

adhyapanam



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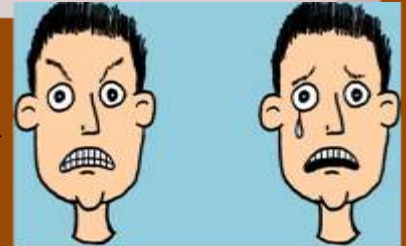
“ACCEPTING CHANGE: - EDUCATOR’S PERSPECTIVE REGARDING TRANSITION FROM OFFLINE TO ONLINE CLASSROOMS”



ACCEPT
CHANGE



Offline to
Online???



from the director's desk



Dear Readers,
Greetings from SIES Institute of Comprehensive Education!
We hope each and every one of you is safe and healthy.
The last year and a half had been very difficult for all of us.
While much is said about the negative impact of the Corona virus, it has indeed contributed to a major shift in our educational trajectory. Teaching and learning are no longer the same. So, Welcome to the “new normal” in teaching!
The present issue of Adhyaapanam focuses on the adhyaapak and the vidyarthi, the teacher, the taught and also the teaching learning process. This issue is an amalgamation of multiple perspectives of educators on accepting change to transition from offline to online classrooms. We have articles that trace the origin of teaching from pre-independence period to the present times. We have received an international perspective from a renowned researcher on the present educational practices followed in The Netherlands.

An interesting article by a former principal on Gamification and use of AI assisted learning trends reiterates our need to effectively and efficiently embrace technology. A teacher educator's views on skillset development is a checklist for all educators to keep abreast with the change. This issue also tracks the digital changes that have taken place from preschool classrooms to college classrooms to a professional training program. Please do pay attention to the 8 I's that we have used at SIES ICE to achieve this digital transformation.

The articles clearly reiterate the angst, the issues, the challenges, and the success that finally came out after quite literally going through trials and tribulations. Our contributors have spoken from their heart. Their struggles with technology and ultimately turning them into a success story is something that we all wish to cherish.

As you read the articles, you are bound to understand, empathize and acknowledge the fact that it was the teaching fraternity that underwent metamorphosis over night!! We had to learn, relearn, and unlearn many things in the shortest span of time. I often wonder why can't the teaching fraternity be considered as a “Frontline worker?” After all we have kept the fire of learning and knowledge burning and bright across the globe!!

Happy reading.

Stay safe and healthy,
Vidhya Satish PhD



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achieving the 8 I's

Ms. BHAKTI GALA & Ms. KAVITHA KRISHNAMURTHY

The year 2020 started with the fear of the spreading COVID-19 disease. This fear was justified as within no time this disease took the catastrophic form of a pandemic and within no time the entire world became a victim to the consequences of this fast-spreading disease. The pandemic spared no field from the clutches of its damage. The smooth system was shaken badly.

Everyone was trying their best to get a grip of the situation and manage it in the best possible way. Education field was totally disrupted with all the schools and colleges being closed. The big question of how to manage and go on with the education without having to open schools and colleges was a big challenge to our education system. Necessity being the mother of invention, each and everyone involved in the system had to put to use the online system in the best way to continue education.

We at SIES did the same and left no stone unturned to ensure that the quality offered by our institute was not the least bit affected, let alone allow the situation to dampen the spirit of our team ICE. We had a mission, as the beautiful quote says, 'Learning together, even when we are apart, we'll get through this, even when we are apart.' Many hours of training, meeting, trial and error helped team ICE to use the online platform to achieve the following 8 'I's successfully.

1. **Intelligent Resource Management:** - As a preschool teacher trainee, it is very important to manage your resources, be it time, materials, teaching aids, planning, intelligently. To top it, the online medium increased the level of challenge. But nevertheless, our students accepted the challenge with open hands and showed that, 'Where there is a will, there is a way.'
2. **Independent Learning:** - A teacher is a lifelong learner. We at ICE emphasize on independent learning. Teacher trainees are provided with many videos, and they had to prepare quizzes or present on those topics. This helped them to learn not only independently but also from peers.
3. **Inexhaustible Platter of Webinar Exposure:** - As Michael Lewis beautifully quotes 'There is something bad in everything good and something good in everything bad.' The good about this pandemic situation was that our students had the opportunity to attend an array of webinars owing to the online platform.
4. **Influencing Learners:** - Due the pandemic and online teaching, we were able to influence students not only in Mumbai but also in other parts of our country.
5. **Impactful Learning:** - A series of webinars, online presentations, workshops, hands- on experiences provided to the teacher trainees have been very impactful and helped them to conduct lessons and activities online with ease.
6. **Innovative Practices:** - As a preschool teacher, one must be able to innovate in terms of methodology used for teaching, managing the class, assessing students, and providing various activities to the children. Our students managed to make innovate teaching resources, teaching aids, present lessons differently even during virtual learning.

7. **Insightful Discoveries:** - The necessity of using online medium as a means of communication helped the students to discover their capabilities to use this medium in different ways/forms to give the best output. Online observations in schools helped them gain insights to the different teaching learning practices adopted by various schools.

8. **Interesting Assessments:** - Under circumstances where it was impossible to conduct exams in physical classrooms, assessment had to be done online. Brain storming, discussions and novel mode of evaluation gave rise to assessments that were interesting as well as stimulating.

Just as every coin has two sides, this pandemic lead to online learning which had both sides - On one hand it was lots of learning, training, adopting to new method of teaching, interacting with students from other parts of the country, and on the other hand it was missing physical mode of teaching, meeting each other in person and interacting.

Nevertheless, we need to keep moving forward, learning, and transforming the world to be a better place to live in.

Ms. Bhakti Gala and Ms. Kavitha Krishnamurthy work as Faculty (Teacher Education) at SIES Institute of Comprehensive Education. They actively participate in training early years pre-service teachers.



transition from offline to online classrooms: a brief history

Prof. T. S. DHARMARAJAN



Online classrooms are a recent innovation in Digital India, even though it was a global phenomenon for quite some time. The corona pandemic gave a kick start in our country due to ‘on’ and ‘off’ Lockdown’ in all states in India and Central Government agencies, offices, schools, colleges and commercial establishments.

This introduction of “online classrooms” was a sort of experimental way out from prolonged holidays in educational institutions so that it might not adversely affect curriculum schedules and professional and technical course studies subsequently.

Staying continued for over a year now, it has taken a central stage in educational fields to stay. There is no “off line class rooms” as such anything out of ‘on line’ is conveniently referred as “off line”.

EDUCATIONAL HISTORY IN INDIA: India had a long history in her pursuit of knowledge. It always rings. Propagating from time immemorial. This is a land of social universities, such as Taxila, Nalanda, Vikram Shila, Vallabhi, Aryabhatt, Nagarjuna, Kautilya to name of few, religious matts Shankaracharyas, Kanchi, Sringeri, Dwaraka, Puri and Veda Patasalas, major temple complexes harboured teaching centres, attracting foreign students all time from China, Gandhar, Greek, Rome, Camboja (Cambodia), Arab World, far away, places and Countries.

