UNDERSTANDING COMPETENCY-BASED LEARNING IN K 12 SCHOOLS TO DEVELOP A LEARNER COMPETENCY MODEL POST-COVID

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ABSTRACT

One of the key challenges the educationists are facing today, is the quality-related deficiency at each stage of education; resulting in unsatisfactory levels of student learning – be it scholastic, co-scholastic, or even non-cognitive. The new perspectives emerging on the international and national horizons are that the outcomes of education are generally non-measurable and do not fulfil the expectation of beneficiaries or lead to career progression.

Therefore, a Competency based Education pattern, that is student-paced and has a self-diagnostic evaluation system with measurable outcomes in K–12 school system, is being seriously considered as a solution. Such a competency-based model could include teacher’s performance and demonstration too, apart from the social support necessary for developing competencies for sustaining relationships. This paper has explored the Learner Competencies required by a student, to enable development of critical thinking, problem solving and creativity. Supported by appropriate IT based teaching learning processes, it is an honest endeavor to enhance desired outcomes in K-12 schools.

As we are in the midst of year 2021, when Covid’19 has already played havoc with the lives of innocent people across the world; we cannot accept the levels of inequality that have been permitted to emerge on our shared planet. We urgently need investment in manpower and structural changes so that the setbacks that the world has suffered, do not grow into long lasting problems. It is widely believed that Covid-19, may eventually prove to be an impediment to decades of progressive growth. Though, some work is beginning to be done in the direction of competencies, a lot remains to be achieved for the desired goals.

The current and post Covid era, requires adoption of the ‘new normal’, i.e., the daily behavioral practices and hybrid techniques of learning, for which new set of competencies need to be identified and acquired. An exploratory study was conducted by us in a school of Haryana, India and an attempt made; to throw light on and explorepossibilities to come up with a strategic model of learner’s competencies, in the post Covid’19 era.

Keywords: Learner Competency, Post-Covid, Learning, K 12 schools, Education

I. INTRODUCTION

“Education is not the filling of a pot but the lighting of a fire.”— W.B. Yeats

There is a growing realization across the world that education is the only weapon that can transform economies and make them progressive. The education sector, has incorporated a number of reforms over the years, in most of the countries, at various levels, to make learning more student-centered and personalized but its impact is not sizable, for two reasons. One reason is that, the 21st century learner requires competence building rather than mere task completion. And second reason is that the world looks up to those who have innovative ideas/thoughts that could bring about transformation as they require radical thinking. Schools and Universities are undoubtedly entrusted with the responsibility of nurturing “thinking minds” but it is observed that there are gaps in what is being taught and what the job market expects. This is the reason why the educators are supporting this great idea—that is, better organized learning, assessments and recognition based on a defined set of competencies, whose key benefits include flexibility, engagement, and affordability.
Covid'19, the most significant health crisis has led to unprecedented consequences for our daily lives, including how we work and learn. While the crisis has triggered a rapid transition to distance education and guidance in the delivery of technical and vocational training in education, it has also revealed the wide learning gaps between certain countries and societies. There is a need to identify the competencies that are crucial for resolving some of the problems brought about or accelerated by the pandemic.

1.1 The *Global annual results report 2019: Goal Area 2*, published by UNICEF, has quoted an observation of the World Bank, that 53 per cent of children in low and middle-income countries are ‘learning poor’- as they are not able to comprehend a story or paragraph by the end of their primary years. With the ushering in of 21st century, the world has gone through many changes and adaptability and flexibility are two major traits that need to be acquired to cope with this situation, under the new circumstances.

1.2 According to a report named *Education for All, Towards Quality with Equity, India*, published by NEUPA in association with UNESCO, “Studies show that children do not have school readiness competencies in cognitive and language domains when they join primary school despite attending pre-primary classes.” These are the (5.1.1) issues that need increased attention in quality-related deficiencies in ECCE (Early Childhood Children Education) in our country India too.

1.3 Learning can be defined as all types of changes that are permanent and that come out as a result of repetition as well as the experiences of an individual. In addition to acquisition of new knowledge, skills and attitudes with the help of experiences over a number of processes, a human being is known for directing his life in sync with his learning. Two of the most arduous experiences of human being, namely learning and teaching, are known to have exceptional natures as well.

Behaviourist theories claim that learning improves by means of establishing a connection between stimulus and behaviour and that change of behaviour can be realized through reinforcement.

