

TECHNOPHOBIA: A THREAT TO DIGITAL LEARNING

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Abstract

Advancement in technology is growing in leaps and bound. It has opened up new avenues for all generation people in various fields like education, marketing, commerce etc. To keep up the pace with this advanced technology in education field, the stakeholders need to keep themselves abreast with it. Teachers are one of the most important personnel who need computer and internet literacy because their gained knowledge can transform teaching learning process which emphasize more on connected learning. It enhances professional content, resources, and systems to help them improve their own instruction and personalize learning. We are aware of the new techniques and tools which are expected by the teachers to embrace with but do we pause and think that do all teachers embrace it willingly or few suffer from technophobia? The objectives of this study are to find out the meaning, causes, symptoms and strategies to overcome technophobia.

Keywords: *Technology, technophobia*



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Introduction

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Review of Related Literature

Akinyemi, K.(2003) investigated Nigerian elementary teachers' apathy towards use of equipment in instruction and to verify possible links with technophobia. Subjects demonstrated lack of knowledge of educational technology and only slight traces of

technophobia. It was suggested that teachers should receive rigorous training in educational technology.

Rosen, Larry D. and Weil, Michelle M.(2005) described a study that examined technophobia in elementary and secondary public school teachers as an explanation for low levels of computer utilization. Highlights include empirical studies of technophobia; technophobia interventions; demographic differences; computer availability and use; computer anxiety; computer attitudes; and predictive models of technophobia.

Objectives

To find out the meaning of technophobia

To find out the causes of technophobia

To develop the understanding of symptoms of technophobia

To find strategies to overcome technophobia

Meaning of technophobia

Technophobia or Cyberphobia is the fear of advance technology or complex devices. The word Technophobia is derived from Greek '*Techne*' meaning "art, skill or craft" and *phobos* meaning "fear or aversion".It is the opposite of technophilia i.e love for technology. In technophobia there is a sense of irrational fear, anxious and being uncomfortable with the technology gadgets and its application.

The constant fear and anxiety hinders teachers to accept new advancements in technology. To keep pace with the new generation learners, teachers need to keep pace with the innovative teaching learning technology aids. But technophobia becomes a setback in adopting and adapting technology.

The fear of technology is often culturally or religiously induced. The Amish group of people resists technology because of the convictions of their Faith. Likewise, many environmental groups are known to maintain social stance against technology. This might not be a phobia per se; rather it is what these groups believe to be "best practices".

Causes of technophobia

There can be many reasons of disliking technology; few reasons are discussed below as observed by the researcher:

- 1) **Fear of Mathematics and Science:** Those teachers who had a disinterest towards Science and Mathematics see technology as an extension of it and that is why associate it

with difficulty and complexity. This attitude development is enough for them to disown the prevalent technology in the society

- 2) **Older generation:** There is a digital divide among the digital natives and digital immigrants. The digital immigrants have to take an extra effort to understand and imply technology in their day to day work. Whereas as compared with the digital natives who are so tech savvy and tech prompt that they outsmart the older generation. This fear of keeping pace with the new generation pushes the older generation to give up technology totally.
- 3) **Technology pace:** Advancement in technology is growing in leaps and bounds. Every second there is a new application discovered in the field of education. Teachers play so many different roles and responsibilities in their institution so even those who are multi taskers find it difficult to keep themselves abreast with the innovations.
- 4) **Lack of proper infrastructure:** If the management of the institution does not provide requisite technology gadgets and internet connection to the teachers they will fail to learn as well as execute. Lack of motivation and support from management too becomes a barrier in teaching learning leading to disinterest towards technology.
- 5) **Expensive:** Buying and maintaining technology devices incurs lot of cost. If the institution does not spend and support this cost, teachers become viable to stop using leading again to disinterest towards it.

The need of the hour is to find out ways and means to combat these problems because they may begin with smaller dislike but if not addressed can lead to such an extent that they want to shun the technology and discourage others also to do so.

Symptoms of technophobia: The symptoms of technophobia vary from person to person. It may begin with feelings of dislike and disinterest towards academics. The extreme forms are feelings of dread or panic, automatic or uncontrollable reactions, rapid heartbeat, shortness of breath, trembling and extreme avoidance.

Strategies to overcome technophobia:

If technophobia is left untreated it can range from a simple annoyance to a serious hindrance in teaching career.

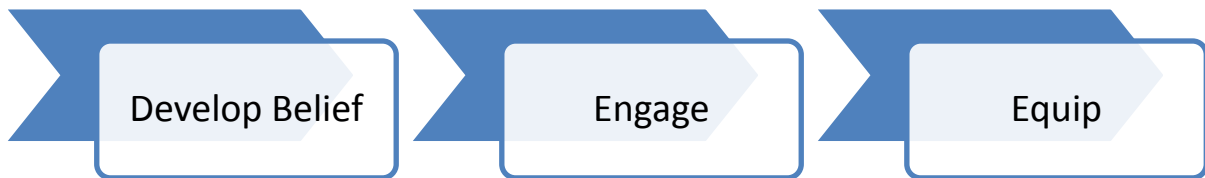
- 1) **Develop belief:** Unless and until teacher develops the belief system that they need to be tuned with digital revolution, they will be isolated. Digitisation will transform our institution

system so it is better to adopt change management system as a key survival tool and encourage adaptability and flexibility.

2) **Engage:** Engaging ourselves with the technology has become an indispensable life skill, so engage and keep the teachers abreast with the latest innovation. Organize workshops and hands on experience to give them maximum real life experiences.

3) **Equip:** To make the above points possible it is imperative to provide them with affordable gadgets and applications to be used in daily classroom. This will develop their confidence and boost their aspiration to learn more and more.

Finally the researcher would conclude that each teacher should adopt blended learning. Use technology judiciously and be more sensitive to self-awareness, imagination, conscience and independent thinking.



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