Gurukul System of Campus where the student lived along with acharyas with their families in their Ashramas was most prevalent. Later developed into teaching villages and universities. Subjects ranged from general education, civics, social cultural, fine arts, Mathematics (Ganith), Arthasastra, Astronomy, Astrology, Vaidya (Medical) Dhanur (Archery), Yoga, Physical Culture, Krushi (Agriculture) Weaponary, Metallurgy etc.

DETERIORATION AND SUPPRESSION UNDER FOREIGN RULERS: Since the advent of foreign forces and rulers, the Centres of Education faced deterioration and forceful closure, or barbaric destruction of the centres, teaching materials, texts, libraries, and riling of acharyas and student population.

NEW TRENDS UNDER BRITISH RAJ: The British Government Machinery needed clerical and service staff; hence tailor-made English schools were started, and the present form of Educational System started took birth.

NATIONALISTS’ ATTEMPT REGARDING REVIVAL OF INDIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM: Some of the English educated nationalists attempted to reorient the Educational System, highlighting Indian tradition and modern systems. Synthesis of East and West emerged – Shantiniketan (Rabindranath Tagore) Banaras Hindu University (Madan Mohan Malavya) and Aligarh Muslim University (Mohammed Ali Jinnah and Syed Ahmed Khan) and a chain of Kalakshetra for solely for revival of Indian

fine arts.

POST INDEPENDENT ERA: ‘East-West’ synthesis continued with modern technological innovations, incorporating, computer and electronics device. Later “Internet” revolutionized the Education field from head to tail.

EMERGENCE OF “ONLINE EDUCATION”- This is the latest ‘Avatar’ in this field of Education, where “Sky is the Limit or medium” globally and India is not spared. This made Education a common merchandise”!!! There are no boundaries at the inter and/or intra national level!!! A Class room can be conducted in any remote corner of the globe and can be instantly transmitted and heard in your sitting room or bed room!!

SALIENT FEATURES OF ‘ONLINE CLASSROOMS’-

- a. One can attend ‘online classes’ in a classroom organized by the educator or organization, provided the promoter has the access of computer, laptop display board, internet connection board band facility either in an open area or an enclosed large room.
- b. Individual student also has direct access provided such facilities are available with him/ her such as a Laptop I-Pad, I-Phone, smart phone etc.
- c. Many such systems or apparatus can be installed in his / her smart mobile phone, powered by latest technology.
- d. These systems can make use of platforms like zoom, G-suite, Microsoft Teams and repositories like Play store and other tech apps and tools.

POSITIVE POINTS OF ‘ONLINE CLASSROOMS’-

- a. It reaches a large number of educator and students.
- b. These students on registration get study materials online or emails or by surface posts.
- c. Expert teachers are available who are not locally based but also from across the global. Thus, the students get benefit of access to world's best experts/knowledge sources.
- d. No classroom accommodation or heavy textbook loads are necessary.
- e. On-site attendance or personal presence is not a pre-requisite.
- f. The system is all “weather friendly” for ongoing studies.
- g. The weather vagaries or local conditions may not affect adversely.
- h. Clear audio-visual system guarantees trouble-free systematic studies.
- i. Any complex, complicated figures charts, tables, photos, demonstration are possible.
- j. Ditto repeat classes can be held as and when required.
- k. Large number of references are made available instantly on the spot.
- l. Latest global information is made available readily or can be downloaded.
- m. Video conferences, webinars are easily conducted.
- n. Video audio recording can be done for future references.

Apart from necessary essential applications or equipments, the educator or organizer must get “registered code” from necessary essential applications or equipment's the educator or organizer must get a “registered code” to communicate and interact on a temporary or time-bound period for a “price”. The sanction from the regulatory authority and the “code” has to be shared with all participants.

to connect and “open an account” with the source of the time of “meet” or class session.

Both ends can make use of video, audio facilities on and off, at will or ‘mute’ in between. Video and or voice recording can be done for quality checking or future references.

NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF ONLINE CLASSROOMS-

Now let us look at the negative points of on-line classrooms.

- a. Elaborate and quality systems are pre-requisite for online classrooms.
- b. Smart Phones, I-Phones, I-Pads, computer facilities are a must.
- c. An organized agency should arrange or conduct classes.
- d. A nominal website subscription must be paid.
- e. Sophisticated computer window or other instruments/ apparatus are necessary.
- f. Instructors, teachers cannot directly control the students or beneficiary.
- g. Q & A session and discussion group consultations cannot be conducted effectively in the present online platform.
- h. Individualized attention or special on the spot attention for ‘weaker’, students are not readily available now.
- i. Effective, all weather internet and web sites are not guaranteed.
- j. System failure and loss of connectivity is common in rural areas and even cities.
- k. Their drawbacks may get addressed or eliminated as and when technology is improved.
- l. Unhealthy, misleading websites, and false propaganda videos are a menace, because of open sky system in these cyber-crime days.

In conclusion, we can say a revolutionary classroom has become the order of the day in the present educational system be it Science, Technology or Arts. It is a paperless education wherein ‘Log in’, ‘Log Out’, hanging of the device, mute and unmute are the norms of the day at both ends – that of the “Educator” or of the “recipient”.

T. S. Dharmarajan is a retired Principal of Government College of Pharmacy, Bangalore. He is a member of various Organization/ Professional bodies and frequently contributes to various educational organisations.

digital aspirations: the new normal in modern education - an international perspective

DR. ANAND IYER



We live in unprecedented times! The 20th century heralded quantum leaps in technology and the health sciences, the likes of which have seldom been seen in the entire recorded history of humankind. Who would have thought, in the 21st century, that the world would be almost brought to its knees by a humble microscopic life-form – a virus?

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected most aspects of all our lives, the way we work, the way we travel, the way we socialize. Most of all it has affected the lives of our children with lockdowns affecting normal school routines and education leaving them chained in front of their computers unable to enjoy the simple joys of childhood. And it has caused chaos and turmoil in the lives of parents who must run from pillar to post to ensure computers, uninterrupted internet access and facilities for their kids while juggling with work and family responsibilities. Concurrently, the lockdowns have forced a digital revolution of sorts, with computers, smart phones and the internet becoming an indispensable part of our lives, regardless of the rural or urban setting, for rich or poor, educated or less-educated, much more so than any enthusiastic government-sponsored drive.

