# ONLINE TUTORING

## Practical or ineffective?

**ZABIN TAZRIN NASHITA**

Tutoring has long been regarded as a lucrative way of earning for undergraduate students. Since tutoring occupies fewer hours than regular part-times and offers decent pay, a large portion of undergrad students take it up as their first jobs. But as rewarding as this experience may be, it also entails long hours of commuting, which isn't feasible for everyone. Female students who have a curfew to work around or students living in dormitories far away from residential areas may find it difficult to sustain a regular tutoring job. In cases such as these, online tutoring can be a practical solution.

The Covid-19 pandemic popularised online education. Schools and universities were forced to switch to an online mode, with coaching centres and private tutors following suit. Educational institutions and coaching centres have reverted back to the offline mode, but more and more classes are being conducted in hybrid mode. In the past, if teachers were unavailable due to an inevitable reason, the classes were generally cancelled or rescheduled, but now we have the option to deliver the lectures online. Online tutoring has also continued, although it's not as widespread as before.

There are both upsides and downsides to online tutoring gigs. For example, most students prefer to have private tutors visit in person, so landing one of these jobs may be difficult. Secondly, unless you own a tablet, it may be borderline inconvenient to conduct the sessions.

Ashfaqur Rahman, a third-year engineering student of Islamic University of Technology (IUT), who tutored a student of a different district while living in Dhaka, shares his experience with online tutoring. "I didn't have the proper equipment necessary to tutor online, so I found it somewhat difficult to teach my student. While it was convenient and had a flexible schedule, I find that it's easier to teach certain concepts face to face."

Another downside that comes with online tutoring sessions is the difficulty in retaining concentration on the student's end. Considering how we skip online lectures in favour of watching the recordings later, it's easy to deduce that it's not exactly effortless to stare at your screen for hours on end with rapt attention when it comes to academics.

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Shah Laheen Mashahad, also a student of IUT, mentions his positive experience with online tutoring, "I noticed my students would often zone out, but overall, I found it easier to explain and the flexible schedule worked very well for me. Although the pay was significantly less, the lack of commute made up for it."

One of Laheen's students, Shabib Chowdhury of Rajuk Uttara Model College, shares his opinion on online tutoring to be positive as well. "Some theoretical concepts can be hard to grasp in an in-person class, but my tutor showed me relevant videos for them, which helped a great deal. Not to mention, I found note taking to be much easier and organised as I would have the lectures in PDF form."

Online tutoring can be beneficial for both parties depending on the teacher's approach. It's much easier to reschedule if need be and having recorded versions of the sessions prove useful as well.

If you're looking for a tutoring job online, the social media groups of tuition portals should be your first go to. As they tend to get snatched up fast, it's easier to find offers through friends or previous students. Keep in mind that it's likely to pay much less than offline tutoring jobs, but it saves you the commuting time and cost as well. It's also easier to tutor a batch of students online, as there's no need for any of the students to travel to a common spot. By tutoring multiple students at the same time, you might be able to bridge the pay gap as well.

Despite the scarcity of online tutoring jobs, it can be a great income source if you're looking to work from home. It's best to keep in mind that the onus of making online sessions successful falls on the teacher and their approaches to teaching, so you may have to exert a lot of thought and effort into your lesson plans.

*Zabin Tazrin Nashita is a student of Islamic University of Technology.*





PHOTOS: **ORCHID CHAKMA**