

THE COMMUNICATIONS

Journal of Applied Research in Open and Distance Education

The Communications—an applied journal of research in open and distance education, is an official publication of the Directorate of Distance Education, University of Kashmir, Srinagar. The Journal seeks to bridge and integrate the intellectual, methodological and substantive diversity of educational scholarship and to encourage a vigorous dialogue between educational scholars and practitioners. The journal seeks to foster multidisciplinary research and collaboration among policy makers, professionals, teacher educators, research scholars and teachers. The journal also intends to exert its efforts in capacity building for the future of learning and teaching among the new researchers across the broadest range of research activities internationally. The directorate seeks to offer spaces for more critical thinking and reflection grounded in rigorous scholarship as to ways in which higher education might go on being further reshaped in the future.

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CONTENTS

Editorial

PAPERS

- | | |
|---|-------|
| Where is the Space?
<i>Sandeep Kumar</i> | 01-06 |
| The 21st Century Classrooms: Technology or the Teachers
<i>Rajeev Rattan Sharma</i> | 07-13 |
| Emerging Trends in Preservation and Dissemination of E-Books for Distance Learners
<i>Avineni Kishore and O. Sessaiah</i> | 14-22 |
| Effect of Militancy On The Educational Standards In Jammu And Kashmir State
<i>Syed Zahoor Ahmad Geelani</i> | 23-31 |
| Empowerment of Rural Women through Odl Technologies In J&K
<i>Geetika Singh</i> | 32-40 |
| Study of Burnout among Face to Face and Distance Mode Teachers in Relation to Their Organizational Climate
<i>Khushvinder Kumar and Jaspal Singh</i> | 41-44 |
| New Paradigms in Distance Learning
<i>Gyanendra kumar Rout</i> | 45-54 |
| Information and Communication Technology Bridging the Divide in Education: ICT as a Digital Bridge
<i>Syed Noor-Ul-Amin</i> | 55-66 |
| Open and Distance Learning: Issues and Challenges
<i>SumanKumari</i> | 67-77 |
| Triggers of Consumer Complaining Behaviour- A Service Perspective
<i>Iqbal Ahmad Hakeem and Aabid Muzzamil Lone</i> | 78-86 |

Two Day National Workshop Report on Role of Academic Counselors in Open and Distance Learning System	87-91
<i>Mushtaq Ahmad Dar and Showkat Rashid Wani</i>	
Understanding, Creating and Delivering Value to Boost Horticulture Industry in Jammu and Kashmir	92-101
<i>Farzana Gulzar and Shazia Manzoor</i>	
What Began as Crude, Now Rocks the World	102-108
<i>Khursheed Ahmad Qazi</i>	
Issues Relating to Electronic and Digital Signatures	109-122
<i>Manirani Dasgupta</i>	
Kashmiri Spell Checker and Suggestion System	123-127
<i>Aadil Ahmad Lawaye and Bipul Syam Purkayastha</i>	
Diffusion Process In Linguistics And Technology	128-131
<i>Neha Dixit, Aadil A. Lawaye and Swapana Mallik</i>	
An Empirical Assessment of Study Habits and Self Concept of Higher Secondary School Students in Relation to Gender and Type of School	132-136
<i>Gulshan Wani</i>	
Teacher Education in the Age of Globalization	137-143
<i>Shahida Parveen and Muhammad Iqbal Mattoo</i>	
Work-Life Balance - An Exploratory Study about Women Employees	144-148
<i>Orusa Yaseen Bisati</i>	
Philosophy of Value Education	149-154
<i>G.M. Malik</i>	
A Study on Internet and E-Mail Usage by the Higher Secondary Students	155-160
<i>Ishfaq Ahmad Bhat and R.Muthumanickam</i>	
Survey of Energy Efficient Routing Protocols in MANET	161-168
<i>Mohammad Rafiq and Sachi Pandey</i>	
Integration of ICT and Education: A Roadmap for Quality Education in the 21st Century	169-179
<i>Habibullah Shah</i>	
Emerging Trends in Preservation and Dissemination of E-Books for Distance Learners	180-187
<i>Avineni kishore</i>	
<i>O. Sessaiah</i>	
Computer Science/Information Technology at Intermediate Level - Challenges and Suggestions: A Case Study of J&K School Education System	188-199
<i>Tanveer Ahmad Lone</i>	
Media, Education And Women Empowerment	200-208
<i>Nishta Rana</i>	