Digital education had taken off in the last decades even before the Corona crisis. The use of PowerPoint for lectures has been a feature of higher education since the early 2000s. In the last decade Digiboards have been replacing traditional chalk boards even at the school level albeit limited largely to urban environments in India. Nevertheless, here in the Netherlands, university and even high school students have access to class assignments, projects and even archives of lectures by logging on to Digital Dashboards. This allows the teachers to assign class work, group projects, study materials and schedules of lectures for the students. It makes it also easier to keep track of assignments submitted, grades and progress both on the part of the student and the teacher. The COVID- 19 pandemic just pushed this situation further to the limits with classes now being conducted exclusively online. Is this a positive or a negative development?

Progress is good! The greatest impact of the digital revolution also in the field of education is the availability and accessibility of information. Previously this necessitated either interest or financial ability on the part of the parents to buy books or membership of a good library where facilities existed. This has changed radically with the advent of the internet and Google with information being freely available almost at our fingertips. The challenge here, for both teachers and students, is to sift the grain from the chaff - what information is accurate and what is fake is not often clear. Nevertheless, for the curious this should not present a big problem. The other advantage is the availability of various online courses and tutorials on YouTube or from resources like the Khan Academy, Udemy, Coursera which can serve as invaluable teaching aids to teachers and for interested students. Some of these resources are free while others require a fee.

Another aspect where major improvements have taken place are the online meeting platforms which provide the classroom environment. Microsoft Teams and Zoom are the most popular platforms and to a lesser extent Skype. All these platforms are relatively user-friendly and offer a wide range of features to bring lectures and study material to students. They do pose a learning curve for educators and students who are not technology friendly. A major challenge here is in engaging the attention and ensuring participation of the students which is no small matter. We try to make our teaching as interactive as possible asking questions and encouraging students to pose questions either vocally or via the chat windows in these platforms for those among them that are self-conscious. A very handy tool is a website called the Mentimeter where you can create questions in the form of polls where the students can vote for an appropriate answer. We find that this tool encourages students to participate more freely without the fear of making mistakes.

A major drawback of online teaching is the absence of the human element. How do you gauge how effective you are in teaching when the only faces you see are images on a screen? In my line of work, in a research laboratory, online teaching is useful only to a certain extent and there is no alternative to actual hands-on work. Or is there? The use of virtual reality to replace actual anatomical dissections by medical students (virtual anatomy) is already making its presence felt. Biology classrooms in many places have graduated to virtual dissections. The future probably lies in that direction.

But all these aspirations will all come to naught unless we can ensure uninterrupted power, good internet connections and availability of computers/smart phones. Cheaper computers such as Chrome books or the Raspberry Pi already exist. The two former points require a deep commitment and drive from the government. Be that as it may, online teaching is here to stay, and it seems there is no way around it. We might as well make the best of it!

Dr. Anand Iyer is a Research Scientist at the Department of Internal Medicine, Erasmus Medical Center, Rotterdam, The Netherlands. A very hardworking and dedicated professional has carved out a niche for himself in the field of research.



इकौी इटइ for the teachers of tomorrow

Dr. SWASTI DHAR



The education field today has tasted blood and, in my humble opinion, online education, in some form or the other, is here to stay.

As a teacher-educator, I have personally dabbled in using technology for teaching since 2012. Back in those days, I had discovered a wonderful platform named Edmodo, which allowed a lot of features similar to what is available in Google Classroom today. Edmodo gave me the flexibility to schedule lectures, add links, set up student discussion prompts etc. The challenges that I faced in my earlier attempts were as follows:

1. **Technology** - All students did not have access to a good smartphone/ computer and thus were not able to interact with the material even if they genuinely wanted to.
2. **Motivation** - Students in India are still motivated by marks and/ or credits. Students do not consider 'learning for learning's sake' very beneficial and teachers had to keep finding reasons for the students to do the course. One had to use the carrot- and-stick approach.

But the Pandemic has changed all that. When the entire world stopped functioning and went into a lockdown, two groups of people – the doctors/ health workers and the teachers of the world – went into an overdrive. Seamlessly, almost overnight, a complete shift in the thought process led to technology and human needs walking hand-in-hand.

The future is online!! Teachers have to start honing these extra skills in order to become masters at their jobs. Some specific skill sets that teachers and student teachers of tomorrow must now start learning are:

Being well versed with word processing (Microsoft Word/Google Doc/ Pages), **using a spreadsheet** (Excel or Numbers) and **creating presentations** (PowerPoint/ Slides/ Keynotes). Today these are extremely essential apps to be used and one should be well versed in using these effectively. One must work on being able to use both the computer as well as the mobile versions. Students mostly use their phone for studies and thus, teachers must be familiar with the mobile layouts too.

Being able to record your screen and edit videos – This is an essential skill which is needed so that the next skill I mention becomes feasible. There are many free apps which can be easily learnt and incorporated as an essential skill in one's work.

Being able to create content: As far as I have experienced, not only students but teachers too are very dependent on the textbook and the ubiquitous 'guide book'. Any teacher worth his or her salt must be able to create content. Many do – in the form of class notes, practice questions etc. Now is the time to start making a repository of the content in the electronic form.

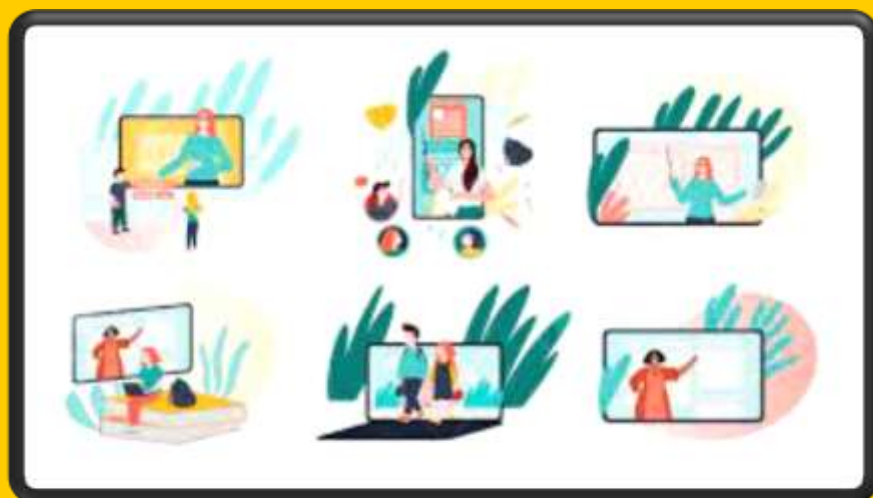
Being able to use a Learning Management System (LMS) – Whether it be Google Classroom or Moodle or Canvas, the future of education is going online. And not only individual teachers but the entire institution should look towards using an LMS. Most of these LMSs are free and only requires a user registration but the benefits one derives are many.

Developing email efficiency – This is not the same as ‘having’ an email ID but refers to the ability to use labels, filters, shortcuts, schedulers and other add-on and extensions in order to extract optimum online use. It also means being able to integrate your email, calendar, and to-do list in such a manner that these do not overwhelm you.