Cognitive theories assert that mental processes are more significant for a learner than the connection of stimulus-reaction.

There are many more learning approaches that come out also by the influence of behaviourist and cognitive theories. Constructivism, psychoanalytic and humanistic approaches are some of these. Constructivism is the theory that says learners construct knowledge rather than just passively take in information.

Learning is a physical process in which new knowledge is represented by new brain cell connections. The strength and formation of these connections are facilitated by chemicals in the brain called growth factors. We now know from neuroscience that the availability of these growth factors can be enhanced. For example, specific exercise routines, optimal sleep structure, and silencing the mind can all enhance the availability of these growth factors.
1.4 Inclusive and equitable quality education has been the main focus under Goal 4 of UN’s Sustainable Development Goals. It aims at promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all. In India, as per Article 21-A of the Constitution, free and compulsory education is provided to the children in the age bracket of 6-14 years of age. The Right to Education Act [9], Point 29 (2), provides the basis and premise of competency-based learning by emphasizing upon all round development of the child; building up child’s knowledge, potentiality and talent, and learning through activities, discovery and exploration in a child friendly and child-centred manner. According to the New Education Policy, which was approved by the Union Cabinet of India on 29th July 2020: “To close the gap in achievement of learning outcomes, classroom transactions will shift, towards competency-based learning and education.” (mhrd.gov.in).

1.5 Competency education is often described with the phrase, “Learning is constant, and time is the variable.” Competences refers to the range of skills which are satisfactorily performed, while competencies refer to the behaviour adopted in competent performance. It is important and useful to understand learning and development at three separate levels, keeping the driving analogy in mind.

- Knowledge—reading (ex: understands the meaning of driving a car)
- Skill—practicing (ex: knows how to drive a car and is allowed to practice in a non-traffic area)
- Competence—application (ex: one displays the knowhow to drive in traffic)

1.6 The COVID-19 pandemic is the most significant health crisis that the world has faced in the past 100 years. According to estimates from the International Labour Organization (ILO), 14 per cent of working hours were lost globally in the second quarter of 2020 which is equivalent to 480 million full-time jobs, Major disruptions were faced in the education sector, setting back progress in the achievement of Goal 4 of the SDGs, in late March 2020, close to 1.6 billion students across the world were affected by school closures (World Bank 2020). In 114 countries (out of 126), a complete closure was reported by the majority of the respondents as per the ILO-UNESCO-World Bank survey.

As per their recommendations, the technical and vocational education and training stakeholders, can work together during and after the COVID-19 pandemic by-

- Increasing crisis-response readiness, involving a combination of face-to-face and remote training
- Enhancing access to education and training
- Delivering relevant training and skills to reskill and upskill, with a view to rebuilding better

1.7 The International Commission on the Futures of Education, established by UNESCO in 2019, in a report submitted in 2020, presents nine key ideas for navigating through the COVID-19 crisis and its aftermath - Education as a common good, right to education, autonomy & flexibility for teachers, student’s rights, protection of social spaces provided by schools, free & open technologies, scientific literacy, public education, global solidarity to end inequality. It lays emphasis on choices to be based on a humanistic vision of education and development and human rights frameworks.

Objectives of the paper

Keeping the aforementioned points in mind, we have drafted the following objectives for this paper

- To understand the emerging need for Competencies based learning in classrooms
- To review teachers’ competencies required for the 21st century classroom
- To decipher the competencies required for K-12 schools post- Covid era

Taking an insight from the mentioned references, it is imperative on our part, as educators to take calculated steps to develop learning competencies amongst our children, to impart quality education. A couple of reviews given here on literature shall help the readers to get a further insight.
II. LITERATURE REVIEW

4.1 Competency-based education must include attention to the learner’s needs and styles

Neil O'Sullivan & Dr. Alan Burce mentioned in their research paper titled, *Teaching and Learning in Competency-Based Education*; that Competency-based education must include attention to the learner’s needs and styles, providing the time needed for the learner to acquire and repeatedly perform or demonstrate the expected competencies (knowledge, skills, professional behaviours) and create a supportive environment for learning. The competency objectives must include outcomes, criteria, performance standards, conditions that are tangible, measurable and relevant.

