



An Overview of Online Teaching-learning During Pandemic

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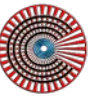
Abstract

This article aims to scan the merits and demerits of ongoing methods of 'Institutionalized' education, mainly 'online' and 'offline'. Basically, the paper tries to reinforce the positives of 'Online' teaching-learning over the most common and traditional, 'Offline' teaching-learning through a comparative analysis. Finally, the paper digs a room for/of learning at an odd time including merits and demerits as the part or process of education.

Keywords: online, offline, purpose

It is an accepted fact that 'best' always comes out of a crisis. It is 'the' best because it navigates a way to destination on the faces of so many challenges and crises. That is why light has so much value and power to all concerned simply because it perforates the thick shells of darkness, a demonic force and enlightens the lives of all organisms through a minuscule whole, a leakage to our eyes. Something that touches the lives of people in particular and other organisms, in general, becomes memorably a path breaker, a path that really leads to the union of souls.

On the other hand, it must be mentioned that the 'finite' capacity of human beings on the face of 'Infinite', whatever one may consider it to be, is aptly visible, always, through multiple occurrences in the world. Covid Situation is one such memorable period to all. But it is succinctly different compared to other natural phenomena in the sense that Covid has choked the lives of all irrespective of time, space and action and that too for a sustained time span, a tenure. This pandemic insinuates a fact to all that words like aim, ambition, aspiration, plan, purpose and promise in the dictionary of human beings serve meanings in their lives and propose a world of dream and expectation. But who knows what God proposes or opposes because we are like flies to God as Shakespeare had foreseen in "King Lear". The human being is simply a puppet who



responds according to the pulls of the string by an unseen hand. We know it well but tend to forget it as blessings of life. On the contrary, it is also a fact that challenges or crises come at the doorstep as blessings to remind us our weakness before the mighty as a substantial part of education in our lives as it is “Foul is fair” in Shakespearean language and forgetting the same will thwart us more and more to the dreary desert of life.

But, a point can never be neglected. While all, excluding human beings, have accepted the trouble without any further exploration, experimentations and prevention, human beings stand apart. Hemingway, the American Novelist, says, “Man can be defeated but not destroyed”. This indomitable spirit to face the most ruthless for a way out, at least, has marked human beings different from all if not unique. To name a few, man has thought about mask, quarantine, lock down, vaccination to stand against an unseen force. It is utterly surprising that man popularized these terms more than the ‘masque’ of Ben Jonson, ‘quarantine’ (“Romeo and Juliet”) of Shakespeare and ‘lock down’ (“Silence! The Court is in Session”) of Tendulkar. Here, again, these are all preventive measures for the self to survive. It can be seen partially a selfish voice that calls for ‘my own life is the only life’. There may be a question of what else man has done to care for the rare or nurture the future. The article began by saying a statement that touching lives for the betterment of life and its settlement in future is perhaps one way to make things indelible or ineffaceable in the days to come. The man really forgets everything of a man except his sacrifice and contribution that benefited mankind amidst misery and misfortune. He has made out and brought out a handful of measures to moisture the dry souls during this deadly condition. Although there are many, considerably, ‘Online Teaching’ is one such vibrant step that has been touching and saving innumerable buds which will bloom within a short time to fragrant the world over the foulds. Before the article magnifies on reaping the grains of ‘Online teaching’ exploring its impeccable impact on students, parents and teachers as well, it aims to deal with two foundational or fundamental questions i.e. ‘what is an online teaching and is it new?’

‘What is an online teaching’ has been a genuine question to many. In a simple term, it is computer-based or broadly speaking, technology-based learning. ‘Line’ here indicates being on the Web, a connection that links people across time and space. The refined version will define it as an experience in synchronous and asynchronous environments through the medium of devices. It is such a tool that imposes value more on blended elements in synchronous learning than live lectures in asynchronous learning. It is one way to lead students through the gates of knowledge to the



gamut of wisdom available in Google, a path not taken by especially in physical mode. Had not the Virus struck the world, people would get away with the sway of time without an exploration.

