PROGRESSIVE JOURNEY: FROM FORMAL EDUCATION TO VIRTUAL EDUCATION

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Abstract:

This essay is an attempt on online teaching and online courses which have revolutionized the formal educational system especially in this pandemic curfew.In this world, everything is replaced by something better. Once sending postcards was the only mode of communication, then it was replaced by telephone, telephone was replaced by mobile phones and finally those mobile phones were replaced by smartphones. As such, the formal education is getting replaced by the virtual education. The virtual education has taken the teaching to next level. This pandemic curfew is a proof that everything has a replacement including teaching. The pandemic curfew had made all the educational institutions instruct their faculties to conduct classes, quizzes etc.... via online. Come rain or shine, online education is glowing in its own way. Along with that, the essay also gives the overview of the online courses available in applications at no cost and with reasonable payment.

Keywords: Virtual Teaching, Google Classroom, E-books, Classroom Teaching, Online Courses.

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Introduction

Through thick and thin, education is travelling with us. It is indeed difficult to define education. Education is the promising method of learning launched in the faith that the learner will acquire knowledge. Amongst the educational methods, teaching is the most important method that guides the learner to go great heights and reach the stars. It is rightly said by Ralph Marston,"Being positive in a negative situation is not naive. It's leadership". The pandemic curfew was a perfect storm. It has made the professors, the leaders of the student's academic standards. Many life lessons are learnt only during worst situations. In the same way, though the pandemic curfew was not a bed of roses, it has taught a lot of useful stuff to the Educational society. One among them was online teaching/online courses. The people are on the ball by learning online courses. This practice has been in use for more than ten years in many top universities. Even our country's notable universities have many online courses which yield training in various fields. But the pandemic curfew has taken the online teaching to the spotlight. It has also enabled all the generations of people, both old and new to learn about new technologies which are unknown for a decade. New discoveries regarding Education and new Applications came to be known by them because of the curfew. The whole virtual teaching has lifted the Education system for about two years.

Learning

Learning is an on-going process in one's life where he/she can acquire vast knowledge. According to educational specialists, Understanding, linking concepts, and forming connections between past and new information, independent and critical thinking, and the ability to transfer knowledge to new and varied situations are all part of deep and long-lasting learning. When coming to human, learning starts from birth and it continues till one's death. According to some psychologist, play is considered as the first mode of learning. In Vygotsky's 'Cultural-historical theory', "play is an important part of early childhood. He believed that play promotes cognitive, social and emotional development in children"(web). After play, the human enters into the world of education.

Ancient Education System of India

Our traditional education system evolved over time, focusing on the holistic development of the individual by caring for both the inner and outward self, beginning with the Rigveda. The approach prioritised moral, bodily, spiritual, and intellectual well-being. Values like as humility, truthfulness, discipline, self-reliance, and respect for all creatures were emphasised. Both learning and physical growth were emphasised in the educational system. In other words, the focus was on maintaining a healthy mind and body. As you can see, education in India has a long history of being practical, attainable, and life-enhancing.

Both official and informal schooling systems existed in ancient India. At home, at temples, pathshalas, tols, chatuspadis, and gurukuls, indigenous education was given.. Temples were also centres of learning, with a keen interest in the advancement of our ancient system's knowledge. Students recalled and pondered what was presented in class since it was mostly delivered orally. Gurukuls, also known as ashrams, were educational residential institutions. Many of them have the names of the sages. Hundreds of students used to learn together in gurukuls, which were located in forests, in tranquil and peaceful circumstances. During the early Vedic period, women had access to education as well. Maitreyi, Viswambhara, Apala, Gargi, and Lopamudra, to mention a few, are among the renowned female Vedic academics.

During that time, the gurus and their shishyas lived together and assisted one another in their daily lives. The major goal was to complete one's education, live a disciplined life, and realise one's inner potential.Students were encouraged to value the harmony that exists between humans and nature. Teaching and learning were based on the Vedic and Upanishad ideas, which included responsibilities to one's self, family, and community, including all elements of life. Students lived together for years away from home until they attained their objectives. The gurukul was also where the guru and shishya's bond became stronger over time. The emphasis was not only on the exterior qualities of the discipline but also on enriching the inner dimensions of the personality while pursuing their education in many fields such as history, art of debate, law, medicine, and so on.

