

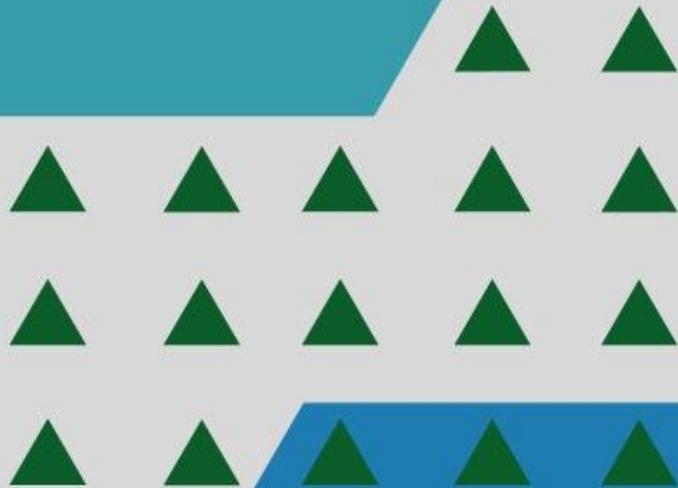


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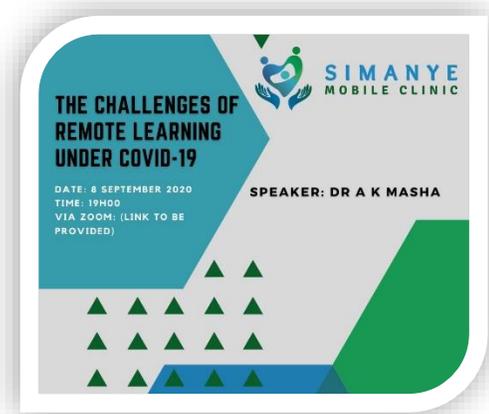
THE CHALLENGES OF REMOTE LEARNING UNDER COVID-19

DATE: 8 SEPTEMBER 2020
TIME: 19H00
VIA ZOOM: (LINK TO BE
PROVIDED)

SPEAKER: DR A K MASHA

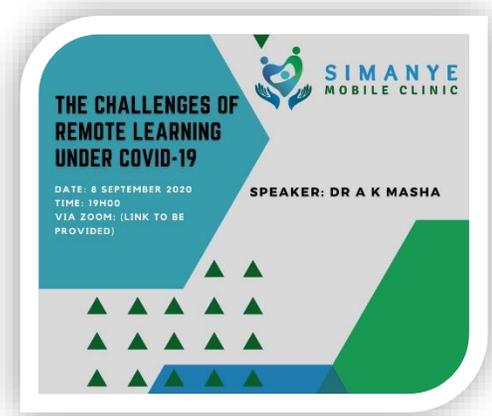


INTRODUCTION



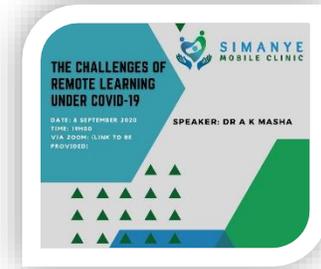
- COVID-19 is the novel coronavirus which goes with the name severe respiratory syndrome coronavirus-2 (SARS-COV-2) (Sansa, 2020).
- The virus was first identified in China in Wuhan City at the end of 2019 and is associated by scientists with a disease referred to as COVID-19 (Sansa, 2020).
- The global impact of the COVID-19 virus ranges between 20 million deaths in 2020 (Imperial College in London), with effective non-pharmaceutical interventions in place.
- 40 million deaths without such interventions (Walker, Whittaker & Watson, 2020).

PRE-COVID EDUCATIONAL CHALLENGES



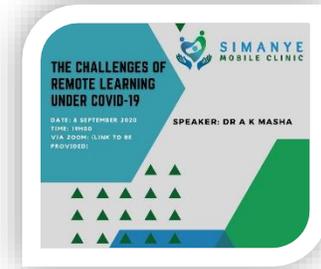
- Before COVID-19 pandemic, world was dealing with a learning crisis, evidenced by high levels of learning poverty (The World Bank Education Global Practice, 2020).
- Therefore, the world was already facing formidable challenges in fulfilling the promise of education as a basic human right (UN Policy Brief: Education during COVID-19 and beyond, 2020).

