelines provided by UNESCO and health ministry. The opening phase with continuous monitoring and adjustments made it possible for students and parents to decide upon taking classes online or onsite. With that, synchronous live was the model majorly adapted by schools in India. Students who could not attend regular schooling due to the alarming situation, could able to attend their classes with students who were able to reach and attend school. This paradigm shift is not new as teachers in schools had already adopted teaching through white boards, blended learning, flipped learning modes but teaching students both online and onsite simultaneously is not something for which teachers were prepared especially in India. Though hybrid is the most reliable mode of providing learning to students in this pandemic period, researchers conducted this study to know the challenges faced by teachers while teaching through hybrid learning model.

Research Questions

1. Are teachers prepared for teaching in schools through hybrid learning model?
2. What are the perceptions and experience of teachers in teaching through hybrid mode in school education?

Objectives of the study

1. To analyze the situations faced by teachers in teaching through hybrid learning model.
2. To study the challenges faced by teachers in teaching through hybrid learning model.
3. To study the present situation of teachers in using hybrid learning model.

Sample and Sampling

Since the research is conducted in the period of pandemic, covid-19, the data was collected through circulating the questionnaire to the school teachers through online mode. A total number of 100 participants were selected through the technique of convenient sampling procedure.

Tool used for data collection

A survey questionnaire consisting of both close-ended and open-ended questions was prepared and circulated to school teachers through online mode.

Result and Interpretation

The survey questionnaire for the teachers consisted of 15 questions. The domains fixed were hybrid mode of teaching and traditional method of teaching in the classroom. Hybrid model is a newly adopted model of teaching in schools to curb the spreading of covid-19 pandemic. The data was qualitatively analyzed by computing the percentage on the basis of answers provided by teachers for the questions asked in a survey questionnaire. The results are consolidated based upon the reflections or answers provided by the respondent teachers.

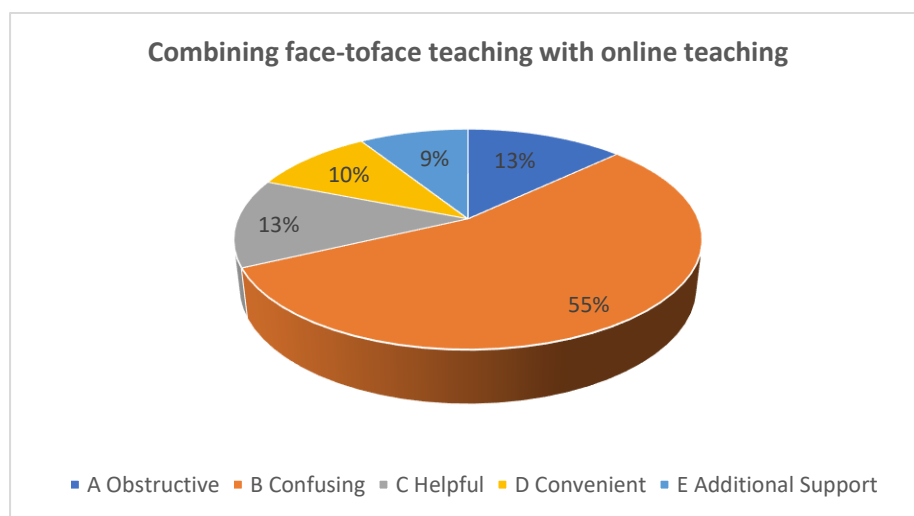


Figure 1: Opinion of teachers on combining face-to-face teaching with online mode (hybrid model)

Figure 1 indicates the opinion of teachers on combining face to face teaching with online teaching. 55% of teachers found combining these two modes is confusing. While 13% found it helpful and obstructive in nature. 10% found this model as convenient whereas only 9% teachers found it as an additional support to their teaching.