Another prominent question is 'is it new?'. Look back into history will take us to the journey of evolution of education. Slates were used in Indian schools during the 1100s. In the year, Guttenberg invented printing press, in the 1600s, Abacus revolutionized fundamental mathematics; in the year 1913, Thomas Edition thought of a replacement of a teacher; and in 1927, Sidney Pressy came up with the MCQ machine. During the 1960s, online education emerged at the University of Illinois and in 1994, India launched EdTechs with the help of Educomp. Since 2010, EdTechs start-ups have been looming large in the field of academics. For an example, Byju's has become one of the most valued EdTech companies in the year, 2019. Now, a number of notable EdTech start-ups including SWAYAM, a programme by Government of India eyed at achieving three educational policies i.e. access, equity and quality.

Now the article torches some meaningful take-homes of online teaching.

Students:

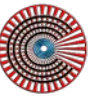
Being 'on' line always has become the motto of online teaching. 'Online Teaching' is not at all a sudden movement in the arena of academics. It emerged as one of the options of/for education. In today's language, it is the other name of 'Distance Education', which is more popular at the university level because all (students) cannot be managed at a time and at a place. But the later (online) manages both. However, there are many an advantage of online teaching. While Covid thinks about evacuation, online has merged everyone without infringing the law of safe distance. But this is all about the physical gap amongst people. Unknowingly this pandemic divulges the gap between a student and his/her teacher (his/her learning), and this, in the long run, will be another deadly problem in the world that will affect generation after generation more rapidly than the spread of Covid. However, online teaching touches the lives of the students fulfilling the basic requirements solicited for the time being. Many may think of its practical utility based on a judgement of the 'chalk and talk' method in a physical classroom. According to them, education is more physical than psychological. Undoubtedly, an encounter with students in a physical classroom will have an impeccable impression on them, just as a face to face conversation is far relevant than that over the phone. It is not at all a matter of discussion which is better or bitter. Here at this stage comparison or criticism is really a matter of ignorance if the real purpose or



objective is ignored. For example, one might think of a plane or motorcycle, but before choosing the mode of communication, one must judge the possibility and availability of a mode based on the destination without a hierarchical notion of a plane to be the best always. What the article means is very simple, i.e. destination matters a lot, not the mode. A criticism demands a favourable ground or background. What the article means to say is that two different persons at two different places are any way out of physical touch or mental connection, and phone calls or online video calls bridge up the wide gap of separation, collaborating a sense of togetherness both mentally and physically. Physical does not always aver a tactile impression. How can a device bring physical togetherness? It is a time to be sensible with a realization that ‘online’ video calls satiate all our expectations though we cannot touch the person. Phone or video calls are seriously of no use in a physical ambience. Pandemic is really catastrophic, affecting academics at the core. Who can think of a physical classroom when the world is strictly maintaining a gap to avoid infection? In such a circumstance, online-academia has been the only medium to touch the lives of people and proved worthy to be contagious. How does comparison come as to decipher which is the best or worst? It is more a survival question in the mind that can serve the purpose. Therefore, considering the condition, ‘online’ teaching is the best irrespective of its limitations as it seems to many. What the article insinuates is that a mindset at the beginning of the journey decides the fate of the journey despite its limitations.

‘Online’- teaching is the only option available now. It makes people in general and students, in particular, feel the importance of teachers though Thomas Edition thought of a replacement of a teacher in the year 1913. ‘Teachers are irreplaceable’ is a cliché. 2020 has proved once again that it is merely a scrap of thought devoid of any relevance. In today’s world, everybody is furnished with numberless facilities by the manifold blessings of Google. Students can easily be independent learners as far as today’s academics are concerned. But surprisingly, these facilities become ‘facilities’ due to a wise methodical felicitation by the teachers. Students have realized the importance of teachers in crises as one knows a real friend or foe in distress. All resources, online and offline, are merely a stock house and therefore, difficult to recognize in a gathering at first as per the requirement and bring out the same as per the selection at an exact time. A teacher does the task for his/her pupils so that they can meet the destinations as easefully as possible.

‘Online’- teaching, on the other hand, foregrounds the eternal bonding between a teacher and a student. Things are not so easy when it is completely ‘off’ track to a certain group of students or



teachers. As of now, online teaching is more popular for students who share a stage of seniority and opt to qualify or equip themselves at any cost with a variety of options available beyond physical, mental, social and locale. In the world of specialization, they outreach to grab the best available in the globe and in such a case, online has been a blessing rather than being the 'only' option to make it happen. But the same, at the school level and that too at a tender age, is not only impossible but also unimaginable. Nonetheless, online teaching during Covid makes the unavailable;- available, impossible;- possible and unable; able amidst threats. Quick acceptance of an odd, though challenging, has proved a fact that a miracle can happen if there is belief. The entire classroom, so vivid and vibrant, is transferred into a small screen, so serene and lifeless, which is basically a tough job for everyone to adjust at first. But a sense of cooperation and correlation from both the corners had corresponded everything effortlessly.