LMS (Learning Management System)

Google Classroom has been used as Learning Management System over the five years since its creation. It is a powerful tool which gives students and teachers the ability to communicate, collaborate and learn. It is a platform where you can write, annotate, explain, brainstorm, and collate ideas using a whiteboard.The study materials can be shared in the form of audio, video, slides, or documents. It has an assignment page where the teachers can give assignments and students can also know the deadline. The teachers can share online resources, such as videos, articles and sites, which can serve as supplementary eLearning tools. Even teachers can provide feedback to the students by commenting on assignments. Google Classroom is a quick and convenient set up sponsored by Google to enrich e-learning. It is also a time saving process for assessing the assignments. With Google Classroom, everything is in one centralized position.

Google Classroom combines Google Docs, Google Sheets, Google Slides, Gmail, and Google Calendar into a single communication platform for students and teachers. Students can be manually imported from a school domain or asked to attend a class using a secret code. Within the Google ecosystem, teachers may create, distribute, and grade assignments.

Classroom Learning

A classroom is learning and teaching arena which involves students and teachers. The classroom teaching is the most effective teaching which promotes and stimulates collaborative learning. Collaborative learning raises a student's awareness of how other students study and allows them to learn more simply and efficiently, making them into keen learners both inside and beyond the classroom. It also enhances critical thinking skills and improves social skills. Students get the chance to participate in live debates in which they are required to apply their critical thinking. Inside the classroom, students engage in social interactions with their classmates and form bonds with their professors. In a live classroom, students are held responsible for being prepared to accomplish schoolwork, which includes doing homework the night before, being prepared for pop

quizzes, handing in assignments on time, and being prepared for in-class discussions. Students learn how to manage their time, prioritise their tasks, and complete their homework as a result of this experience. Through engaged and exciting activities, a teacher's physical presence keeps pupils stimulated. This helps pupils remember more of what they've studied throughout a class. Teachers can alter their teaching approach based on the types of learners in their classroom.

Disadvantages of Classroom Teaching

Classroom learning experiences are widely regarded to have a significant impact on students' academic growth. But the system was also attacked by various groups of people. Italian educator Maria Montessori in her book 'The Montessori Method' wrote that 'Stationary desks and chairs proof that the principle of slavery still informs the school'(16).Classroom education is controlling the students. In the name of discipline, the Management and the teachers are controlling the students to maintain discipline and decorum. This stops the own thinking of students. Once heard that students wearing uniforms to college or schools cannot able to decide of their own. Because they are being literally controlled by others. Those students are very use to follow the footsteps of others. Classroom education has made them forget the real fact that they should decide their life. Though there may a real connection between the teachers and students, their relationship will be like the relationship between Master and Slave. But when coming to online education, such things are not possible. Here are some reasons why people love online teaching.

A tutor can teach at any time that suits him/her. In some form of courses, even students can learn at any time that suits him/her. Most of the online classes were conducted on the weekends or evenings. Both can be in their own location in this learning process. This makes the students learn courses from different abroad Universities. Unlike classroom teaching, the online teaching is a well organised one without mismanagement. Because the teachers of Classroom Education sometimes spend their in classroom just doing some management duties assigned to them. But in Online Education, each and every

minute is managed by the teachers carefully. Through online teaching, the tutors can connect with the students of various disciplines and cultures. In this learning process, the tutor can expect the students of any culture join his/her course. So that the tutors will handle the course properly without any discrimination. This will improve the standard of the tutor. In classroom learning, the teachers have to do a lot of stuff to control the students and gain their attention. Even one student is distracted, it affects the whole classroom. There will also interruptions from other sources. But in the online process, the tutors are stress free. They can concentrate in their subject very easily. Even the tutor will ask questions in between the session to make the discussion and lecture effective. Still they conduct periodic tests, quizzes etc... to equip the students. It also gives job satisfaction to the tutors. The most important advantage of the online class is the fee payment. It is also one of the drawbacks of Classroom Education. The fee amount of the online class is low when compared to the school/college education. When a student is unable to pay the fee, some of the managements are insulting the students and ask the student to stay out of the classroom for the whole day. It is one of the humiliations faced by the students of poor background. In the process of online learning, the students can go for part-time jobs to support their education. Online Education is of course boon for the students of poor background. The students can also take any course from their field as well as apart from his field.