EDUCATIONAL MATTERS



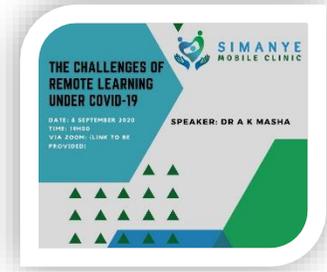
- The first quarter of 2020 - outbreak of the COVID-19 virus (Demuyakor, 2020) - forced the WHO to declare it a **pandemic** (Adu, Mpu & Adu, 2020).
- A phenomena **unprecedented in history** (Azoulay, 2020; Yong, 2020).
- COVID-19 **caused worldwide disruption** in literally all spheres of life (UN Policy Brief: Education during COVID-19 and beyond, 2020),
- Affected all levels of **education** (Behari-leak & Ganas, 2020; Demuyakor, 2020; UN Policy Brief: Education during COVID-19 and beyond, 2020).
- This affected **billions of students world-wide** (Mhlanga & Moloji, 2020; UN Policy Brief: Education during COVID-19 and beyond, 2020).
- COVID-19 pandemic and **resulted into social and physical distancing** practices among citizens - made staying at home compulsory (Adu *et al.*, 2020; Cakir & Savas, 2020; Uscher-Pines, Schwartz, Ahmed, Zheteyeva, Meza, Baker & Uzicanin, 2018).

EDUCATIONAL MATTERS



- From March 2020: To contain the spread of COVID-19, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) around the world **cancelled in-person instruction and moved to remote learning and teaching** (Abdulmir & Hafidh, 2020; Di Pietro, Biagi, Costa, Karpiński & Mazza, 2020; Raheem & Khan, 2020) on the planet (Adu *et al.*, 2020; Bawa)
- **Affected huge percentages of enrolled learners**, 2020; Demuyakor, 2020; Di Pietro, Biagi, Costa, Karpiński & Mazza, 2020; Joynes, Gibbs, Sims & Gaible, 2020; Mhlanga & Moloji, 2020; UN Policy Brief: Education during COVID-19 and beyond, 2020; Universities South Africa, 2020).

MEANING OF EDUCATION



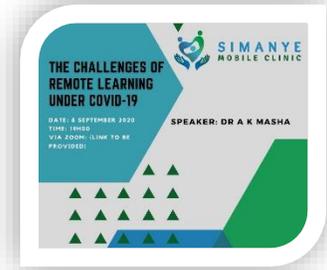
- Education is defined as the deliberate, systematic and sustained effort to transmit, evoke or acquire knowledge, attitudes, values, skills and sensibilities, and any learning that results from the effort, intended or unintended (Nel, Werner, Both, Du Plessis, Mey, Ngalo, Poisat & Van Hoek, 2014).
- The main purpose of higher education is to build capacity for middle and high-level manpower to cater for the socio-cultural and developmental needs of a society (Bosu, 2020).
- The primary responsibility of every higher education institution is to provide quality education to its clients or products that would be useful to their society and the nation as a whole taking into consideration the tenets of globalization (Yankson, 2013).

REMOTE LEARNING



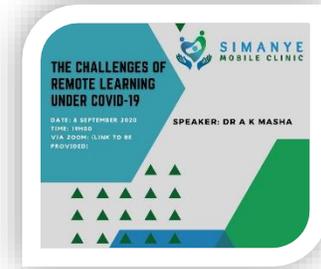
- HEIs are forced to reconsider what part of their educational delivery will be offered in person and what part will be offered on-line (Dennis, 2020).
- The use of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) in teaching and learning (Behari-leak & Ganas, 2020; Demuyakor, 2020; Mhlanga & Moloji, 2020) – one option - strictly on-line.
- HEIs suddenly saw participation of diverse students in terms of **age, gender, social background, schooling background** and **expectations** (Crisp, Palmer, Turnbull, Nettelbeck, Ward, LeCouteur, Sarria, Strelan & Schneider, 2009).
- **Inclusion:**
 - ✓ **First time entering** (FTEN) university students (DHET, 2018) / **First year students** (Tinto, 1988; Brewer, 2013; Brinkworth, McCann, Matthews & Nordstrom, 2009).
 - ✓ **International students** (Chysikos, Ahmed & Ward, 2017),
 - ✓ **Indigenous students from isolated locations** (Abdullah & Elia, 2009),
 - ✓ **Students from rural backgrounds** (Maila & Ross, 2018; Pillay, 2010), students from disadvantaged backgrounds (Hobden & Hobden, 2015),
 - ✓ **Students who are first-generation students** (FGS) (Bayaga & Lekena, 2018; Heymann & Carolissen, 2011)

