

ONLINE MODE: A CHALLENGE FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

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The COVID pandemic situation led to a new phase of learning throughout the world – the online learning mode (Gamage et al., 2020). The use of online platforms (e.g. Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google meet) became mandatory for all schools and colleges. These platforms enabled teachers to deliver the academic content to the students to meet the curriculum requirements. The methods of conducting the assessments also were revamped (Montenegro-Rueda et al., 2021). Though the effectiveness of this content transfer is questioned at many academic forums (Dung, 2020), it certainly opened an alternative to maintain a certain minimum amount of exchange of information between a teacher and a student. In India, the lecture sessions were being conducted online, albeit with reduced duration. The contents of the curricula were being reduced. Though these changes ensured teacher-student interaction to some extent, they brought about significant impact on the teaching-learning process. One of the authors, who was a teacher at a reputed IB curriculum school during the pandemic situation, observed some of the challenges faced by the student and teacher communities.

One of these challenges was the lack of physical interaction between teacher and student communities. Students were confined to computer screens and fixed environment for interactions. Lack of physical interaction led to some decline in their attention span during the classes. It also reflected in the form of behavioral changes in some students. Teachers adopted different methods and resources to gain their attention and deliver the academic content as efficiently as possible. Alternatives had to be used to compensate for the unavailability of laboratories. There were also some positive results of the online mode. The safety of student-teacher community was one of the main outcomes. Significant attention was given to maintain the health and fitness of students by the school as well as by the Government.

The authors, therefore, felt the need to probe the outcomes of the online mode of learning based on the observations mentioned earlier. The sample chosen for the study was from grade XII ($N = 38$) of the IB curriculum. Students responded to a google form questionnaire. Interviews were conducted with some of the students ($N = 15$) in an online format. We also discuss some of the responses where students realized the importance of the offline mode of learning, and they expressed a sense of respect and belongingness towards their academic institutions.

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