So, let me close by pointing you to the various platforms where these skills can be learnt – mostly for free. The biggest platform is YouTube. There are tons and tons of material available for free learning and one can definitely start there. The next big platform is Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) such as Coursera, Udemy and edX which have a lot of skill-based courses apart from subject-based one. Skillshare and LinkedIn Learning are sites to check out if you are willing to pay a small premium.

However, the moot point is to invest time in continuous learning. If one commits to learning something, however small, everyday – then over a year it compounds to a lot.
Happy learning!

Dr. Swasti Dhar is the Assistant Professor at MES's Pillai College of Education & Research, Chembur. A tech-savvy educator who is a life-long learner brings in novelty and newness into her classrooms. She can be contacted on this email address: sdhar@mes.ac.in



accepting change: = a teacher educator's perspective

Ms. JANAKI KRISHNAN



Technology plays a vital role in education, as it ushers in teaching, achieving significant improvement in both learning and teaching process. Today there are new techniques that combine classrooms with digital learning tools that help in increasing student engagements through a personalized learning approach. Artificial intelligence and machine learning have become an integral part of the teaching process. Most of the teacher educators are using technologies such as machine learning, artificial intelligence, and virtual reality.

Technology is a game changer for Indian education, especially with gamification i.e., engaging for children. What is gamification? It is the game like stimulations and learning platforms in learning that helps to keep the student's interest level high and captures their attention.

Virtual teaching assistants

Artificial intelligence and machine learning have enabled various learning capabilities such as digital classrooms, e-books, interactive learning platforms and online assessments. The technology can be used to develop adoptive learning methodologies through identification and improve learning gaps specific to each student. Thus, can also help students learn at their own pace and ensure that they are learning and grasping the topics being covered at each stage. The students can develop or create smart learning platforms with 3D gaming, computer animation and realistic virtual characters.

Due to the pandemic, schools and colleges have remained shut for more than a year now severely impacting the lives of 360 million students across India. The disruption in their academics, daily routine, and isolation at home without friends or regular activities has had deep negative impact on students.

How important is online learning and offline learning?

The main difference between online and offline learning is location. In offline learning participants are required to travel to the centre of learning e.g., lecture hall or classrooms. In online learning the training can be conducted anywhere in the world. Students simply need to log on to the internet from their home or anywhere. Online learning usually has a more flexible timescale. As a trainer you can offer your support through email or through an online chat system. The benefits of learning online and offline are practically the same, although online learning has become the preferred method for many learners.

Unexplainable outcry against online teaching

As one may expect new regulations to be in place to limit the duration of online classes to perhaps only few hours every day, the question that continues to remain unanswered is how does one define the screen limit time. Online learning has its benefits. It allows sharing the student's opinions freely through the web. Children seek online autonomy and intellectual freedom as they progress online. Besides online learning is not limited to something that maybe solely curriculum based.

They engage themselves in personalized learning programs.

Thus, online learning enables the students towards independent learning. Apart from this, the parent-teacher collaboration is much more positive and direct. Online communication lessens the chances of misunderstanding. Teachers can analyze the student's progress regularly; they are in better position to assess the weaknesses and guide them accordingly.

Trends in future

Today with online education offered by various international institutes, Data Science courses has become possible, and it has opened new doors to learning and better opportunities for future. It is very important in this 21st century that teachers need to be professionally trained to adopt new approach of interactive teaching to enable students to acquire new age skills. With technological advances transforming the world around us, it is not surprising that the process of teaching and learning is also undergoing a big transformation.

Ms. Janaki Krishnan, is a Post Graduate in Education and is the retired Principal of a D.Ed. College in Bangalore. She is a crusader for quality teacher education and has been in the field for a very long time.



transition from offline to online teaching = a personal experience

MS. RUPAL VORA



The COVID -19 Pandemic ravaged the world in the early months of 2020. One of the biggest casualties of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant lockdown was institutionalized education. UNESCO reported that over 210 countries shut down their schools, colleges, and universities impacting ninety percent of the world's total enrolled learners. The New Education Policy advocates the importance for digital and online education and, in reality the pandemic has accelerated this transition. To minimize the loss of students due to their closure, educational institutions took relevant measures for online learning and teaching. Sinha (2020) has reiterated that the pandemic has transformed the centuries-old, chalk-talk teaching model to one driven by technology.

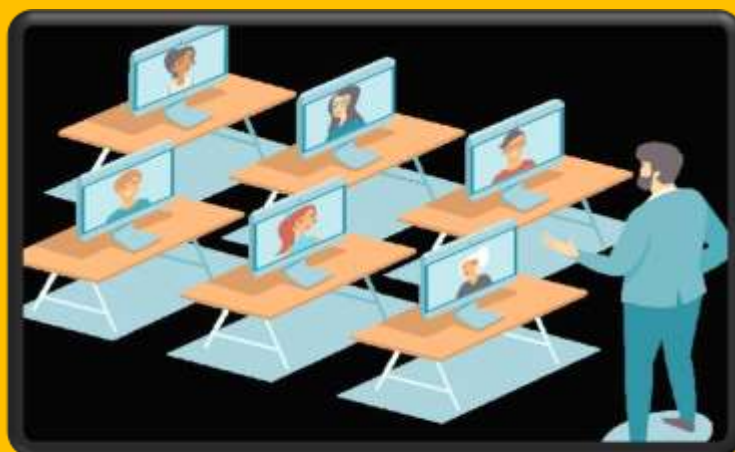
To create classroom experiences, educational institutions have encouraged practices such as live streaming of lectures, pre- recorded lectures, and online discussions. They are now conducting real-time online classes on Zoom Classroom, Microsoft Teams, Google Classroom and Google Meet, among others. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has transformed the field of education and thus learning is no longer confined within the four walls of a classroom.

There have been a number of challenges faced moving from the offline to the online mode with the use of ICT. For teachers such as myself it has been a herculean task to suddenly move to the online teaching mode. First of all, one had to procure a teaching device if one did not have a smart phone or a laptop or a computer. A reliable source of WIFI with a sufficient bandwidth had to be arranged, along with an alternate instrument (Dongle) had to be bought in case of disruption of services of WIFI. Then came learning and incorporating online teaching technology. Numerous workshops and training programs were organized by our director and management. This was coupled with viewing various YouTube videos to learn the nuances of this new technology. Newer methodologies had to be devised to conduct practical's online. We brainstormed together to keep optimal connections with the students and encourage them to enthusiastically participate in online classroom activities. A lot of thought had to be put in to make the subject interesting while not losing out on the content value. Since the blackboard was not available, the existing Power Point Presentations had to be changed and for some topics new ones had to be made. Faculties and visiting faculties had to be oriented and trained to be adept at virtual teaching.