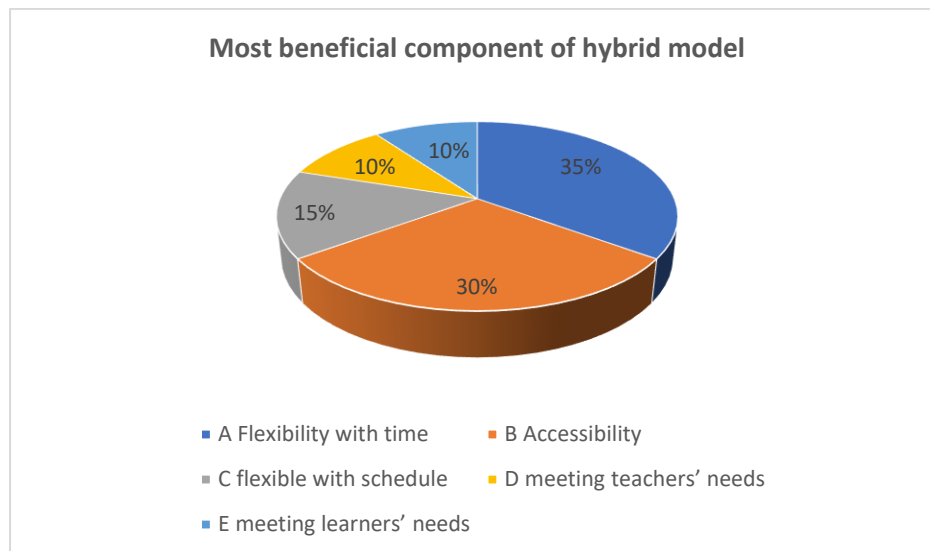


Figure:2 Most beneficial component of hybrid model

Figure 2 indicates the opinion of teachers about the most beneficial component of hybrid mode of teaching in the classrooms. The data collected shows that 35% of teachers opined that it provides flexibility with time to them while teaching. Whereas 30% believes that its accessible to teach students in this pandemic era through this mode. 15% teachers believed that hybrid teaching model provides flexibility to them while teaching through both face to face and online. Only 10% teachers opted for hybrid model being helpful in meeting the needs of both teachers and learners.

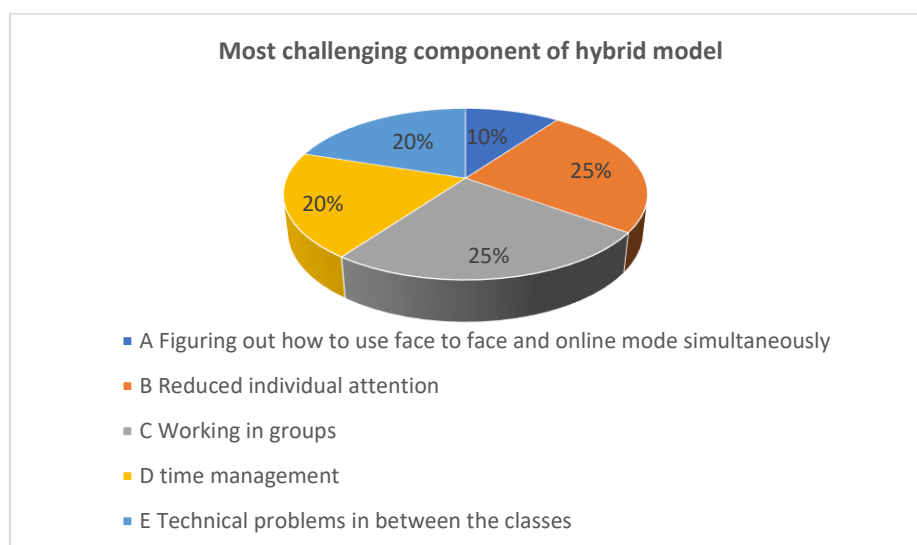


Figure:3 Most challenging component of hybrid model

Figure 3 signifies about teachers' opinion regarding the most challenging component of hybrid model. 25% of teachers opted for reduced individual attention and working in groups while 20% opined for time management and facing technical issues in between the classes. Whereas 10% believes that the challenging part in hybrid mode is to figure out how to use face to face and online mode simultaneously in teaching-learning process.