Flexibility is another mind-blowing concept in online education. Students along with parents and institutions along with teachers and support staff members have been flexible enough to serve the best and crop the best. Time is beautifully managed to some extent. Journey, to and fro, and movement time in-between classes restore energy and time to implement it further. Video lecture with technology gives rise to blended learning that helps increase the potency of a student/teacher. Anyone can learn anywhere at any time, thereby developing new skills, leading to life-long learning, which is intensified and conceptualized the most by/through online teaching.

At last, one cannot help saying that online teaching has been a module to enhance a sense of morality, individuality and personality amongst students. Online teaching-learning being flexible has offered much scope to use or misuse, lose or gain, be honest or dishonest, remain motivated or demotivated, and finally, get set or upset for the future. For instance, an online test has been more a morality test. Students always fight and compete for marks not for knowledge. Therefore, students at home without any supervision of teachers during the examination can do any unfair means to fulfil their craving for marks. But a resistance to resort in an unfair act becomes the hallmark of honesty. Abstinance from the calls of answers in the body of text books while writing answers makes the students more controlled and confident on their selves. Hence, the online method implants a sense of morality at a tender age. Students can make mistakes under the circle of influence. Firmness to stay in the path of honesty and self-reliance endorse individuality in him/her. On the other hand, students can easily skip the classes or shirk the duties in the absence of their parents in the name of pretext. A little bit of sincerity and dedication to what they are



expected to do and paying respect or tribute to what their parents do for them form a sense of responsibility, and it is a responsibility that personifies the 'personae' amongst students. Hence, the entire process of teaching-learning through online has sensitized the real 'student' within.

Parents:

'Sarbasiksha Abhiyan' is one revolutionary step to enlighten people with the light of education even reaching at the door step of interior parts of the country. Ignorance takes us to the delve of dreadful desert but little bit knowledge can quench the thirst even if someone is stuck at the most cruel steps of life. The concept of 'Sarbasiksha Abhiyan' bears some possible drawbacks to fulfil its divine aim. Physical presence and shame of ignorance have become a major block to some to confess a bitter truth that they know less or nothing compared to others. Hence, some had drawn themselves back even though they thought of plucking the full advantage of its mission. Online teaching has catered the unique mission of 'Sarbasiksha Abhiyan'. The child along with his/her parents can enjoy the journey of learning without any sense of inferiority complex which itself i.e. to drive any type of complexity, is a life-long process of human being.

If online teaching has served the former to educate all for its unitary blessing, it has also incubated a talent to parent the children by teaching the parents how to teach because they (parents) follow the teachers or observe the teaching-learning process during class time. It is a fact that if mothers are educated, their children will definitely be educated or learn the basics at least. But mere action is directionless if not goaded by wisdom, as it is shown by Krishna and Arjuna in "Mahabharata". Our children, Arjuna must be instructed by parents, Krishna, who knows all happenings of the world and guides accordingly. Online teaching has shared a wide range of techniques and methods with the parents as they observe the classes driven by different teachers who teach the learners evaluate their learning and synergize the entire process of nurturing the future of the students through learning. Apart from it, parents also learn how to convey a message quite easily or simplify a complicated concept, control the individual behaviour or idiosyncrasies, correlate a dichotomy of innocence and experience without losing patience and sense of morality. Truly, if the former brings the children to this world, the latter makes them fit for the world. Hence, online teaching-learning is a mutual learning for both the pupils and their parents.