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

With one of the largest higher education systems in the world, India's education system has witnessed exponential growth in the last decade. However, the system itself is grappling with a number of challenges related to expansion, excellence and equity. Distance learning holds immense prospects to the 1.59 crore of the Indian populace, who fall under the student category. Offering readily accessibility, flexibility in learning and affordability compared to regular colleges, distance education institutions are the channel for the mass to earn a working status and the better financial status. Distance education has proved to be a blessing for many aspirants seeking to upgrade their educational qualification for achieving higher education, career enhancement or just for the sake of updation of knowledge. While distance education has by and large benefitted working professionals but now students and even house wives are not far behind. Has the concept of distance education not come into existence, lakhs of students who wished to pursue higher education would have been rendered educationless. This would have shattered their dreams of achieving education despite facing constraints like full time job, family life, financial limitations and many more. Distance learning has provided an excellent platform to students for learning at their own convenience and at their own pace. In this rapidly changing system of learning, if you are working and need a good degree as well as specialized knowledge to enhance your career then distance education can surely be your cup of tea. It is in this backdrop that the University of Kashmir established the Directorate of Distance Education in 1976 with a vision to reach the unreached and to impart education in different disciplines through Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode. The directorate aspire to attain the status of an internationally reputed institution of excellence in teaching, research and extension.

The Communications—an official publication of the Directorate of Distance Education, is a well recognized journal of research and scholarship in the field of education. Established with the mission of disseminating information about research and scholarship in India, the Journal seeks to bridge and integrate the intellectual, methodological and substantive diversity of educational scholarship and to encourage a vigorous dialogue between educational scholars and practitioners. Although the Journal has a specific academic position, it also seeks to foster multi-disciplinary research and collaboration among educationists, academicians, philosophers, psychologists and administrators. The main aim of the Journal is to disseminate scholarly works and information useful to researchers and practitioners in the field of education. Due to huge response from the contributors, I am pleased to introduce two issues for Vol. 21, with a view to reach to a worldwide audience.

I appreciate and congratulate the editorial board, the contributors of articles and all others involved directly or indirectly in this excellent intellectual exercise and wish that the journal becomes the best medium for scholarly work in the field of education and research.

Habibullah Shah
Editor

WHERE IS THE SPACE?**Sandeep Kumar*****ABSTRACT**

*This is a small study done by the author in a school to understand the space provided to the learner by the teachers in teaching learning processes. Though I also strongly believe that when I am saying above line space provided to learner by teacher itself carry a super impose authority of teacher on learners, where we have accepted the unquestioned authority of teachers. This article will try to elaborate how much and what kind of space is available for learners in class room teaching learning processes like, is the teacher plays an authoritative role in class or not? Is there any contradiction the way learner and teacher perceive the classroom processes? How much a child comfortable in the class to say his or her views? Etc. So the basic objective of the work is to **explore** the space and say of a learner in his or her own learning processes and how this processes is being influence by the teachers' authority. To achieve this objective data has been collected by observation of twenty classes of social science in a school. Paper starts with a theoretical framework, which talks about the importance of authority of learners in teaching learning processes, which also include the rationale along with the objective of the work done. Then after collected data has been analyzed on the themes emerged from the collected data itself. After analysis some suggestions has been given to teachers to appreciate the learners' authority in the class.*

Key words: Teaching- Learning- Process, Authority of Learners, Teachers Authority, Socio-Cultural Context.