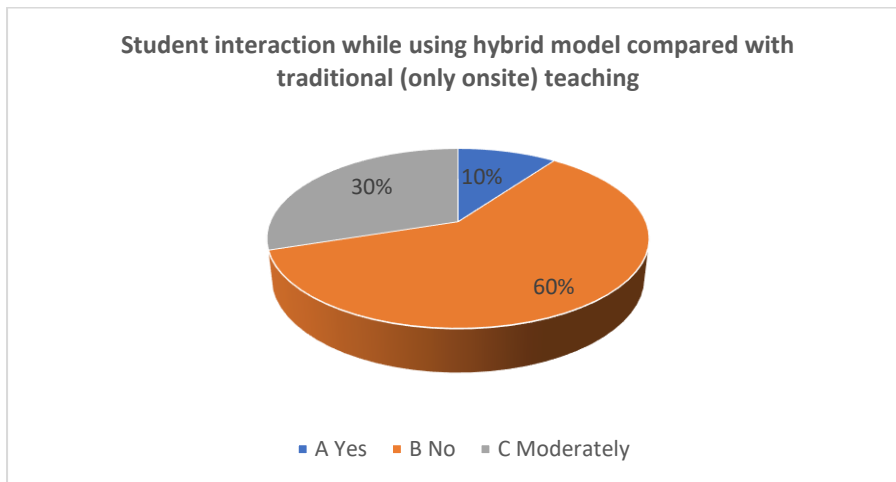


Figure:4 Students' interaction while using hybrid model compared with traditional (only onsite) teaching.

Figure 4 indicates about the data collected for teachers' opinion on students' interaction while using hybrid model when compared with onsite or classroom teaching. 60% of respondents opines that hybrid mode of teaching does not allow interaction with students while 30% of teachers says, it moderately allows student interaction and only 10% agree with the possibility of students' interaction using hybrid model in their classroom.

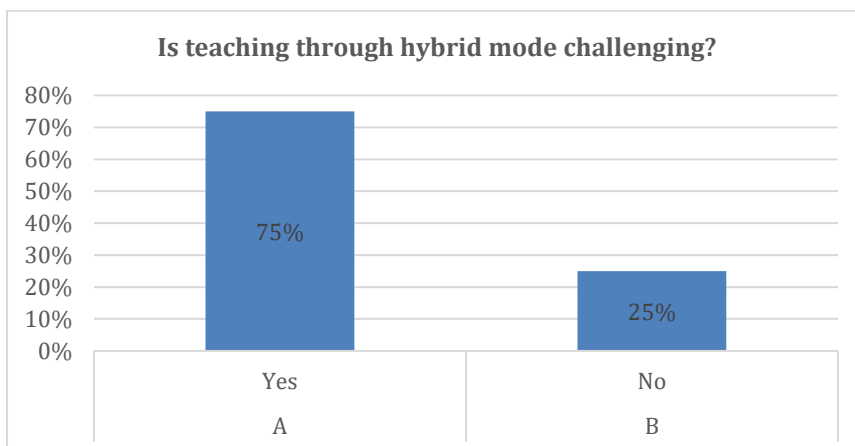


Figure:5 Teaching through hybrid mode challenging?

The data in figure 5 shows that 75% of teachers found hybrid model of teaching as challenging whereas 25% teachers did not find it challenging.

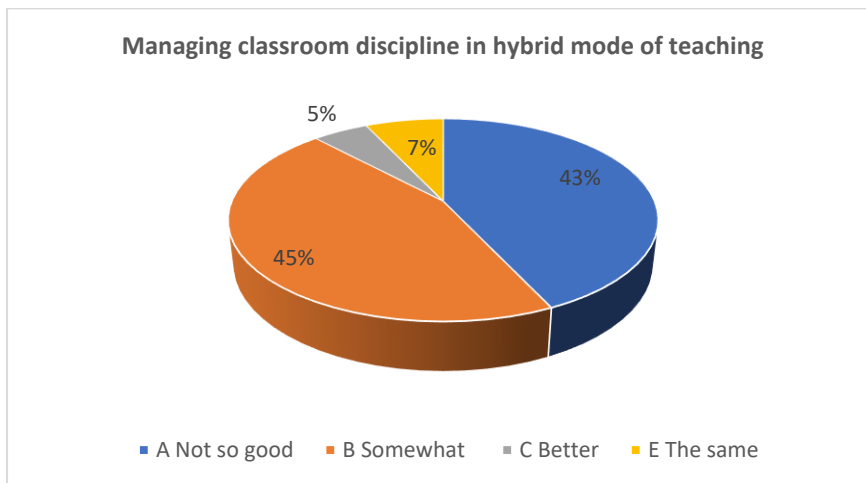


Figure:6 Managing classroom discipline in hybrid mode of teaching.