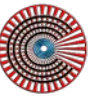
Teacher:



The 21st century has deciphered a number of ways to foster an education that is self-sufficient and smart in its texture. The flip classroom is one such methodical step which in turn postulates another method of learning i.e. SQ3R (Survey, Question, Read, Recite and Review). What it aims at is that traditional or classroom teaching must be flipped to home through the medium of Voice/Video clips and the classroom should be used for activity based on the flipped learning. In a nutshell, the classroom should be a lab for experimental learning whereas home is apt for theoretical learning. Again, a shift from old to new, conventional to unconventional, and used to adjusting situation is a hard nut to crack. For so long, a teaching has offered a comfort zone to a group of facilitators. But a break from school during Covid has given a break through to the teachers. Comfort zone, according to many, is the other name of a well where frogs dwell. Therefore, Covid has become a stepping stone for those teachers who were so conventional with old-outdated concepts of the teaching-learning process even in the face of the 21st century. It is a do or die situation for them because no other method is as relevant as online teaching. Once it is online, it incorporates the vast span of teaching-learning techniques which certainly demonstrate an application of machine rather than technical knowledge, something which is now more popular as 'Applied Technology'.

Before; the article tends to look for the backdrops of teachers or students in this entire process of online teaching-learning; everyone must reflect to the mirror, which reflexes both the object and its surrounding. To face the challenge, most of the schools lack the weapons to face the challenge in general and Covid in particular. For overall performance, everything must have a lineage. Just as only a cook cannot offer desired dishes, the teachers and students alone cannot do the ideal as it is expected. Proper ingredients with modern instruments help a cook perform his/her best. Similarly, a furnished classroom with modern instruments can cater for the taste of best learning. Smart execution with unsmart items is merely an accident or uniquely unique, something that cannot be accepted as normal or natural. A little bit of training could have done a great job. Unfortunately, it never happened in most of the school and more definitely, Covid has not offered an inch space to make it happen in some schools which normally take an initiative to upgrade teachers institutionally. But both the teachers and students have persisted in this struggle of existence because of the former's revocable responsibility and the latter's tremendous tenacity.

The article began with a statement that indomitability before the dominant makes a human being unique. This, an attitude to sustain even up to the last, has proved it to be so because of lack of



knowledge in technology, lack of expertise in the same, application of the same without definite training, making such application comprehensible to the students who are on the other hand (may be) unskilled to handle or enable such programming, have shattered and battered both the student and the teacher. Both of them understood what a defeat is in relation to the victory of a physical classroom and hell (online) in relation to a heaven i.e. offline. One must remember a fact that warriors are celebrated more not for their victory but for a tenacity to fight with the last drop. Teachers and students have been such warriors who did not offer an inch without battling. As injuries do not matter to a triumphant or labour pain to a mother, the same is true with a teacher or a student whatever they have experienced to beget a holy mission of fruitful life. What the article wants to say is that necessity is the root (mother) of everything man needs (invention). And due to the blessing of Covid, the fraternity of a student and a teacher adventures to incorporate all possible methods to be a path breaker in the history of academics.

If teaching is an art, a teacher as an artist has to perform in class. As the performance of a so-called artist can vary, the same can be with a teacher or a student. True, it is! A microscopic view will foster a thought that art invites an infinite scope of participation and involvement because it assimilates a cosmic gesture in itself. Therefore, it is everybody's cry to taste it with the help of a palatable performance. But there is a twist. An artist is supposed or expected to perform and entertain the audience through a magical spell of his/her performance. So called professional artists, on stage, are not at all expected to solve any doubt or answer any question at any point of his/her performance. In a word, an artist is not at all responsible whether s/he makes sense or not. On the contrary, a teacher, as an artist as it is believed to be, is fully responsible regarding the understanding or misunderstanding, clarity or curiosity, and the fusion or confusion of a student. Therefore, a professional artist can perform his professionalism while performing on the stage. But the teaching of a teacher through a profession from his/her side, on the contrary, has to profess without any pinch of professionalism.

Many may opine that teaching is an art within a finite space addressing a mass of a certain age group, unlike an artist who encounters an audience of a mixed group. But the audience of a teacher, the students, is the fountain of talent and curiosities leading to further exploration of the world. They are very active, unlike the passive audience of performing art. It is also true that an artist makes art with an accompaniment, but a teacher is all alone on the stage and, therefore, fully responsible on his/her own. The popularity of online teaching has debarred the walls of limitations



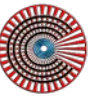
from making it infinite and placed the teacher to a stage of the universe inviting a large number of positive and negative responses which in turn construct a teacher through a healthy process of self-construction and deconstruction. Performing a role to one neither seen nor known and playing a role to one either seen or known are remarkably different. A teacher has the latter, and a success aftermath has definitely upgraded his/her skills.

