

Teacher's Perspective

Rupali Ganguli, Teacher at Sardar Patel Vidhyalaya, New Delhi

I have been in the teaching profession for the last 25 years. I really enjoy the whole experience of teaching and interacting with students. But the last 2 years have been a bit of a struggle. Speaking as a teacher in her 50s, the technological shift that came with online mode was quite hard to adapt to. But I acknowledge that I learnt a lot from it and now I do not feel scared of using technology for my teaching lessons.

The shift to offline/ in-person mode has been a new experience in itself. It's not completely back to the time before the pandemic. While we do make jokes about talking through the screen, not unmuting ourselves when we speak, etc., teaching 35-38 students together has been an adjustment. Everybody is masked and as a teacher, I always wear masks to keep myself and the students safe. But talking through a mask for 6-8 hours of your day is very exhausting and nauseating. On the other hand, it's been a pleasure to see all the students in the classroom together. They have enjoyed getting back to the school environment, spending time with their friends and also getting outside of their homes. Students who are not very sound in studies or kids with special needs or coming from economically weaker sections are able to get more in-person attention from teachers which has been better for them. Many of them shared their experiences that they

were not comfortable in the online mode and failed to understand the lesson.

Another challenge of the online mode was correcting assignments because different modes of activities and assessments required different ways of evaluations.

I feel one of the biggest impacts has been on children's learning. The online mode helped to teach the curriculum and complete tests and assignments, but the level of learning has slowed down. There has also been a huge decrease in the ability to write. For example, the children of class VIII are at the level of class 6th and so on. Although school life is slowly gaining momentum, in the early days of school being reopened, students could not sit for long and got tired quickly. It is very pleasant to see them interacting in a school environment which is very important for the overall growth that got affected in the last two years of lockdown. If schools stay open and the pandemic does not get worse, then I feel that the process of teaching and learning can be better for teachers and students.