Introduction

When we talk about democracy we talk about such a system and mechanism in which all components work individually, but with sprit of collectivism. Two things work here very effectively individualism and collectivism. Each component has its own defined work different from others, but they all collectively work for a system. If you see democracy form structuralist functionalist perspective, we come to know that democracy work like a body, in which all parts work individually but with relation to another one, to make a body function properly. According to Michel Apple (2007) democracy is not only a term used in political science, moreover it is a skill for life living. It is not only related to administration and system but also with all aspects of life. Democracy is a way of looking at things which is related to all parts of life, whether it is state, society, family, school or any other system or even an individual. When we talk about democratic school various thinkers come in mind like Ganghi, Tegore, Krishanmurti, Geejubhai Badheka, Dewy, Montessori etc. According to Apple and Been democratic school are the actual school based on democratic way of living. And if we want to make this spirit alive, we have to provide opportunities to our learner to make them understand the importance of this democratic sprit.

With students, community participation is also essential in education system to make a democratic school. Gandhi said school has a great role to play outside the school premises. He said students ultimately will have to deal with the community, than why not they get chance to learn about it from school itself, so that they can understand it in a more comprehensive manner. When a child enters in school, he/she is not a blank slate nor a clay to whom you can make anything. Dewy (1938) said a child has a legacy of his/her past experiences those can be good or bad. Child has strong innate abilities to learn from the birth. Without

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any teacher they learn many things from their surroundings. With little guidance they learn how to speak, they also learn their culture and customs. This learning process is self-directed and self-oriented. Above discussion point out that children do learn from his or her own past experiences. Michal Apple (2009) said that we have to consider these experiences to help learners to learn naturally. Rabindra Nath Tagore said nature is the actual teacher. He also said there should not be any restriction on curriculum, it needs to be free. This way learners can do his or her over all development. He has full faith in learners' abilities and capabilities, that is why, he said child construct his knowledge in natural settings. He perceived very strong, positive and constructive role of education in which desired role is to play by learner which is forced.

Geeju Bhai Badheka has written many books on his own school experiences. Dewaswapan is one of them, he said in this book that it is important to make a pedagogy contextual. He also mentioned that examination decides everything in school education and the objective of education get defeated. He accepted the space of learner in learning processes and to understand this he does some experiments based on humanistic perspective. He said learning is not mere collection of knowledge, it is a process of dialogue. So it is essential to make learning dialogue based, not teacher authority based. Dialogue means, where dignify respect can be given to learner and his or her experiences and viewpoints. Krishan Murti accept the space of learner in learning process. He said learning is a lifelong process and there is no time when we learn nothing. So in this way actual experiences of life teach us many things. Dewy said a person is an active organism and part of his community. His nature is to express himself and this expression is built and constructed in social settings and social experiences. So if we ignore this expression of learner in class, we are doing injustice to them and in such a situation learning cannot take place. Frère also criticized education system for not giving appropriate space to learner in learning process. He argue that education system believe---teacher teaches and learners are taught---teacher knows and learners are tabula rasa---complete authority is with teachers and learners are who obey, etc. Frère said actually banking system of knowledge consist Burdon of knowledge which suppress the development of the personality of a child. He said the function of education is to break the culture of silence and also to create the space for dialogue.

With reference to above discussion this is also need to be consider that all individuals are unique, there are difference between two individual and we should respect that difference.---- all student should be given full respect and acceptance, it is inhumane to show some one down---- to develop faith in each other, it is mandatory that we should be honest towards each other---- there is a need to listen each other patiently--- teaching should be meaningful---- it is to be acknowledge that everyone have their unique way of learning etc. But is this the reality in schools? It is a question subject to inquiry. Do students have any role in their own learning process? Are classes always teacher dominated? Does this domination of teacher influence learning of a learner? Is there any conflict in authority between learner and teacher in classroom? What is the role of a learner in a democratic school? Does examination determine everything in school? How much space a learner has in his/her own learning. These and many other questions will be answered in this next part of the paper after methodology.