If Covid is the disease, online teaching-learning is the panacea. But it has some medicinal side effects. Now, the article switches the focus to those areas because of which online method is not widely accepted or acclaimed. The article also eyes to figure out its solution.

Problems:

Amidst manifold blessings, some loopholes are thought of or rather magnified by its stake holders. It is common that a coin has two sides, head and tail; a man, life and death; and similarly life, happiness and sadness. Likewise, every aspect must have merits and demerits.

- i) The first is pitched on the physical ambience of a physical classroom leading to emotional ambivalence. Truly, a gentle tap at the back of the students can play magic to perform a miracle in a physical classroom. On the other hand, a stern eye can steer the class better than a thousand shouts, or a casual gesture can clarify end number of doubts more than repeated explanations. In an online method, these are not as effective as a physical classroom.
- ii) Online education is city-centred, according to a group of people. It is so because the city possesses the requirements of online teaching. It ideally hints at the solvency of people and the sufficiency of technical aspects in a city. In remote areas, online teaching-learning is not only impossible but also unimaginable because the economic standard of the parents cannot avail the basic necessity of online education. Hence, it fails to begin even a scratch in those areas.
- iii) Evaluation, whether oral or written, as the article opines, is the major impediment of online teaching. One red underline or circle highlighting mistakes can do much more than verbal corrections. After examination, students fail to match the compensatory marks along with mistakes in online checking. A teacher can revise/judge the outcome of a session through the arrangement of an instant test or quiz or rapid fire. None of these is so effective in an online class.



- iv) Attendance has become a major block, and the lack of interest within the given screen or some physical problems associated with devices are thought to be the roots of such absenteeism at the front and teachers at the back. Continuous contact with a screen during class and beyond class makes education a luggage rather than a package of wonder. Some aver of the fact that students of lower class learn more from their fellows than their books and teachers simply because lower class students have no concept of an idol or a sermon. Therefore, kids are suffering the most compared to the senior ones.
- v) According to many, online is mere an expenditure about nothing or something negligible. An arrangement of online education, namely separate device/s, web connection, a table to fix such instruments etc., has really affected the parents monetarily who was helpless than to serve the elements of elemental education to their children even in the face of either losing job or living a life negotiated. Therefore, the online method is an additional load on their rugged shoulders.
- vi) This problem is much more complicated and genuine. Deficit of technical knowledge irrespective of students, teachers and parents has ended in resulting in the futility of the mission of online teaching. In some cases, students are facing problems, and consequently, neither parents are able to make it out nor teachers are able to reach them out to solve it. Ultimately, it results in negative spoiling the entire outcome of the online teaching-learning process.
- vii) Besides, there are multiple technical impediments that are out of anybody's instant service like loading or downloading a file, typing a word converting into a by default word typing, crackling of sound or polyphonic sound creating a noise etc. As a result, classes get delayed, time gets spoilt, and the syllabus gets lagged.
- viii) Finally, the finger is turned, and it 'crucifies' the teachers for being at the centre of the entire operating system of online teaching-learning. The online method being open to all has brought the teachers to the focal point. Today's educated or experienced guardians have put a question on the face of a teacher with the help of some technically quoted terms that ultimately question the skill and the responsibility of those teachers and these are also endless irrespective of their value, logic, perspective and purpose.

Solutions:



Based on the upper mentioned problems/confusions, let us introspect and ‘fructify’ the vision of online education.

- i) Physical touch has no value without empathy. Hence, emotional touch is universal, whether physical or online. Nonetheless, today’s educational policy or safety measure both as a student and teacher and as male or female has forbidden any type of physicality. It endorses minimum distance for a convenient conversation in class, bypassing the risk of blames of carnal desire, harassment, molestation etc. Therefore, the physical aspect is slightly ‘old’ and odd though permissible on a personal relationship with the students. On the other hand, an appreciation during class or silence to control a class is enough to mark the presence of a teacher. For words of appreciation or to convey a message through silence, there is no need for physical presence.
- ii) To some extent, it is a shortcoming of online teaching. But, today’s socio-economic scenario has witnessed a lot of change or progress even at the most remote areas. Interior villages are strongly connected with technology. Companies with nominal charge have provided unlimited net facility. And a strong network coverage has revolutionized the rural with an awareness of the happenings of the world. For instance, the long queue for Jio SIM at the beginning demanding a smart phone with 4G facility as an operating system has proved the increasing importance of technology over the other requirements of life both in rural and urban areas. Therefore, online is impossible in rural areas is not a solid point. If people say that poverty is an impediment of online teaching-learning, students of such economically impoverished background either manage their household or go to work to help their parents without attending a physical classroom, a picture delineating the dilapidated economic condition of those students in particular and our Nation in general. Although mid-day meal had a holistic eye to solve this problem so that students can be brought to school-premise without hunger, it is observed that a group of students attend school mainly for the meal without any pure intent of learning. Poor attendance of the students after mid-day meal compared to at the beginning is evident enough to bring forth a weakness. Who is accountable then if the observation is pertinent? Let the article focus on some of the possible reasons.
 - a) Do students lack the charm of a physical classroom?
 - b) Do they avoid interesting lessons by the teachers in a physical classroom?