4.2 Competency-based models rely on unbiased, measurable assessment

In a paper titled, *Competency-Based Learning Models: A Necessary Future* by Richard A. Voorhees, competency-based approaches form a bridge between traditional credit hour measures and learning revolution. Comparing course-based assessments with competency-based learning models, the author felt that while the former is dominated by the professional judgment of individual faculty, the latter one most often relies on the judgment of those external to the learning process. Thus competency based models ultimately rely on measurable assessment as they are based on units of analysis that are smaller, and certainly more granular and addressable, than those used to assess traditional courses.

4.3 The student learning outcomes can improve quality of education.

In a research paper titled, *21st Century Skills and Competences for New Millennium Learners in OECD Countries*, Katerina Ananiadou, Magdalean Claro compiled results of a survey done on instructors to see the extent that their educational tasks had meaning beyond the school setting and connected to the larger social context within which students live. These contexts were - Multicultural Perspectives, Caring & Effective Teaching Skill, Metacognitive Abilities, Technology Knowledge, Pedagogical Knowledge and Subject Matter Knowledge. The authentic, integrated instruction given by instructors were measured by student learning outcomes, using self-assessment technique and patterns were noted. It was felt that improving the quality of education in higher education can be accomplished by developing a competency-based educational model that includes performance-based education measurable through student learning outcomes.

4.4 Learning to be Personalized, based upon strength and passion of students

In the paper titled, *The changes we need: Education post COVID-19* by Yong Zhao and Jim Watterston, it is argued that the pandemic has created a unique opportunity for changes in education that were already proposed, before COVID-19, but could not be materialized due to various reasons. There are three changes advocated by this paper, that could be implemented post COVID-19:

- curriculum that is developmental, personalized, and evolving;
- pedagogy that is student-centered, inquiry-based, authentic, and purposeful;
- instruction delivery to include both synchronous and asynchronous learning.

It is a well-known fact that not all students have access to technology, some lack gadgets/hardware, others are compromised on digital competency. The issue of digital divide remains a significant issue around the globe. It is imperative on our part to visualize education with technology integration, wiping away digital divide, and using creative ways, as suggested by the paper.

4.5 Competency based courses shift the focus towards student-paced, self-diagnostic evaluation system

Dr. Mrittunjoy Guha Majumdar, in the book that came out in 2019, titled *Competency-based Education in Indian Schools: Realities and Vision for the Future*, mentioned that India’s has been a story of mixed success on the educational front; because although the country is home to 22% of the world’s population, it is also home to 46% of the world’s illiterate population.

The traditional ongoing academic programmes in India are based on educational material and resources, with there being not much clarity on the exact competencies acquired after each section or module of the programme. The focus here is on covering the curriculum and not building capacities or obtaining competencies in such programmes. A student can pass without having proficiency or mastery over each competency or task within a
subject-matter Competency-based courses are based solely on particular learning outcomes that are essential for developing critical thinking and reasoning. Students can work at their own pace and get periodic feedback to correct their performance.

As per the study, the aspects that come to the fore are the establishment of a competency-based learning framework in the country that could promote critical reasoning and independent & intuitive thinking in students with emphasis on differentiated teaching, vocational training, design-thinking, benchmarking the standards, capacity-building of teachers and a student-paced, self-diagnostic (identification of one’s learning gaps) evaluation system.

4.6 Needed clarity & seriousness of purpose for developing teacher’s competencies

The paper titled 21st Century Skills and Competences for New Millennium Learners in OECD Countries by Katerina Ananiadou and Magdalean Claro discusses issues related to the teaching and assessment of 21st century skills and competencies in 17 OECD countries are discussed. The key findings of this study are appended here. It says that though the introduction of 21st century skills has often been done in the context of a major curriculum reform across all the countries studied, but there is a need to look at the following issues too:

• There were virtually no clear (formative or summative) assessment policies for the skills under study. And the evaluation regarding their teaching is often left to external inspectors as part of the whole school’s audits.

• Similarly, there are few teacher trainings programmes, initial or in-service, that target the teaching or development of 21st century skills. Even though there exist several teacher training initiatives that focus on developing teachers’ ICT pedagogical skills, but most of them are optional and not taken seriously.

This paper draws attention to the necessity of bringing in more clarity and seriousness, towards the purpose of developing teacher’s competencies to handle learners of this millennium.

4.7 A competency-based teacher preparation model should include teacher’s performance and demonstration

Author Karen Cator, Carri Schneider and Tom Vander Ark mention in their research paper titled Preparing Teachers for Deeper Learning- Competency-Based Teacher Preparation and Development, that as we focus on improving engagement, productivity and efficiency by personalizing learning for students, we have the opportunity to provide educators also with opportunities to continuously learn and improve their practice, with their success measured not by time spent but by performance and demonstration. With higher expectations and the shift to personalized learning, a competency-based teacher preparation and development system can better prepare teachers to thrive in deeper learning environment.