Students also faced numerous difficulties in this unplanned and sudden shift of the learning mode. Many experienced anxiety while using ICT. One of the foremost problems was limited access to laptops/computers due to gadget sharing. Other problems included slow/ unreliable internet, power interruptions and limited space conducive for learning. Due to lack of technical skills, training programs had to be arranged for the students. Despite the various problems faced by students, one major advantage was the phenomenal increase in the average student attendance percentage. A record 92.7% attendance was captured during the online classes. The online mode helped us to enroll students for our programs from far and wide.

In conclusion, we can say every challenge opens up a new opportunity. The pandemic resulted in an explosion of online teaching. The crisis has accelerated the adoption of technology to deliver education. The online mode of teaching and learning are now here to stay. The online coupled with the offline mode will be able to provide the best learning experience to students. There will be a dramatic increase in blended learning in the future.

Ms. Rupal Vora, Faculty and Coordinator, Counselling Programs, SIES Institute of Comprehensive Education. Ms. Vora is a keen learner and shows lot of enthusiasm in learning new technologies.



the colorful world is on!!!!!!!

Ms. NANDA & Ms. MANISHA



As per the government norms, we had to shut down our college from mid-March as a preventive measure to contain the spread of COVID-19. Being a junior college teacher, we only had First Year Junior College (FYJC) students as the Second Year Junior College (SYJC) students had already appeared for their board exams. Despite lockdown, our college had taken suitable steps to continue the process of education by holding online lectures using the video conferencing app Zoom and Google meet to engage with students. Hence, we only had a short period to change the chalk and duster method and get adapted to the arena of digitalization in teaching. As we announced the start of the digital academic year, we were bombarded with questions like “Ma’am I’m in the village and I don’t have a strong network”. “I don’t have a phone or laptop,”! And of course, the horrendous one for us to hear was I want to drop out!!!! So, what do you do?? We did what any normal millennial would do in a crisis, Google deep meaningful quotes and our personal favorite was “Let’s just take one day at a time!” A Classroom is not just a space for learning, it is also a space where you learn traits that are essential for your social life, it is a place where you make friends, it’s a place where you pull pranks, it is a place full of little episodes which will be one of the best parts of your life. It is a place where friends and teachers become your family. All of this is impossible if teachers and students are tethered to the screen.

Truth be told we were scared at first how are we going to deal with this. What if our lessons are boring? What if we lose my network? What if someone dozes off and starts snoring? What if we are zoom bombed? All this made us petrified. We had to put our fears aside and we started by taking mock sessions, started talking to friends and family who had video conferencing experiences, saw tutorials on YouTube. Each step made our goals more realistic. **If COVID-19 was a dark cloud, we were determined to make online lectures the silver lining!!** After what felt like an eternity of mock sessions, we were ready. We segregated students in two groups, one who had access to the internet and one who did not. For the former we went old school and introduced games such as word puzzles, Pictionary, guess who, trivia quiz, what is going on in the picture, etc. Our emphasis was given more to striking images and resourceful videos which was a blessing in disguise especially, in set induction which ultimately led to more enthusiasm and comprehension of concepts. For the latter, we assured that they were provided with recorded lectures, study material in the form of PDF and subject-related videos. For subjects like Bookkeeping and Accountancy, we used Microsoft Word to solve the more practical problems and post the lecture, a pdf was sent for revision. We also made subject related WhatsApp group where we uploaded resources and encouraged students to communicate which led to a more dynamic and creative group discussion. The resources included interviews, movies, debates, speeches, articles, to name a few.

We have large numbers of students in the class so we started using break out rooms where they would brainstorm and then discuss as a class together. The use of google forms made it easier to evaluate the concepts taught. The students were asked to upload their assignments within a set deadline.

The students had the liberty to select their platform for submission of assignments wherein some preferred PPTs, Word file, PDF, videos etc. Our lectures are scheduled in the afternoon session hence we stressed on lunch and water breaks. We felt it was also crucial that our students get a proper screen break and to serve this we had a gap of 15 minutes post every lecture.

Our entire practice was to make sure that the flow of education is not hindered, and online education serves as an arena for a blended learning system.

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ଡକ୍ଟରେଟାଲ ଲିଟେରାଚ୍ୟୁ: ଏନ ଇଡୁକେଟର'ସ୍ ଇହାସେ ଓ ଚେଲେଞ୍ଜିଂସ୍ ଫିଟ୍ଟିଂ ଡ୍ୟୁରିଂଗ୍ ଟ୍ରାନ୍ସିଜିଂସନ୍ ଫ୍ରମ୍ ଅଫ୍ଫିଲିନ୍ ଟୁ ଓନଲିନ୍

MS. JINCY JAMES



Like in many countries across the world, India also locked itself down in early March 2020 to prevent the spread of COVID- 19. The contagious and infectious nature of the virus meant that public gatherings were not possible anymore, and as a consequence, all social gatherings were called to a stop. Gathering of 4 or more people were banned, including schools and colleges. As a result, students and teachers were no longer under the same roof. School and college classrooms that once upon a time lit up every morning with students were dark and empty, the corridors where students would loiter and sing and eat around were deserted. And just like that schools and college buildings across the country were hollowed out like haunted castles.

But guess what, despite all the limitations, schooling did not stop and nor did teaching and learning. With a snap of a finger, teaching and learning moved online. It was an unprecedented transition. *And as you may know with change; you cannot be what you want by remaining what you are!!*

As a teacher and educator, I found myself embracing change overnight. I realized that this was the time to rethink, revamp and redesign our education system. The well-established assumption that no pedagogical approach can replace in-class teacher- taught interaction was no longer valid in the COVID- 19 era and as an after math of the crisis, online education replaced the traditional method with a modern approach. Learning and teaching moved from classroom to zoom, from personal to virtual and from seminars to webinars.

However, there were difficulties felt in the implementation of change. Especially in the process of delivering and receiving education; these difficulties were stemming from previously held perspectives of online education and technological complexities. Prior to COVID- 19, online education was only considered by open universities in India and were taken by individuals who could not attend regular college, as a result it was the least preferred method of learning and consequently the least developed method of teaching. But during COVID- 19 online teaching -learning became a massive challenge to deal with. The students, teachers and institution were not well equipped and potentially fit to adjust with the sudden educational change as they were not technologically competent to embrace the current situation.

As days and months passed by in the crisis, the system began to take a rudimentary shape of its own, teachers and students somehow figured out ways to overcome technological barriers with quick fix and continued to teach and learn. All of this has resulted in a system that is half baked and under-developed. The series of quick fixes are not sustainable in the long run!

Furthermore, in a time where India is facing a policy paralysis in handling the sudden shift in educational planning, management, and organization with their fractured technical infrastructure, it is very likely that we will suffer more setbacks if we do not learn to live and survive the present crisis in a more planned manner. In the long run, we cannot afford the negligence towards digital transformation education using quick fixes.