- c) Do the guardians miss out on the real impact of education in a physical classroom, and therefore, they accept the running away of their children from school after lunch?
- d) Does the authority (institution) of a physical classroom lack anything to hold the children back till the end?

Who can answer it? Sometimes, lack of communication in the interior parts of the country is another hindrance for the students to reach on time whether it is school or home. A large number of students, especially girls, have left the school premises because of it. However, these questions are unimaginable in online education.

- iii) For proper assessment, plan B must be ready. There are some apps in the Google classroom that can take an instant test. For example, 'Jam Board' can function magic in class, inviting different approaches with neatness. With the help of these apps, teachers and learners can replace a word with an image it represents. Consequently, it adds salt to their intent and interest as well. Nonetheless, teachers have gone through hundreds of such online copies to validate the learning of a student. It may include some errors, but it is indubitably a phenomenal task that demands persistence, patience and penance.
- iv) To avoid absenteeism, guardians must be active while teachers can only inform them or ask the reason for absenteeism. Normally, children, who are present or absent in school, are conspicuously known by the members of the family. On the same line, students are attending or skipping classes is certainly a matter of observation. Students are playful, and it is natural that they love to engage themselves in anything except studies. Parent-teacher meeting, popularly known as PTM, clarifies a bitter fact that excluding physical emergencies, students remain at home uncared during class time because parents and other members are busy with their own. Hence, guardians must be more active, or they must look for an option as they were before though there may be some valid reasons of escaping classes due to repetition, boredom, technical issues etc.
- v) Online is not so expensive in that sense because it has balanced the economy of the parents. Monthly Fees is revised by the concerned board; transportation fees are either moderated or denied, stationery charges, including pen, paper, printing, print outs, xerox, files, to name a few, have become minimal due to smart technology. Yes!



Costing at one time is always difficult, even in a well to do family. But it manages to be economical in the middle and at the end of the session.

- vi) Though all are using smart phones, all have not yet been smart enough to use their smart facilities. On the other side, people are not so much acquainted with academic Apps and their functions. A threat has forced all to explore these as promptly as possible. Anything new takes time to learn or digest. Therefore, it is not anybody's fault. Rather we have to be smart users of smart devices.
- vii) It is such a time when the entire world is hanging on Web Portals, and therefore, it is viable that the consequent effect will be on us. After all, these are machines, and a machine does not know any promising language. They believe in the ultimate "do or die". Therefore, it is better to accept the limited and unlimited capacity of a machine as well without blaming/fouling its potency.
- viii) A teacher though placed at the helm, is basically a human being and, therefore, vulnerable to human emotions, may be positive or negative. Everyone should agree on a point that the online method peeped into the institutions without any prior notice. Therefore, it is as sudden or surprising to the teachers as it is with the students and guardians. It tolls the teachers at the beginning though they have not yet given up. Moreover, a teacher is evaluated on the basis of his/her performance in class, whether online or offline, as it should be to some extent. But we have to accept a bitter truth that all are not well armed with oratory skills/dramatic skills/performative skills. If playing a role on stage or backstage cannot be the same, addressing the mass and sitting at the lounge as the audience are then poles apart. A teacher plays the second one.

Parents are much troubled with the children due to the temporary closure of schools as they share in PTM. Just have a look at a point if guardians feel so, what a teacher undergoes in a class to facilitate meaningful interaction with a number of students without any retribution and impeachment. The teacher alone cannot make thing interesting as Tagore acclaims in his poem "Gaanbhanga":

Ekaki gayoker nohe to gan

Milite hobe duijone.