Online Education in India during Covid Outbreak
The worldwide proliferation of COVID-19 has resulted in the closure of educational institutions. This put colleges to the test in terms of their readiness to cope with a crisis that mandates the use of modern technology, such as hardware and software, in order to facilitate successful online learning. As a result of this closure, the development of online learning environments has accelerated, ensuring that learning is not impeded. Many universities are interested in finding the most effective ways to distribute course content online, engage students, and perform evaluations.Many online learning platforms, notably BYJU'S, a Bangalore-based educational technology and online tutoring corporation started in 2011, are now the world's most highly valued edtech

company, are giving free access to their services in response to overwhelming demand. According to Mrinal Mohit, the company's Chief Operating Officer, since introducing free live lessons on its Think and Learn app, BYJU has witnessed a 200 percent rise in the number of new students using the programme.

To preserve a competitive advantage, an education system must adapt to the needs of the technology era. The newest technology breakthroughs have improved the quality of modern schooling. The education landscape is practically being revolutionised by new dvancement in information communication technology (ICT), globalisation of education, and the ever-increasing competitive context. Higher education produces the necessary circumstances for enhancing quality of life and addressing issues, both of which are necessary for the country's economic growth and the maintenance of democracy. E-learning has been used by many higher education institutions to provide courses wholly online or to supplement traditional courses (Blended learning).This allows learners of various ages and capacities to continue learning at any time and in any location. Such a coexistence of e-learning and traditional classrooms has the potential to extend much into India's rural areas, which have been in the dark regarding eLearning.In the context of higher education, online education is seen as a credible alternative to traditional courses, although it is still in its infancy.

Pros and Cons of Online Learning
Teachers can provide lessons to students more efficiently through online learning. Teachers can employ a variety of online learning materials, such as videos, PDFs, and podcasts, as part of their lesson preparations. Teachers may become more efficient educators by expanding their lesson plans beyond standard textbooks to include internet resources. Another benefit of online education is that it allows students to take classes from anywhere they choose. Online lectures can also be recorded, preserved, and shared for later viewing. This allows students to access the instructional materials whenever it is convenient for them. Another benefit of online learning is the cost savings. When compared to traditional schooling, online education is significantly more cheap.

Because online learning reduces the costs of student transportation, lunches, and, most significantly, real estate, this is the case. Furthermore, all course or study materials are available online. There are lower risks of pupils missing lectures because online classes may be attended from home or any other location. Every kid has a unique educational experience and learning style. Some pupils like to learn through visuals, while others prefer to learn through sounds. Similarly, some students excel in a classroom setting, while others prefer to work alone and are easily distracted by big groups. With its variety of options and resources, the online learning system may be customised in a variety of ways. It's the most effective technique to create the ideal learning environment for each learner.

Essential Skills for Online Teaching

Teachers are used to being in positions of power as online instructors. Every day, they answer a million inquiries, make choices, offer counsel, and provide guidance. They have put a lot of effort into making our online courses work like well-oiled machines. Online teachers, on the other hand, are always studying throughout the day. They are always improving their present talents and learning new ones as needed. Because every work day is a learning experience when he/she teaches online. There's no ways around it. Online teachers are sometimes too preoccupied with handling a high workload to recognise a key fact: they may be teachers, but they are also students! Online learning enhances your present abilities while also assisting you in the development of new ones. Teachers who teach online have essentially enrolled in a never-ending lifelong learning course. How To Be More Patient is the one. This type of time-lapse communication irritates everyone, not just kids. Teachers who teach online do, too! As a result, as part of this process, both online students and online professors are learning to be patient. That's the way things are. And as your patience grows, it becomes easy to be a little kinder with your students. Sometimes online students are so stressed or overwhelmed that they are unable to understand what appears to be a straightforward activity. A patient explanation or a relevant example may be just what they need to achieve the breakthrough they require. When you teach a topic, your knowledge of it grows automatically – even if you

already knew a lot about it before you started. Examine the institution's track record for meeting deadlines. I'm sure it's gorgeous. That's because online teaching has allowed us to take our talents in this field to a whole new level. A buzzing chain saw, a snapping shark, and a razor-sharp samurai sword are all things most online teachers could readily handle. We often take on larger issues than that. Teachers have undoubtedly acquired techniques for dealing with time pressure throughout the course of their online teaching careers without even realising it. These are just a few examples of how online instructors are students by default. We are constantly being schooled - often without our knowledge. When you think about it, it's not that unexpected. Online teaching demands a diverse set of abilities that must be continually developed.