It is imperative to develop multimodal approaches in order to develop appropriate course content and for better learning outcomes this can be a good idea to deal with the complexity of online education. Undoubtedly, the government must ensure the availability of reliable communication tools, high quality digital and academic expertise and promote technology enabled learning for students as the mainstream and formal form of education.

We must realize that we are all in this together and the only way out is to look out for each other!

Ms. Jincy James is a Lecturer at DTSS College of Commerce, Mumbai. A student-friendly teacher she strives to bring in innovative practices in her teaching-learning experiences.





Blaring horns, noisy lanes,
Chaotic roads and chattering faces,
Ringing bells and running feet,
Trudging bags and water bottles hurriedly into the school.
Good morning teacher! Namaste!
This was an ordinary scene in every school till March 2020.
Everything came to a standstill when Covid-19 came marching into our city.
Playgrounds deserted, classrooms empty,
A loud hush plagued the cafeteria and auditoriums.
Everybody was in a frenzy. Riddled with uncertainty, we plunged into a lockdown.

Just like every other sphere of society, the education sector was deeply impacted by the pandemic and its consequences. Teachers had to move to online teaching, something that was unheard of in our country. Ironically, mobile phones were not allowed in most schools till March. But come April, and the request put forth by all schools was, "Please invest in good devices"!

This pandemic has revolutionized our definition of a School. Previously, we used the word School to denote a physical space, a place we went to each morning and returned from in the evenings. Now, we have compressed education into the confines of a small screen we peer into. School is on a device where students and teachers are referred to as participants, and classes are referred to as meetings. This has forced us to reconsider what exactly we mean by the word, School, and therefore reevaluate our priorities when it comes to education.

Our school recognized the challenges of digital education and started extensive trainings for teachers to prepare them to conduct online classes. Laptops were upgraded and provided to teachers who did not have one. Teachers were trained to use several applications so they could make teaching more interesting. Many workshops and webinars were organized for teaching staff to understand the nuances of online teaching. A lot of our champion teachers extended their support to other schools by conducting sessions for their staff. There was a chain reaction of sorts. The entire community was coming together to help each other. There was one common goal – learning must go on.

Educating parents about online teaching was another challenge. Their support was needed more than ever before. They had to be the second teachers at home. Encouraging children to get ready for virtual class, submitting timely and completed assignments, participating actively during class - all of this had to be supervised by parents. They were witness to the quality of teaching and the teachers. Teachers also got an insight into the children's homes, their lifestyles, likes and preferences.

Children had to be educated about online class. Guidelines to manage devices, virtual classroom norms and cyber safety rules were reiterated continuously for the physical and mental well-being of children.

The virtual classes brought the school and parent community together. We, as a school, have done everything possible regarding the quality of education, even in the virtual mode. Right from events, celebrations and competitions, to quizzes, assemblies, CRED talks (Cool, Radical, Enthusiastic and Divergent), workshops, online exams and parent interactions, everything was conducted successfully online.

Children thrive on interaction, peer learning, exploration and engagement. 21st century skills such as Communication, Collaboration, Creativity and Critical Thinking are essential and must be inculcated in children for them to succeed in the global community. Educators had to reinvent and modify their lessons to make teaching interesting and engaging online.

Teaching online is a new experience for all the educators at our school. A few of us took some time to find our bearings but now, we have excelled in this mode of delivery as well. It has been a learning exercise for everyone – students, parents and educators.

Students miss interacting with their peers and learning from one another. Parents miss the little peaceful time they used to get while their children were at school. Educators miss the energy that a live class generated. However, we have managed the offline to online transition reasonably well. Even as normalcy resumes with time, a hybrid mode of teaching learning must continue in one form or the other.

Ms. Jasmine Shah is the Pre-Primary Coordinator at The Somaiya School, Mumbai. She is a passionate teacher who strives for developmentally appropriate practices in Early Childhood Education.





Did we accept the challenge, or did we embrace change?

I think we embraced the challenge to accept the change.

Since time immemorial, educators are known to shift practices to reach out to all learners. An integral part of educator's working pattern is to bring in change whether it is updating their knowledge or trying new teaching strategies and technologies. But all of these are expected changes, things that happen periodically. The change is slow, deliberate, and very controlled. Did we ever think that we would be forced to transform our basic working patterns so drastically when schools became inaccessible in the most bizarre of circumstances? Never in our wildest dreams!

Being a kindergarten teacher, my biggest anxiety was - if the locked-down mode of preschool prevails, will it result in the dulling of young minds without the stimulation that a classroom creates. 'Will this prime initiative be riddled with uncertainty outside the boundaries of a physical classroom?'

As I thought through the given circumstances, the words of our great poet Rabindranath Tagore flashed through my mind-

Where the world is without fear and the head is held high

Where knowledge is free

Where the world has not been broken up into fragments

By narrow domestic walls...

These lines though written in a different era with a different context, assimilate the essence of hope in these dark times. Without inhibitions educators set the tone to reengineer the very basics from teaching in a classroom to teaching virtually.

Adaptive thinking in educators played a pivotal role in the transition with an aim to achieve specific objectives. This led to the creation of virtual classrooms and pulling down the walls of many barriers. Schools walked into homes of students through screens, educators began teaching from their homes. It did not matter whether the educator was at a beginner's level or an expert level, the resulting balance was upgrading of technology skills. Each one becoming a better version of the previous.

The digitalization of classrooms brought in new experiences for the teacher-student community. Middle school and high-school students would adapt but how about the Pre-Primary students. For them, screens were always a form of entertainment. Capitalizing on this aspect we rethought our roles to bring in elements of entertainment or infotainment or even "edutainment". We created videos and assigned them on various Learning Management Systems giving it the title of Asynchronous Learning. The passive screen watchers turned out to be active learners as they watched teacher's *edutainment* and followed along.

The next challenge was how to record videos without any background disturbances and a basic technical know-how? We were after all teachers, not video content creators. The creative mind of teachers came up with something we called my space, a designated area of our homes that was well laid out for each live/recording session. Eventually, a classroom corner shaped up in each teacher's house. It didn't matter whether houses were overcrowded with minimal access to technology or plenty of space and easy availability of technological tools. Learning videos were created whether one had minimal access or maximum availability of tools.

Alongside, teachers also taught live over the internet using various online collaboration tools giving it its name Synchronous Learning. Kindergarteners began using jargons like login, mute, unmute, and most of all hand gestures. Hand signs and signals became the tool of communication. Each hand sign signified something e.g., Drawing our inspiration from Gandhi's three wise monkeys we used the hand gestures of *bura mat dekho*, *bura mat suno* and *bura mat kaho* to I cannot see the screen clearly, I cannot hear you/clarity of voice and I want my turn to speak.