Methodology

The nature of entire work is qualitative and analytical. Observations and interviews were being used as tools for data collection. To collect the data 20 classes of social sciences were being observed and 20 students and 5 teachers were being interviewed. Some theme emerged from the data and on the basis of those themes analysis was done. Themes are also supported by theoretical framework of the work.

Findings

This analysis is done on the bases of data collected by observations and interviews of students and teachers to understand the space of learners in teaching learning processes

Disdain of Students Say in Class

It was being observed in the classes that students' authority is disdain. Authority means, the equal opportunities and participation in class. Students curiosity was not addressed satisfactory. Question asked by students were not being answer properly. Nothing was being asked by the students, that how they want to do the work, everything was decided by teacher. In a class student said " aj hum political science padengy." Teacher refused immediately and said " *aj history ka turn hai so no political science*" It was a clear disdain of student space in learning process. In some of the observed classes teacher even reject the idea of participating the entire class. They always ask question to the bright student to show and prove their teaching quality. In whole some, it came out from the analysis of observed classes that student has no say in class.

Decline of Child's Identity in from of Student

Observation show that there are huge crises regarding the identity of a child in school or in a class. We need to consider that all students are children first and then students. Generally children feel proud to be part of any class, but observation and interviews done with students it clearly came out that they are in school forcefully without any objective. They shared that they come to school and go back, parents send them to school and school does not accept them as a child of a particular age. So the childhood had lost somewhere between school and home. Resultant they are not doing well at school nor at home. They are losing the childhood and identity as a child.

Ignorance of Learner Natural Tendencies

Students are curious by nature and this curiosity is different learner to learner, but this natural and innate tendencies are being suppressed in class. Students want to ask question (but stopped by saying that your question is wrong), they want to enjoy (they stopped by saying it is not a cinema hall), some time they do not want to study (they are being forced by saying that it is a class not a picnic spot). In all most all classes naturality of a learner is being rejected and distain. They are not allowed to do anything which does not have acceptance of teacher.

Inadequate Development of Self of Student

It was being observed in the classes the student has not developed their self adequately, reason being they are not being accepted the way they are. Teachers do not have faith in their abilities. All the time words being used by teacher "nonsense", "you cannot study", "cannot even you do this much" etc. such behavior of teacher is not appropriate, it creates hinders in the process of self-development of learners. It became more problematic when teachers is this teacher even do not think about such issue. While interviewing a teacher it came out that they (students) have become already what they want to be, we cannot change them. With this understanding they do not do any effort to help learners in their personality development.

Lack of Co-relation between Democratic Class and Learners' Space:

Observations show that classes are not democratic and there is no space for learners to participate in classroom processes. Democratic class rooms provide space for learn to engage him/herself in learning with due respect. But observations showed that student even do not have space to ask questions without any

hesitation. They answer only what teacher asked to them. In democratic class teacher should provide opportunities to raise questions but nothing like this was being observed. Only straight forward statement is the pedagogy of the classes, no space for dialogue between teacher and students. Everything is prescribed to learner no scope for negotiation.

Negligence Role of Learners to Decide What and When to Study

Analysis showed that right to decision is with teacher only. Student has no such right in classes. In observed classes it has never been asked students that what would you like to study or discuss today. This prerogative is with teacher only. Students only obey. So we should forget about the authority of learners in the class room process. Interaction with teacher revealed that they have to do this way only because, they have deadlines for entire course and so there is no time for all such work.

Forced Disciplined and Forced Value Education

Responsibility and accountability is inherent within the discipline but only when, if discipline is not forced. Discipline need to be volunteer not forced. But observation showed that classroom discipline is forced by teachers and because of this students are failed to develop feeling of accountability. Interviews with students showed that they feel if everything is done by teacher than why they should bother, even keeping chalk in classroom. They bring chalk when teacher ask them to do. So what so ever discipline exists in school and class does not carry the feeling of responsibility.