Webinars

Seminar is the most common word used by the academicians which engage them in learning and discussing their domain subjects. The aim of the seminar is to gain a better insight into the stated topic. It was conducted by various reputed institutions to provide opportunities to the academicians and faculty members to examine and scrutinize the topic. Just to replace Seminar during the pandemic curfew, Education system has introduced a redesigned one. The name 'webinar' is formed by combining the phrases 'web' and 'seminar.' The word refers to the use of video technology to broadcast seminars, lectures, and other types of material via the internet. In contrast to a webcast, which delivers material on demand and only in one direction, a webinar is interactive, allowing two-way conversation between the organiser and the other participants. Webinars have connected the people all over the world virtually. Here, the academicians and faculty members attend the discussion virtually. They discuss and express their ideas freely just like Seminar. There were a lot of applications introduced during this critical period to serve the academicians and the faculty members. This includes Google Meet, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Webex etc.. During this period, workshops and conferences are also conducted by the same medium. The participants presented their papers by sharing the PowerPoint presentations. The faculty members started learning new techniques which they can use in their teaching. Webinar covers all the topics which

should be known by the faculty members. These applications have made even the people of rural connect to the International institutions. The institutions have made use of the Google forms to collect the details of the participants for Registration. Later Feedback Link is shared among the participants to issue e-certificates directly through Certify'em. The following aspects attract both organisers and attendees to online conferences. Slideshows or screen material can be presented in an uncomplicated manner. Streaming video, additional material can be shared and downloaded. The ability to record entire courses and share or revisit them later is a practical option. Creating and distributing surveys or quizzes. Even though the topic is the same, online seminars are not the same as traditional face-to-face seminars. They have several advantages over traditional lectures, but they also have some drawbacks: the webinar format excels at not requiring a specific location. Both the speaker and the attendees save time and money because they do not have to go to the seminar place.

Online Courses

An online course is the presentation of a set of lectures via internet which can be accessed anytime and anyplace. 'An online course is designed as a built environment for learning. It's constructed as an experience that can be followed sequentially or can be accessed throughout the designed time period' says Wendy Woon, director of education at the Museum of Modern Art (web). Online course is the best thing since sliced bread. It is in being for more than a decade, but still it became famous during COVID outbreak. When the students as well as the faculty members are supposed to stay in their respective houses, they are very much bored with the routine. So this urged them to learn something which will be useful for their life. Temptation to learn made them to fall in the web of online learning which they cannot get rid off till now. So they decided to spend their quarantine productively by taking Online courses.

There are many people who would often say that online teaching is not much effective when compared to classroom teaching. But the pandemic curfew has disproved the point. It has become successful because there is no other go. To teach and enrich their

knowledge, students are instructed to take online learning. In this situation, most of the college management has instructed their faculties to conduct teaching, quiz and examinations through online mode. Eventhough the online teaching is little bit tough for the students from rural areas, the smartphones have made it possible.

NPTEL

National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL) is one of the major initiatives in India towards e-learning which is providing quality education to the students as well as the faculty members through virtual mode. This is a joint venture of IITs and IISc.It is creating complete, free and open courseware online to institutions and individuals in all domain. Contents for the courses were based on the model curriculum proposed by All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and the syllabi of major affiliating Universities in India. Indian higher Education Report 2015 declares NPTEL as "a model for technology enhanced learning". NPTEL is providing a lot of facilities which can be used by the students according to their convenience. The lecturer who is handling the course will give lectures through videos. The students can watch them and even they can download it for future use. Next step by the NPTEL is availing students to download prepared reading material in the course outline. The Self-assessment tests are conducted through tests and quizzes. There is also an interaction section withs the students. Finally they conduct an online discussion forum for clearing the doubts. It is a good initiative taken by the country to educate all group of people.

It has been a successful one eventhough it was conducted online. It still has the same facilities provided in the classroom environment. It also has the advantage of learning on one's own time. The student can watch the video lecture whenever he can. They can also do the assignment whenever they have time. This type of virtual learning has made all the sector of people join the course. The examination was conducted in either paper/pen or computer based mode. NPTEL is providing credits to the students through the course.