4.8 Social support necessary for developing competencies for sustaining relationships during Covid’19 pandemic

Brenda Lloyd-Jones in an article named Developing Competencies for Emotional, Instrumental, and Informational Student Support during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Human Relations/Human Resource Development Approach emphasizes the social support. In this article, the author shares her experiences of developing competencies for sustaining relationships and implicates a transdisciplinary relationship between the fields of human relations (HRL) and human resource development (HRD). Transcending discipline-based boundaries, helps to explain the nature of supportive relationships and the competencies needed when experiencing ‘coaching, care, and collaboration’. Figure 1 provides a conceptual map underlying social support activated in a higher education classroom in its shift in instruction from face-to face to online learning using Zoom as a platform to master competencies of a professional nature like, coaching, care and collaboration, needed for student success, while developing a range of social support behaviors (e.g., emotional, instrumental, informational). The success of adult learners was acquired by way of conflict resolution and multidirectional communication, as students adjusted to the new norm. It also included negotiation of work life balance for/with students, along with explicit organization of time, space, and materials under new and unchartered socio-emotional and socio-political territory.
4.9 Border free education to remove barriers and expand knowledge & opportunities

In the essay *Towards a Border-Free Education*, the author James E. Callaghan posts the need for education to take a leading role in the wake of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. At the outbreak of the pandemic, it was observed that the education of millions of students was disrupted and their health, safety and security were put at risk as the borders were closed down and all transportation was halted. The concept of “border-free education” is mentioned in this paper, as a way to minimize risks to internationally mobile students (and scholars), while also removing barriers and expanding knowledge, diversity, and opportunities, particularly for the marginalized and vulnerable.

4.10 Need to reshape the competencies of educators post covid’19

The changes expected by the educators, in the educational practices of the post-COVID-19 world are: reshaping the competencies of the educators, undergoing a paradigm shift in education, supporting the educators’ ability to provide online learning practices, integration of more courses about online learning into the curricula of education faculties, increase in students' motivation towards learning upon returning to schools/universities and shift in the role of educators from teaching to facilitating.

It is advocated that to carry out policy making, both Top-Down (general to the specific) and Bottom-Up (begins at the specific and moves to the general.) strategies should be used to carry out a participatory policy making. In addition, instead of overwhelming students with many subjects and contents, more meaningful and flexible curriculum making strategies should be adopted, and this would mean revising the entire curriculum of both school and universities. GüneşKorkmaz and Cetin Toraman expressed these thoughts in their paper titled *Are We Ready for the Post-COVID-19 Educational Practice? An Investigation into What Educators Think as to Online Learning*.

### III. METHODOLOGY

As well as it is being covered in the Literature Reviews (section 4), there is a worldwide impetus to embrace Competency based learning which is well paced with defined learning outcomes; as against the traditional mode of teaching which is directed to complete the set syllabi within a given time period and is not personalized. I have used discussion method and the method of survey by framing questionnaires to finally draw the prototype of a competency model for schools, though it is required to be tested and tried in other schools as well.

### IV. DISCUSSION

The need for moving away from traditional teaching methodology towards Competency based education is very well enshrined in India’s new education policy’2020, as mentioned in section 2.4
Many of the recommendations referred to, in India’s context, by Dr. MrittunjoyGuhaMajumdar, in the book titled *Competency-based Education in Indian Schools*, mentioned in section 4.5 here; have been observed to have been incorporated in the NEP’2020, by virtue of which we have the following submission:

- In Indian schools, specially those that are coordinated by Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), there is an overall emphasis on making learning experiential, interdisciplinary and problem based. Similar observations are recorded for other Boards as well.

- Creative and critical thinking skills are enhanced through regular updating of HOTS (higher order thinking skills) questions on CBSE site. Case study-based, reasoning and assertion-based questions have been added to the Assessment framework and the percentage of competency-based questions in the blue prints of examination papers in grade IX & X has been raised to 30% and in grade XI & XII to 20%, vide CBSE/ACAD./DIR./2021/dated 22.04.2021

- As part of Assessment plan, 360-degree appraisals for students are on the cards wherein the peer groups, parents and the students themselves will appraise the performance

- All teachers and even school heads have to take minimum 50 hours of compulsory professional training (CPD) in a year.