Sitting Arrangement in Classroom

Sitting arrangement in classroom is also not appropriate. Some students seats are fixed in class, like the bosses (influential students) of the class have their fixed seats and some learners those who are less influential has also fixed seats at back. So such division is very problematic and it is more surprising to know that teacher knows this and does not intervene in this. Teachers' view is that let them decide, how much we can intervene. So it was observed that there are two classes within one class. Active students and passive students. Interviews with student revealed that they have understanding that intelligent students should sit in front and others at back. It is more surprising to know that teachers also indorse this process. So the sitting arrangement also need to be reconsider on egalitarian basis.

Contextless Teaching and Ignorance of Individual Experiences

Analysis showed that teaching in classes are some way or other was context less. Researches proves that subject like social sciences can be best deal in context, but unfortunately observed classes were not using learners context. Discussion with teachers also revealed that they are not bothering about this. They just complete the syllabus on time. Even some of them were very confused that how to incorporate learners context (like their social background) in teaching. Most of them just read books in class or ask some students to read the book and then question answers. Observed classes also revealed that teachers are not sensitive about the students previous experiences they have constructed from their cultural legacy and if used is problematic, like Diwali is a festival when cleaning is done but cannot it be said that cleaning is done on all festivals. So situating learning in context was completely absent.

No Space for Critical, Analytical and Reflective Thinking

Everything is given to the learner such as content, questions etc. Hardly there is space of thinking. And in absence of thinking there is no criticality and analysis in absent of these there is no space of reflection . Content is given to learners just to memories and to write in exams. The activities given in text books are also not being used. Teachers skip those activity by saying that put more focus on content

because that will be asked in exams. In such a situation, it can be assumed that nothing is happening for the development of critical, analytical and reflective thinking.

No Collaborative Work

Collaboration is a very good strategy to deal with the classes like social science. Student get more chance to understand others perspective and then also learn how to work in group individually with collective responsibility. But nothing like this has been observed in classes. No collaboration exists in classroom teaching. Only teacher fronted classes are existing in schools, where teacher is in the front and students are just listener. While talking with teachers it came out that they believe, that ultimately our teaching helps students to write in exams. In group work they just enjoy and do not study. So collaborative work was not seen in the present study.

No Understanding of the Nature of the Subject (Social Science)

It is very sad but true that teachers did not show good understanding of the nature of the subject social science, neither in observation nor through interviews. Most of teacher said social science is the combination of four subjects which is a very wrong phenomenon about the social science; they said history, geography, political science and economics make this subject. But when I asked them, why you teach them separately they could not reply much on this question. They do not understand that social science has its own nature and scope except history, geography etc.

Conflict between Learner and Teacher Interests

Analysis of observations shows that there is conflict between learner interest and teachers interest. If it is supposed to be said learner want to learn and teacher want to teach. But teacher want to teach without bothering how learners want to learn. And learner want to learn but not being given due respect to their ways. So, they fail to achieve what they want. So this conflict is very crucial to deal to resolve it in a proper way. So that teaching process actually become teaching- learning- process.

Others

Except above issues there are more issues were being observed in the classes. Like Lack of child centered pedagogy, information oriented knowledge, teaching dominated teaching-learning- process, unavailability of co-curricular activities in class, ignorance of individual difference, Homework pattern, School as government tuition center and teachers are agent.

Conclusion

As a conclusion it can be said that till date students do not have any space in their own teaching-learning- processes. They do not have space for debate, dialogue, criticize etc. they have no space for asking questions, reflection, analysis, collaboration. The entire process is teacher oriented and classes are teacher fronted. School is working like a government tuition centers and learner as their agent or customer. School is losing its identity as a school and so the welfare agenda of state. So the question still exists "where is the space."