When teachers’ opinion regarding managing classroom discipline in hybrid mode of teaching is taken, data collected shows that 45% of teachers are somewhat able to manage their classrooms in terms of discipline. 43% of teachers agree they are not able to manage the discipline in their class. While 7% says that they did not find any change in terms of discipline and 5% opined that their classroom discipline was better when taught through hybrid mode.

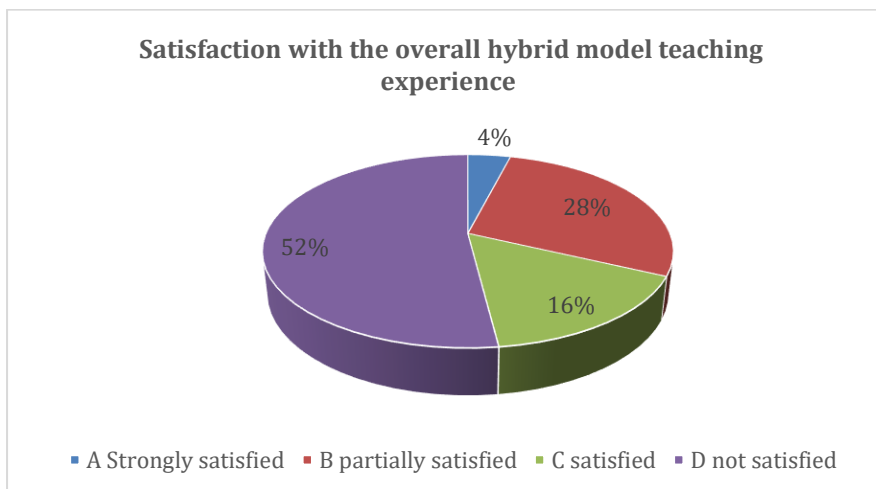


Figure:7 Teacher satisfaction with the overall teaching experience through hybrid mode of teaching.

When teachers’ satisfaction with the hybrid mode on the basis of their recent experience, 52% of teachers were not satisfied with their experience whereas 28% were partially satisfied, 16% were satisfied and 4% were strongly satisfied with their teaching experience using hybrid mode.

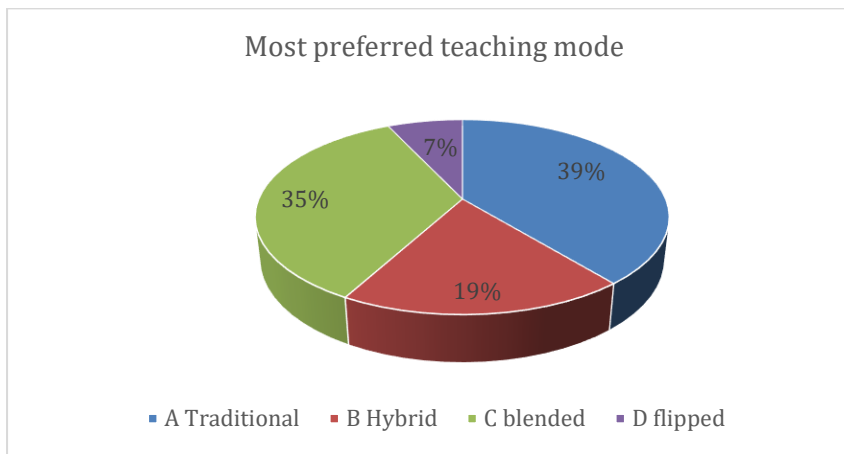


Figure: 8 Most preferred teaching mode according to teachers

Figure shows that 39% of teachers found traditional teaching over blended (35%), hybrid (19%) and Flipped (7%).