- The hard boundaries between scholastic & co-scholastic, and between Commerce, Humanities & Science streams at the senior secondary level have been dissolved.

- Vocational training with local artisans, carpenters & potters etc. is advocated along with Internship with local industries for secondary school students and a variety of skill-based subjects like Artificial Intelligence, Automotive etc. have been introduced too.

- A competency-based framework is in the process of being introduced, with the objective of student-paced, self-diagnostic evaluation system.

- India is aiming to participate in PISA 2021, a giant step towards international benchmarking.

### 5.2 Teacher Competency Readiness Self-Assessment Post Covid-19

With reference to the point reviewed in 4.6, titled -Needed clarity & seriousness of purpose for developing teacher’s competencies, another sample study was done. To measure the readiness level for the post-COVID-19 educational practices, a Teacher Competency Readiness Self-Assessment Post Covid’19 survey was conducted with over 87 teachers of a K-12 School in Gurgaon, after they had completed 13 months of online teaching practices, due to the pandemic. It was observed that:

**Questionnaire:**

1. I believe that the world events past, present and future impact the field of teaching.
2. I believe I have the ability to convert the knowledge I have acquired and create compelling lessons, using ICT tools to meet the needs of my students.
3. I have integrated the topics related to self-care, health, hygiene etc. into the curriculum content.
4. I am placing more emphasis on teaching real-life problem-solving skills.
5. As a future teacher, I am able to reach out to all the learning outcomes determined for learning.
6. I ensure that there is a system of periodic feedback throughout the learning process, with there being opportunities for students to correct their performance.
7. As an educator, I try to master social-emotional competencies for maintaining continuity in relationships.
8. I think about how to improve my ability to be a successful teacher.
9. During online classes held after the outbreak of Covid’19, I ensure every student’s access to the internet or other necessary equipment.
10. I am focusing on competencies related to online learning.

*Figure 3: Teacher Competency Readiness Survey*
• During online classes held after the outbreak of Covid'19, almost all those who participated in the survey questionnaire, had ensured almost every student's access to the internet or other necessary equipment.

• As a “future teacher”, almost all were able to achieve all the learning outcomes determined for learning, in their teaching learning process and acknowledged having introduced a system of taking regular feedback at intervals, during the teaching learning process; thus providing opportunities to students to correct their performance. They were also focused on improving their ability to be a successful teacher.

• 98% of them felt that world events, (with reference to Covid’19) past, present and future have an impact on the field of teaching. But they do possess the ability to convert the knowledge acquired to create compelling lessons, using ICT tools to meet the needs of their students.

• 60% of them have already integrated the topics related to self-care, health, hygiene etc. into the curriculum content and another 39% are in the process of doing the same.

• 83% of them are focusing on competencies related to online learning environment and how to use online learning management systems.

• 96% are now laying more emphasis on teaching real-life problem-solving skills.

• 97% are trying to master social-emotional competencies for maintaining continuity in relationships (e.g., student/peer, student/instructor).

The survey results clearly indicate readiness on the part of the teachers to fulfill the needs of online teaching and development of necessary competencies. Though the conclusion is drawn from a sample survey, there is scope to generalize by conducting some more similar studies in different situation/circumstances.

5.3 A Sample Survey on Competency-based learning for Students

Drawing inference from the review given in 4.4, titled Learning to be Personalised, based upon the strengths and passions of students; a sample survey conducted on the students from the age group 13-17 years, wherein 45 of them participated; the following conclusions can be drawn:

• 60% prefer self-paced learning and wish not to be pressurized to compete at the same speed as other learners in the same standard.

• 84% would like to form flexible learning environment for themselves to learn; meaning- having the freedom to choose, how( group or single), what( topic/subject), when( time of the day) and where( online or offline)to learn?

• 77% of those who attempted the survey wanted that multiple chances should be given to students to attempt assessments; to prove their competence in any subject/ area of performance.

• 89% of students are well aware that learning outcomes emphasize competencies that include application and creation of knowledge, along with the development of important skills.
The students need to be exposed more to the concept of self-paced learning, as in the present system, all time lines of course delivery are pre-defined and so are the assessment deadlines. Students are familiar with and recognize the fact that learning outcomes, provided, at the time of teaching, emphasize competencies that include application and creation of knowledge, along with the development of important skills like reading, writing and arithmetic. This sample survey provided us a platform, for educators to work in the direction of Competency based learning and can be tried for a larger sample of population.