Teachers and Students

The students play a vital role in the Education system. They have the capacity to change anything. Improving students' connections with instructors has significant, beneficial, and long-term consequences for both academic and social growth of kids. Improving students' connections with their professors alone will not result in academic advances. Students who have tight, good, and supportive connections with their instructors, on the other hand students who have more friction in their interactions with their professors. Consider a student who has a close personal connection to her instructor, speaks with her on a regular basis, and receives more constructive counsel and appreciation from her teacher rather than simply criticism. The student is more likely to trust her instructor, to be more engaged in her study, to behave better in class, and to accomplish academically at greater levels. Positive teacher-student connections engage students in the learning process and encourage them to want to learn more. The student-teacher connection should be like a friendship, with one person attempting to understand the other's issues and assisting him in attempting to address them. Teachers may be like a mother who is concerned about her children's education, grief, and issues, among other things. A teacher who acts like a mother would lavish love, attention, and particular care on his students. A teacher might be compared to a deity who keeps an eye on his students' activities and assists them in correcting their errors.

After getting to know each other well, it's simple to establish a wonderful teacher-student connection. The only qualities a learner needs in a teacher are trust, love, and respect. for example, A teacher-student connection may benefit the instructor in a variety of ways. Students can be free of tensions, fears, and other concerns if they have a solid teacher-student connection. If pupils have a close relationship with their teacher, they will communicate their concerns with her, and she will undoubtedly resolve them. A student can remain cheerful and stress-free in this manner. It will also encourage him to study hard because a teacher would constantly steer him in the proper direction. A solid teacher-student connection isn't enough to ensure academic achievement. However, it has the potential to motivate students to be more dedicated to their studies

and to work harder to master their topics. Unhealthy relationships, on the other hand, will have a bad impact on the same. It can also stifle a student's social-emotional development. The classroom enivronment will become hostile as a result of a lack of mutual respect, and instructors may find themselves screaming and losing control over minor matters. In these harmful situations, student bullying can become a widespread occurrence.

Virtual Education has become successful because of their satisfaction. Though the students are satisfied with the virtual teaching, it is the teachers who are taking lots of effort in educating the students. The young generations are familiar with the technologies and also they love that. But the teachers who are of different age group find it difficult to equip with the technologies. Eventhough they faced troubles first, they have made themselves ready to face the reality. Teacher is the only person who has to learn throughout his life. It has been provedduring the pandemic outbreak..

Types of Online Courses
There are different types of online courses but when it is categorized they can be grouped into two main categories. They are Synchronous and Asynchronous online courses. In Synchronous e-learning process, the student and the tutor should fix a particular time. Like a video-conferencing calls, the students and the tutor interact with each other. U. S News & World Report also calls these classes 'live'. Virtual class discussion is available here. Active students usually take part in these types of courses. In this process, the students can ask the questions to the teachers directly. The students can interact regularly and frequently with the tutors. Because of rigid schedule and technical difficulties, the most of the people like asynchronous online classes.

In Asynchronous process, the videos and the materials were present already there. Or else the course work will be send via web, mail and message board. The students can also use the course materials in offline mode. There will not be any interactive zones here. But the students can share their thoughts in message board. The students don't have to

stick to a strict schedule to engage in live classes or discussions.The only thing they have to worry about is the assignment deadline. In this process, students can work more independently.

Applications for Online Courses

There are various applications available in Google Play Store for learning online courses. The top most application among them was 'Udemy'. Udemy is an online learning platform giving centre stage to more than 45,000 courses taught by expert instructors. The courses range from programming languages to personal development skills.

There are other applications like 'LinkedIn Learning', 'Coursera' and 'Cursa'. LinkedIn Learningis an application where the students can learn business, tech and creative skills from industry experts. 'Coursera' is an online platform where the top universities provide courses in programming, music, languages and more. Cursa works as a learning content organizer because it brings together the best courses available on Youtube and organizes them into categories and subcategories, also allowing the learners to save the favourite courses in a specific area.

Conclusion

If one has a desire to learn something, nothing can stop him. With internet, this pandemic curfew has proved that nothing can stop learning. The students of both schools and colleges are learning, answering the quizzes and attending the examinations through online mode in this pandemic curfew. The pandemic curfew has made lots of people including students, faculties etc... to join the courses of their interest. Throughout its journey, the Educational system is getting altered with lots of new stuff and now finally with virtual education. It's not just jumping on the bandwagon, the education system is getting developed to satisfy the needs of the learners. Come rain or shine, online education is glowing in its own way.

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