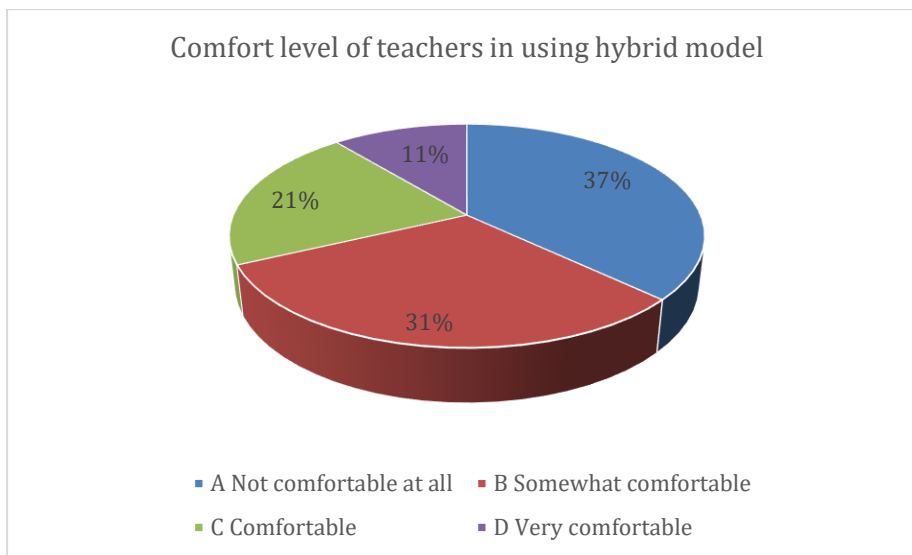


Figure 9: Comfort level of teachers in using hybrid mode.

Figure shows the percentage of teachers' comfort level teaching through hybrid mode. 37% of teachers were not at all comfortable with hybrid mode of teaching. 31% were somewhat comfortable, 21% were comfortable and only 11% were very comfortable in teaching through hybrid model.

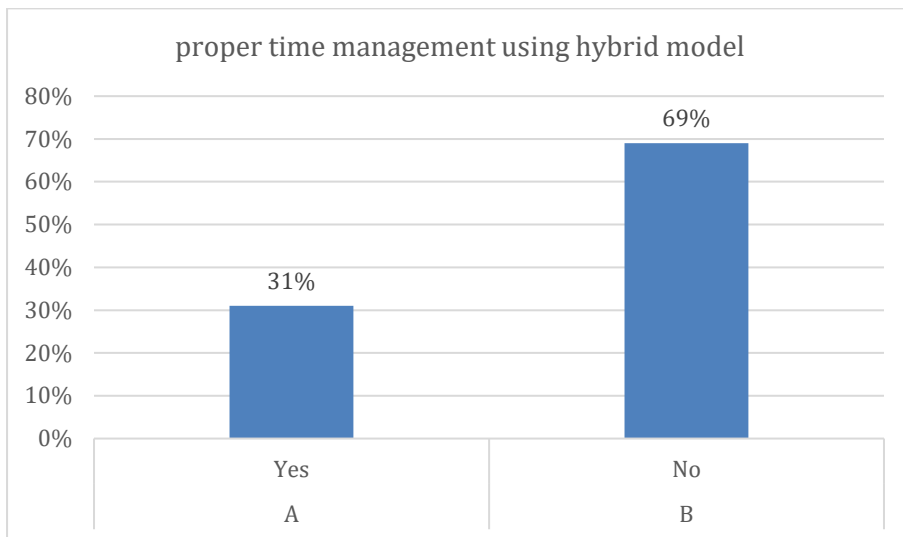


Figure:10 Proper time management using hybrid mode of teaching.

Figure shows that 31% were able to manage time when taught through hybrid mode whereas 69% were not able to manage their time properly while taking classes through hybrid mode.

