From Brick-and-Mortar to Broadband-and-Monitor: Integration of Remote Learning Practices into ECSE Classrooms

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ABSTRACT

The world is embroiled in the Coronavirus pandemic and education institutions are making all efforts en masse to combat disruption and discontinuity in education. This chapter outlines the pedagogical practices and models in remote learning adopted during this education disruption in the special education classroom of Well Being Research and Rehabilitation Centre (India). The aim is to share teaching and learning practices used on an e-learning platform and investigate the efficacy of web-based education. Findings are discussed in the context of how the early childhood special education (ECSE) adapted quickly to remote learning during COVID-19 and the implications for ongoing technology support for early childhood personnel. There is a paucity of special education student experiences in remote learning (Barbour & Reeves, 2009; Burdette et al., 2013). Students with special needs have recorded mixed experiences with online schools (Clifford, 2018). Adaptation of e-learning can be challenging. The objective of this chapter is to offer veritable insights and recommendations into instructional design that were gleaned and may be incorporated into any curriculum across the globe. It presents an inclusive pedagogy model based on the UDL principles which enables all students, with or without disabilities, to enhance their full potential. A sample lesson plan is shared for instructors involved in the delivery of online coursework in ECSE. A review of challenges of online learning adaptation in early childhood special education and measures for successfully engaging students in remote learning is presented.

Keywords: Remote learning, COVID-19, Inclusive teaching, Special education, UDL framework

INTRODUCTION

In light of the Pandemic, educational institutions were compelled to connect with computers and engage in technology-mediated learning pedagogies. More than half a billion children had to become remote-school learners (Cohen & Kupferschmidt, 2020). Early childhood special education (ECSE) instructors faced the daunting task of maintaining connection with students and their families while catering to their special education needs via remote education (Asbury et al., 2020). E-learning being the only viable medium of education encouraged educators to develop innovative practices to reach the learners and use digital tools as allies for the 'emergency remote teaching' (Hodges et al. 2020). Even before COVID-19 overturned the world, remote learning had become popular owing to its vast benefits and the evolving dynamics