REMOTE LEARNING



- Teaching and learning is one of the three functions of a university (Kerr, 1991; Pillay, 2010).
- VLE platform has imperceptibly become a learning strategy in the teaching and learning realm (Negash & Vilkas, 2017).
- Since this method improves students' academic achievement, it VLE has grown to enjoy popularity (Khalkhali, Shakibayi & Andosh, 2015).
- However, for students from majorly rural and peri-urban areas, the VLE platform has resulted into challenges from lecturers and from students on issues such as:
 - ✓ *Lack of on-line learning environment.*
 - ✓ *Accessibility to data/wi-fi/internet and their usage.*
 - ✓ *Lack of connectivity.*
 - ✓ *Personality traits and attitude towards the use of smartphones.*
 - ✓ *Laptops and ipads.*

MY FOCUS: CHALLENGES



- 1) Individual learning styles.
- 2) Home environment.
- 3) Parental and digital support.
- 4) Nutrition.
- 5) Affordability of extra-school activities.
- 6) Interaction with other students.
- 7) Stress, emotional well-being and motivation.

MY FOCUS: CHALLENGES

1) Individual learning styles: **Visual, Auditory & Kinesthetic** (VAK) learners.

2) **Home environment:**

✓ ***Parental and digital support***

- Students from less advantaged backgrounds can experience more significant learning loss during this emergency period than their more advantaged counterparts (Di Pietro, Biagi, Costa, Karpiński & Mazza, 2020).
- Differences in non-financial parental support, parental financial resources, schools attended and students' digital skills (Di Pietro et al., 2020).
- Parents' ability and they conclude that parental education plays an important role in explaining the transmission of cognitive abilities between generations (Anger & Heineck, 2010).
- More educated parents spend more time with their children and tend to be more involved in their learning process (Sayer et al., 2004)
- More educated parents may be more efficient at assisting their children with schoolwork (Holmund *et al.*, 2008).
- Importance of a reliable internet connection at home to assist in education materials delivery (Baytiyeh, 2018).
- Not all parents possess the digital skills required to help their children deal with the technical challenges of on-line learning (Zhang & Livingstone, 2019).

✓ ***Nutrition***

- COVID-19 crisis is likely to have a negative effect especially on the most vulnerable segments of the working population such as workers with lower wages and worse employment conditions (Fana *et al.*, 2020).

✓ ***Affordability of extra-school activities***

- Students from richer families are significantly more likely to have access to a private tutor than their peers from poorer families (Andrew et al., 2020).

MY FOCUS: CHALLENGES

✓ *Interaction with other students.*

- The **isolation from friends and lecturers** may have a detrimental effect on students' socio-emotional skills and **parents from more privileged backgrounds may be better equipped to support their children in these circumstances** (Moroni *et al.*, 2020).
- Some teaching methods that can be used for face-to-face interaction in a traditional classroom include:
 - **Buzz groups:** *A small group of people assembled to identify a problem or problems, consider and select alternative solutions (Leigh, 1993; Nel et al., 2014:203; Jarvis, 1995; Rae, 1997; Rogers, 2002; Simmonds, 2004);*
 - **Discussions:** *Discussions are structured conversations between learners and facilitators. They provide immediate feedback on contributions, creating higher motivation levels and better participation from the learners (Blanchard & Thacker, 2013; Coetzee & Botha, 2013:324; Leigh, 1993; Orridge, 1998; Rae, 1997; Rogers, 2002; Simmonds, 2004; Jarvis, 1995); and*
 - **Activities:** *Including ice-breakers, games and group tasking (Spinks & Clements, 1993; Rae, 1997; McLaughlin & Peyser, 2004; Simmonds, 2004; Sugar & Willett, 2005; Biech, 2008).*

✓ *Stress, emotional well-being and motivation.*

- Students who are confined at home with their parents due to COVID-19 may feel more stressed and anxious (Di Pietro *et al.*, 2020).

THANK YOU

Asante sana

Enkosi kakulu

Natoteera sana

Shukran