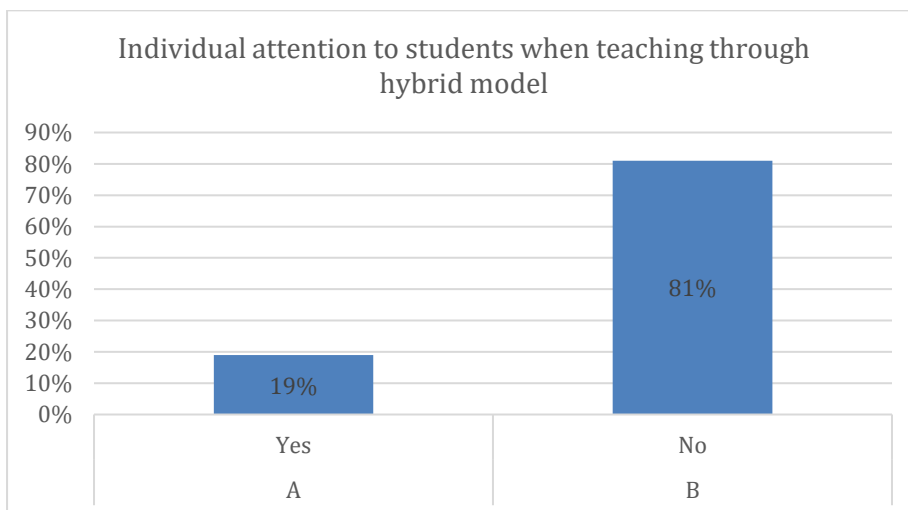


Figure:11 Individual attention to students when using hybrid mode.

Figure shows that only 19% of teachers were able to provide individual attention to students whereas 81% were not able to give individual attention to students through hybrid mode of teaching.

Discussion

Most of the teachers found it confusing when they had to teach through hybrid mode of learning. As teachers were not prepared and skilful enough to handle the situation where some students were taking online and others offline mode of learning. Many teachers also found it obstructive in day-to-day teaching activities. Teachers did not find hybrid learning mode meeting the needs of both teachers and learners which shows that the child-centric curriculum and six Cs of education including communication, creativity, critical thinking, culture, collaboration and connectivity are not being fulfilled by using

hybrid mode of learning in schools. When asked about the most challenging component of hybrid learning, teachers' responses were scattered and were of the view that they were not able to provide individual attention to students and it was not possible for students to work in a group. The other challenges included time management while teaching and technical issues in between the classes. It was also noticed that students' interaction was also less during hybrid mode. Most of the teachers found it challenging to teach through hybrid mode as they were not prepared and have not been given any formal training for the same. During hybrid mode of learning, teachers also found it difficult to manage the class as some students are learning online and some onsite, it became difficult for teachers in maintaining the discipline in the classrooms. When asked about their satisfaction level regarding hybrid learning, teachers were hardly satisfied with their teaching and they preferred to teach in a traditional method using blended mode using technology with regular classroom teaching rather than hybrid mode of learning. Teachers did not find hybrid learning as their comfortable mode of teaching and also were unable to give individual attention to students which is a necessary component of child-centred education thus, making it more challenging to meet the needs of the learners. Most of the teachers also admit that they were unable to facilitate and provide proper explanation of the content to the students because most of the times, they had to deal with connectivity or discipline issue during the classroom transaction.

Conclusion

Technology in education system is a transitioning period for teachers as well as students. The vision of digital India has begun and has a long way to meet the vision of India to become a digitally empowered country. Education system also need to keep the pace with the ever challenging technological and pedagogical needs and for keeping this pace, our teachers need to be skilful and properly trained. National Education Policy emphasised teachers to be trained from time to time focussing on social, affective and psychomotor dimensions of learning. Only quality e-learning can meet the vast needs of country like India in terms of diversity including culture and languages. Hybrid mode of learning was adopted by schools during opening phase after pandemic, when teachers and school administrators were not at all prepared for it. But the challenging situation brought about a revolution in the field of education where new initiatives and movement towards blended learning, rise in learning management systems (Misra2020), improved digital literacy took place. India is still developing in the field of technological use in education and with reducing the digital divide, pedagogical strategies for teaching through technology and proper training of teachers for using blended form of learning, the vision of digitally empowered country is not far to be accomplished.

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