COVID-19 & Online - Learning

In the midst of all the suffering, EdTech is one category that’s shining. And why not! With 6+ hours of schooling, and potentially several hours of tuitions coming to a sudden halt, the space is here to be filled. Schools are aggressively moving to tutoring students through online platforms - activities, science, math, music and PE as well.

But hopefully the virus will be tamed soon. And when that happens, schools and tuitions will be back, perhaps with greater demand on student’s time to make up for the lost hours. It is likely that there will be little time left for online education. Moreover, schools and parents will be keen to go back to the old normal. ASAP, than not.

Learning, Unlearning & Relearning

Meanwhile, for the past several years, universities have been increasingly turning to online and modular learning modes for continued learning. Countries like Singapore are investing heavily in providing their citizens with learning credits that they can draw on throughout their working lives. Individuals, too, increasingly seem to accept the need for continuous rebooting.

According to a Pew survey, 54% of all working Americans think that it will be essential to develop new skills throughout their working lives; among adults under 30, the number goes up to 61%. Another survey, conducted by Manpower in 2016, found that 93% of millennials were willing to spend their own money on further training.

But despite all the intent, infrastructure development, content creation, and near ubiquitous access, the economist laments - "Information technology has reshaped other sectors; it has had little impact on education".

So what might online education providers engineer in these COVID-19 times to create durable engagement rather than a covid-induced temporary surge that they are currently witnessing on their apps?

- a. Help learners build an engagement with the online platforms which goes beyond just providing quality content & assessment.

- b. The need for learning, unlearning & relearning is ever accelerating. This is a captive opportunity to help learners take charge of their learning requirements over & above what is being provided by formal system.

- c. Create a sense of ownership & investment in the learning platforms thus creating a need for preserving what was created during this TINA (there is no alternative) moment.
BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES TOOL-KIT FOR ONLINE LEARNING PLATFORMS

Over the past 3 years we have been working with several EdTech companies across k-12, teachers and adult learners to shape their education platforms in ways that drive higher order engagement between learners and the platform. Leanings from behavioral sciences and design has helped create a blueprint of concepts that can be leveraged by EdTech companies to enhance the platform. Here's a glimpse.