Teachers willingly let their student families peek into their space. Space which has been purely shared by the teacher-student community in a physical classroom. Initially, it felt claustrophobic, with students on small screens but then fresh air swept in. Getting used to online collaborative tools and advanced features in platforms such as Zoom, and Google Classroom things began to speed up. It gave all stakeholders i.e., parents, students, and teachers their space to breathe freely. On the other hand, educator's families or student families saw the glimpse of their preschool teachers' hard work. It changed an age-old perception that preschool is not only about A, B, Cs and 1, 2, 3s but also impart the most valuable skills like holding a pencil to write and using a pointer finger to read. The recognition teachers ought to receive. There seems to be a whole new appreciation for how preschool matters. This is likely the first generation of parents to get a glimpse into how preschool works.

The role of parents as partners facilitates student's learning as they are too young to be all by themselves. Parents had to be familiarized with technicalities. Patiently handling queries from all stakeholders regarding technology-led to self-learning for teachers. This learning was then shared within the teaching community reaching for widespread use. This helped build and cement deeper relationships and mutual respect.

Educators while sharing their space also got an opportunity to peek into the environment of students. Some homes were disciplined, some weren't. Some were 'all-ready' to begin their day and for some, it was a hop from the bed, a skip to the morning routine and a jump into the virtual classroom. Educators had to take on the role of guiding families to establish routines. With daily morning check-ins, children's voices were heard about their well-being and their families to create a connection, to build a classroom community. As an educator I personally learnt to be more patient to wait and listen to students as they unmute to share and mute to hear the next sharing. As we walked ahead into the year of distance education, challenges kept growing. Treating challenges like teething trouble, educators adapted to drive the change in daily learning practices, classroom management systems for e.g., one-to-one with a student using break out room feature, enhancing skills with assignments, celebrating events over video conferencing etc.

Although we have passed over a few hurdles, a few remain to be addressed like holding onto student engagement, social skills, observation of each student's true independent learning, to replace the timely intervention that existed in a physical classroom while pacing and watching students at work and unstructured playtime with peers. Besides, we also need to seek answers to the question "What will be the impact of this transition in the future?" "Does the future hold for a hybrid classroom?" "Will students develop social skills and establish bonding in a virtual class?" "Will we be able to conduct a virtual gap-filling exercise to enable students' progress at individual level as a school?" "How will student learning be facilitated without the help of parents as partners?"

Well, all I know is educators are evolutionists. Evolving to overcome challenges and embracing the changes will lead to progress on these fronts and change is here to stay.

Ms. Sheetal Vora is a Pre-Primary Teacher at The Somaiya School, Mumbai. She communicates in the most effective manner with parents and children. She is a passionate early childhood educator who brings in quality in her teaching practices.



Student's Impact- their experiences of online classes

It was interesting to see how teachers and students interacted socially via the online platform and managed to form strong heartfelt connections despite the lack of physical interaction. I was very grateful to our administrative staff for bridging the gap and hosting various social and extracurricular activities online and keeping up our morale, if we ever felt disheartened over missing out on a physical classroom experience. Personally, I enjoyed the new experience and I look forward to seeing how it continues to grow.
- Nicole Viegas

*"A teacher is a star who teaches others how to shine"
That is all what my journey has been this year, a year where darkness filled it was our teachers to showed us the light and helped us to complete the course successfully.
A sudden change which happened in all our life's but yet a life time memorable experience in this course during lockdown. Teams - our classroom , meetings - our learning, lessons- our learning and teachers- shining stars. Its is only acceptable because of the smooth and superb efforts done my the whole team.*
- Trupti Thakkar

It was an amazing experience. We didn't feel any difference compared to learning in a physical classroom. Online learning was effortless as it was been made easier and comfortable by our Director Dr. Vidhya Satish and our Awesome faculties. We were constantly guided, be it lesson plans, online internship, classroom learnings. Over all Online classroom learning experience was amazing and overwhelming.
- Kiran Apte

*Learning together even when we're apart 📖
Online learning provides more time flexibility. Now I have a bit more
time to spend on my extracurricular projects and hobbies ☐ It also
helps you to develop self-discipline and plan your day. Professors are
very approachable and eager to help us 🧠 📚 ♀ 🤝.
It's very surprising to see how quickly we adapted to this new
situation.
We didn't have to cancel lectures or undergo drastic rescheduling 📅
Studying at home has been more comfortable.
Keep Calm and Stay Organized 👍 ❤️
- Ipshita Biswas*

*Online learning at SIES-ICE was very flexible and easy to attend. I
was able to manage my housework and my studies together. Also, it
gave me the leverage of attending the class from any location. Just a
good connectivity and you are good to go. The teachers of SIES -ICE
were available whenever we need help even with the fact of not
meeting them in person. We feel like family whom we met virtually.
Thank you, SIES-ICE and all my teachers.
- Hiral Gala*

*Initially, the transition from offline to online felt wayward and
maddening, but it was rather the opposite. The extremely motivated
and forward driven educators, made the transition extremely smooth
for me. As a learner, I missed nothing academic wise. On the contrary,
my skills were further developed and sharpened as teachers also
taught us new techniques of teaching- learning.
- Hetavi Gala*

The online course from SIES has been a wonderful experience for me. Despite it being an online medium and not meeting us, all of the teachers have been so wonderful and helpful. They have helped me build my confidence. They have provided me with immense knowledge that is required to be a good teacher. I am thankful to the entire team of SIES for this beautiful journey.

-Divya Kedia

The pandemic has brought about a huge change in all our lives. Be it professional, personal, educational etc. Never in our wildest dreams had we thought about learning, working or doing our daily work online. That is the beauty of time. Everyone has to change and adapt whether voluntarily or involuntarily. The online teacher training course was one such change, we as students had to adapt to. It was a pleasant surprise to see how well we all ie the teachers and students adapted to this unforeseen change. Though online, we never felt that we were missing out on anything, be it the academic part or the fun part. The teachers gave more than their 100% to make sure this was a fun filled and memorable experience for us. A big thankyou to the entire faculty of SIES.

-Furzeen Nagarwala

I personally have had an enriching and fruitful experience @ Sies ICE. The online sessions were interactive and informative. The facilities were approachable and they were successful in adding a new chapter in my life.