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THE 21st CENTURY CLASSROOMS: TECHNOLOGY OR THE TEACHERS

Rajeev Rattan Sharma*

ABSTRACT

The place and the space of the Classrooms right throughout the world are changing with the massive use of Information technology tools and devices ion our day to day thus proliferating the use of it in the classrooms .In the Indian settings although because of many handicaps of the socioeconomic domains are not that forthcoming to change and to be as per the new western society, yet the beginning is made. In all this scene a demand is emerging is the technology or the teachers are to be in the classrooms of the 21st century and the development of the Social networking is playing a major role in the development of this trend. A time is now not only ripe for the class rooms to be changed but also for the both social actors –teachers as well as the Students are to be reciprocative to this trend happening because of the social media .This paper deals how the development of the social media and the social networking are to be instrumental in the knowledge society being shaped in the classrooms.

Key words: Information Technology, Knowledge Economy and Society, Social Media and Net Working, Teacher Education.

The 21st Century – A Change from the Past

As we move further into the new millennium, it becomes clear that the 21st Century needs are very different from the 20th Century needs. It has happened because of the needs which the new society could create because of the interaction between the evolution of technology and the development of economy and society and is an important dimension of human history. The transition from the agricultural society towards the industrial society provides the most pertinent illustration of the profound implications, which the full diffusion of new technologies can have on family structures, work relations, settlement patterns, economic and political power configurations, and also on behaviour patterns and value systems. Looking ahead towards the next ten years or so, the main driving force for economic and social change will be information technology. After a quarter of a century of gradual development and diffusion, many believe that information technology is on the verge of a new take-off. This is partly due to genuine technology evolution; however, it is also partly the result of changing economic and social structures. These are increasingly adapting to the new organizational and institutional patterns required for the full and most effective use of the new technology, thereby contributing now to the push for further technological progress. In the sociology text it says, “Technology is changing our society and our everyday lives” including our classrooms . In the 21st Century classroom, teachers are to be facilitators of student learning and creators of productive classroom environments in which students can develop the skills they will need in the workplace.

Globally, we live in a society which is continually evolving and yet, somehow, it has become generally accepted that schooling should not change. Many still hold expectations that what “used to work” remains appropriate. But we are not the same, we are different because of the needs and the situations which sets are apart from the past. Likewise the world is different too. Does one refuse to wear a pair of new shoes when one pair is worn out or outgrown? It doesn’t mean the old shoes are bad , they just don’t serve their purpose any longer. Similarly, the schools are same but the 21st century has turned them into a

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centres of divergent and collaborative learning. So, the , classrooms of the 21st century are different from the classrooms of the 20th century, which was only teacher centric and lectures on a single subject at a time were the norm. The focus of the 21st Century classroom is on students experiencing the environment they will enter as 21st Century workers. The collaborative project-based curriculum used in this classroom develops the higher order thinking skills, effective communication skills, and knowledge of technology that students will need in the 21st Century workplace. The interdisciplinary nature of the 21st Century classroom sets it apart from the 20th Century classroom.

The 21st century is widely acclaimed as ‘knowledge century era’ as the knowledge is becoming a buzzword in every activity. Every nation, rich or poor, developed or developing is finding itself pitched in a competitive and globalised environment wherein the information and its access, the research and the innovations taking in the labs and the classroom transforms the society and whereby the education not only for a specific period of time but a lifelong and a recurrent education are not only important but emphasized and practiced. Etymologically, the word education means just a process of leading or bringing up . . . we speak of education as a shaping, forming, molding activity - that is, a shaping into the standard form of social activity . . . The required beliefs cannot be hammered in; the needed attitudes cannot be plastered on. But the particular medium in which an individual exists leads him to see and feel one thing rather than another; . . . Thus it gradually produces in him a certain system of behavior, a certain disposition of action.”Raymond Williams states, “Schools . . . not only process people, they process ‘knowledge’ as well.” As Michael Apple explains, they act as agents of cultural and ideological hegemony, as agents of selective tradition and cultural incorporation. . . . They help create people (with the appropriate meanings and values) who see no other serious possibility to the economic and cultural assemblage now extant.

A Change – A Need or a Desire?