5.4 A new Model of Learner Competencies for schools post Covid.

Based on the review of the literature and my own surveys done so far; we have consolidated our learning in the form of a model given here in figure 5, as a Learner Competency Model for schools. With the overall aim of providing quality education, it highlights three major stakeholders for its necessary execution, the policy makers, teachers and students.
5.4 A. The Governments and policy makers must include the educators/teachers themselves in the strategy building exercise to chalk out flexible and meaningful curricula that draws text books closer to reality and focuses on developing problem solving and reasoning skills. The teaching pedagogy in the classrooms, whether online or offline, needs to be restructured to include the possibilities of differentiated learning with varied time frames. There was an emerging realization during Covid’19 phase; when many schools across the world were shut down leading to a major loss of hours of work; that equity and empathy must flow across the nations and educators should create active learning environments where different cultures and lifestyles are valued. So, education should not have any borders and learners should be able to choose from the wide array of networks available, the preferred mode of study and the courses of interest. There has to be a worldwide acceptance of distance education courses and they need to be provided as much importance as the regular courses.

5.4 B. The teachers must get ample opportunities to acquire competencies related to technology integration in online mode and sufficient exposure to using synchronous & asynchronous tools as part of capacity building exercise. There has to be a seriousness of purpose on the part of teachers, to update their knowledge and skills. Their performance must include demonstration that could be evaluated for better results through an in-built system of feedback. They should acquire ICT based competencies, useful in creating compelling lessons and focus on outcome-based education. The role of teacher should shift to being a facilitator in the classroom. Focus on continuous professional development for teachers is as important as teachers becoming part of professional networks, beyond their districts, states or national boundaries, wherever possible.

5.4 C. The students should be allowed to take up learning at their own pace, with the possibility of improving their performance, through a system of feedback- offered both by peers and superiors. Learning should be self-diagnostic and performance based with measurable learning outcomes; that emphasize competencies like application and creation of knowledge, along with the development of important skills. Flexibility in choice of
Such personalized learning patterns, as against the concept of ‘one shoe fits all’, shall help in inculcating 21st century competencies like critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity.

5.4 COVID’19 has shaken the world as the worst calamity in 100 years. In June 2020, UNESCO published a paper entitled "Education in a post-COVID world: Nine ideas for public action" and it’s statement that "We cannot return to the world as it was before", urges us to rethink about new ways, principles and possibilities so that we may not have any educational setbacks. The realisation after the outbreak of COVID’19 is, that learning must never stop, irrespective of the environment that the child is in, be it a physical classroom, or an ‘online classroom’.

The education fraternity must equip themselves with synchronous (online chat and videoconferencing) and asynchronous (emails, online forums, and collaborative documents) tools and the policy makers could ensure their reach and affordability. Needless to say, that, the teaching fraternity must ensure full engagement and handholding to students. Social and emotional wellbeing of the students specially during the online teaching must include talks on good health, wellbeing as well as monitoring behaviour by school counselors. Overall, the systems must be equipped to handle crisis and embrace resilience in case of any future eventualities and such topics could be part of life skills curriculum in schools. Student motivation is essential to bring them back to real time classrooms, once Covid’19 is over and to make them accept the ‘new normal’ of education pattern that would give as much weightage to safe surfing as safe distancing.

V. CONCLUSION

With the view to provide quality education, keeping SDG’s goal 4 of the UN in mind (to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all); it is imperative on the part of nations to come together to rethink and redesign their education systems and make them progressive and outcome based. For education to be impactful, enable employment opportunities and to have a reach beyond borders, upskilling and reskilling of its stakeholders is crucial. As the realisation towards enhancing learner competencies has set in across the world, fueled by the recent devastating Covid’19 pandemic; creation of deeper learning environments and sustainability drives are positive moves, along with international benchmarking like PISA; that countries like India are committed for.

Chris Hadfield (2013) in his book titled “An Astronaut's Guide to Life on Earth”, said, ‘Competence means keeping your head in a crisis, sticking with a task even when it seems hopeless, and improvising good solutions to tough problems when every second counts. It encompasses ingenuity, determination and being prepared for anything’. The learner Competency Model for Schools shared here, is not a sure shot panacea for all the issues that loom ahead of us; but is a repository of suggestive practices, in the form of a prototype, that could be further tested and developed to enable us make the right choices in K-12 schools.

REFERENCES