Gahibe akjon khulia gola

R akjon gabe mone.



[To sing alone is not the task of a singer. It has to be a duel where one will sing at the high-pitch voice and the other at heart.]

One must accept that a teacher can only offer ‘ing’ to the students if they pour out their ‘interest’ on the topic the teacher undertakes and both, in the process, make the journey ‘interesting’. The teachers had been patient enough to neglect some unnecessary noise/nuisance while interacting with students and the students also face the same with the teachers. If this is the situation, both, not the teacher alone, should take the responsibility to offer a place fit for the teaching-learning process or be blamed to its exception.

At last, teachers should try to accept the new, train and sharpen the skills and fill the rifts with ore. To make it happen, institutions must opt for occasional training, workshop, seminar, symposium etc. to furnish teachers with the 21st- century pedagogical methodology and impart an inclusion of technology as part of their teaching. People call anything special or extraordinary a masterstroke. Truly, it is a product of a master, a master who can (is) be a role model for all. Therefore, a teacher must take the farthest step towards perfection at first. A teacher’s job is not to preach but to teach. A teacher is the maker of other professions. S/he teaches what s/he acts/does in her/his life. Finally, inspired teaching can shake the eternity breaking away with all trials and tribulations and twists and tremors of time. Before it, a teacher must come out of the shackles of dos and don’ts. Nissim Ezekiel, himself a professor of Bombay University, has conceptualized the need of self upgradation in an age of change and advocated accordingly in his poem “The Professor”:

We have to change with times.

Whole world is changing. In India also

We are keeping up. Our progress is progressing.

Old values are going, new values are coming.

Everything is happening with leaps and bounds.

I am going out rarely, now and then,

Only, this is the price of old age.

(Ezekiel)

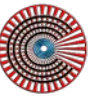
Conclusion:



Finally, online teaching-learning has proved that huge building with manifold facilities is merely a stage where students and teacher perform. But the performance matters or takes the lead; not the grandiose of the stage. Similarly, the relationship, code of conduct, conversation and rapport between a student and a teacher in the premise of an institution is primary over the secondary purposes of an organization like huge building with architectural beauty, open field with pasture, elegant reception-arrangements to welcome a visitor, western outfit with coat and tie, use of apple not as fruit of knowledge but as a device, grand celebration to welcome and bid farewell a batch or investiture ceremony and other glorious facilities. Online teaching has scientifically and logically proved a fact to all concerned that what we elementarily need is a combination of a student and a teacher, and except these two, all are secondary and, therefore, complimentary. It is this method that is in sync with Tagore, who believed in learning in the lap of nature by nurturing the natural qualities of a learner. Circumnavigating the fence, a fence, may be, in the form of walls, time and space, online education has established a wide range of education, a force that can enforce a method/process to pave the world in its mainstream if distracted or a light that can enlighten the minds with knowledge if subtracted. Online teaching-learning is a renaissance in academics that propels the exploration (discovery) of the 'self'. Many a man think it to be optional in the field of education and get confused as a result. But it is more an 'option' now rather than treating as optional. Though physical and online methods are contradicted based on their advantages and disadvantages, what the article opines is that these are two indigenous approaches for the fulfilment of education. Those who think that demonetization is the source of Online Payment Apps; may be so exactly because people go cashless at that point of time, and alike demonetization, Covid 19 is the mother of Online education for temporary utility, are firmly reminded of the hindrances and limitations of classroom teaching by none other than Walt Whitman in his celebrated poem "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer":

When I sitting heard the astronomer
 Where he lectured with much applause in the lecture-room,
 How soon unaccountable I became tried and sick,
 Till rising and gliding out I wonder'd off by myself,
 In the mystical moist night-air, and from time to time,
 Look'd up in perfect silence at the stars.

(Whitman)



If people still munch or magnify the futility of online teaching-learning, the article desires to conclude with a statement that something is always better than nothing in general and in this pandemic in particular. A teacher or a student is like a pilgrim who remains one-minded in his spiritual quest without any assurance of attainment. Likewise, if both teachers and students dedicate wholeheartedly in their journey to the world of wisdom, online or offline does not matter much just as a pilgrimage does not depend on the condition of the roads. A devotee only knows the deity and the destination, and consequently, determined not destined. Therefore, the progress of a teacher or a student is “The Pilgrim’s Progress”.

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