- Meghna Tana

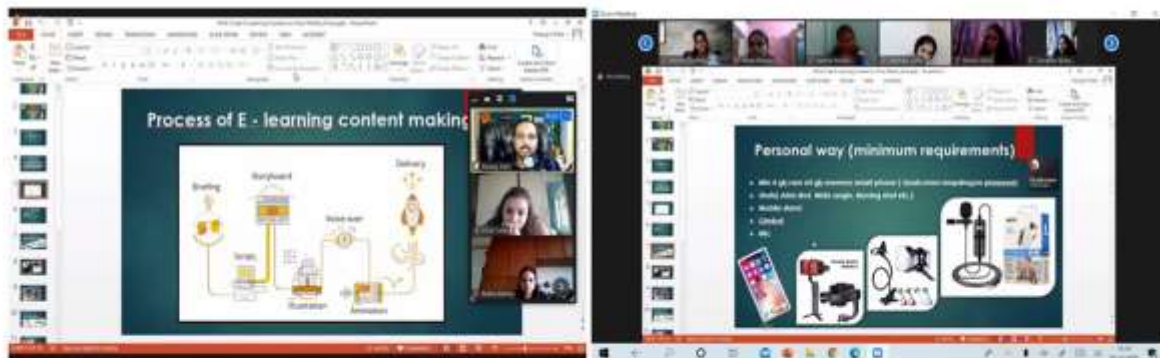
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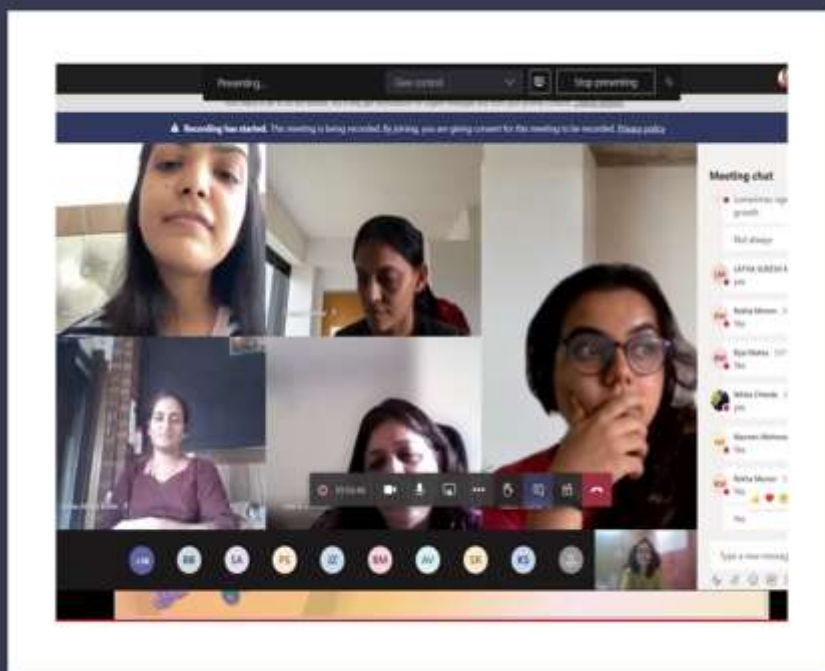




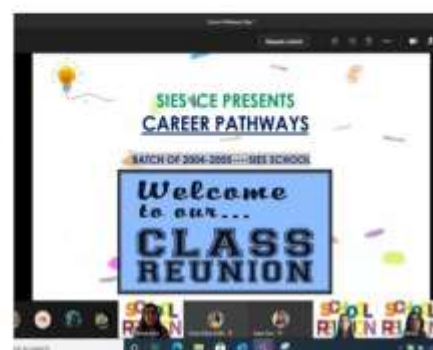
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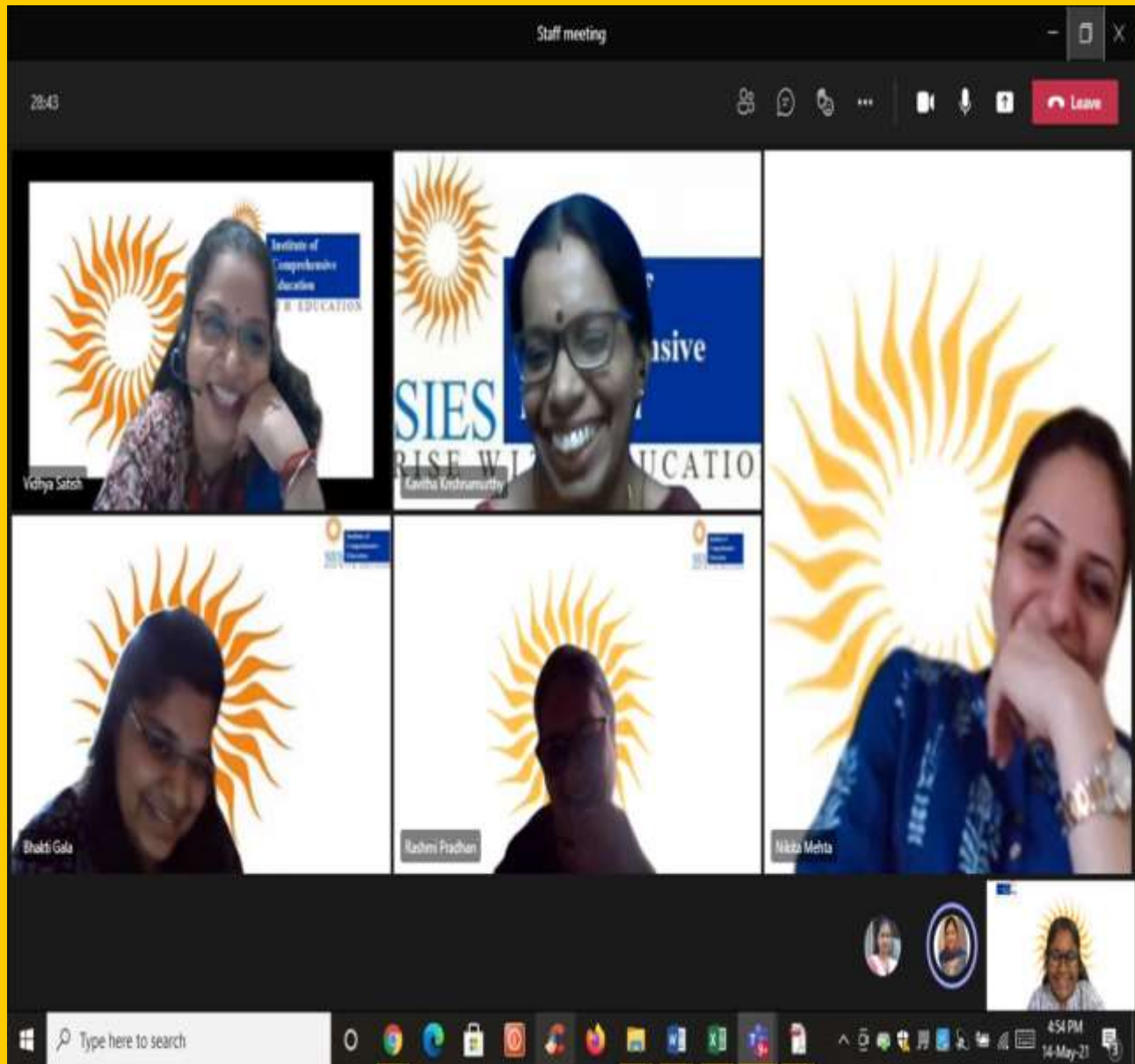


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