The education system which we are continuing in most of the context of teaching-learning in the developing and the under developing nations is based on 20th century factory based model of education (UNESCO, ICT in Teacher Education, 2002), whereby the large number of individuals are trained in the skills needed for low skilled positions in industry and agriculture. It is a teacher centric, less information and more memorization based model. It was precisely a model to prepare a class of individuals having ‘mediocrity of intellectualism; teacher’s information and book processing. In this process of Learning, the application of the information for the self realization of economic, social and moral goal is too limited and the learners hardly find anything to work upon. It is way to produce degree and jobs seekers rather than job providers and self initiators having inquisitiveness for innovation or experimentations. India, like many other countries is also following this model of learning which is basically meant to create ‘Middle Level Cadre’ job fills of the erstwhile British Raj type and this sort of education is still looming large on Indian teaching – learning process on a large basis including the state in reference.

Of course, it is not that students or teachers who are to be blamed only for it but to the total system of education which has failed to board the bus of the day for the onward successful journey of 21st century . Why failure happened? The reasons for this can be the apathy of teachers because of the non responsive policy on account of teacher education at the national level. This was also supplemented by the lack of necessary infrastructural facilities such as labs, equipments, library facilities etc and it encouraged the students to do things in a stereotyped fashion, with complete attention for producing best results by obtaining good marks in examinations. They have information but not the necessary skills to apply them for making society to find and achieve the desired goals of education. But recently with the Introduction to the Examinations Reforms by MHRD and replacing of the marks with the Grades will not only help the

teachers to come up with a changed role and strategy for teaching where in the aim would be the cultivation of the Knowledge rather than the information. As per the examination reform NCF(2005), “ a system of education and the examination that teaches members of the disadvantaged groups the requisite problem solving and the analytical skills needed by the job market is vital. Memorising and regurgitating textbooks is not the skill needed by the job market. An exam system that encourages this type of learning snuffs out creativity .To teach skills and create excellence is the way –perhaps the only sustainable way toward equity.” So, the Indian system very slowly but temped to adopt the new need of change for bracing for the 21st century class rooms.

The Defects in the Indian Classrooms

An old adage state, “Tell me and I forget, show me and I remember, involve me and I understand”. The last part of this statement is to be understood in the changed role of the classroom contexts for teaching. Now, the emphasis, is not only to narrate the textual based facts and figures but how these facts and figures can really be useful and are applied in the day-to-day context of students’ life is more useful and emphasised. Lave (1988) showed that learning is viewed as a function of the activity, context and culture in which it occurs and developing meta cognitive skills (Haiso, 1999) and to increase the meaningfulness of students’ classroom learning (Schoenfeld, 1987). In Indian classrooms, another very glaring problem that is encountered is availability of good textbooks and other resource materials. The books available are “by and large run-of-the-mill products with age old facts (Pande, 1997). But these need to be replaced, as there is a shift in the paradigm from teaching to learning particularly in subjects like of math and science, as the methodology of teaching these subjects is faulty. Gupta (1996) carried out as a part of a large-scale study under DPEP (District Primary Education programme) and found that the ‘knowledge’ level of his sample of primary school teachers on a test of reading and mathematics was much lower than expected. In fact, the teachers did not themselves have these minimum levels of learning competencies, which they were striving to develop among their students.

The teachers in the present day should also have to work upon the information of the students in this way, and that is what we know is the philosophy and the theory of ‘Constructivism’. In order to have this kind of the learning which may not only be based on the situations and the self initiatives as the teachers need to devise out these situations (Samashaya) and very important a good amount of the home work at their own ends how to get on with this kind of the system. It will not encourage the learners but also the teachers to face the challenges of the society because of the knowledge generations and the information processing.and as these require the professional competence and commitment for this system, Delors Commission (1996) emphasized, “there is need to update and improve the teachers’ knowledge”. UNESCO World Education Report (1998) notes that there are indications that new technologies could have radical implications for conventional teaching – learning process. It notes that, in reconfiguring how teachers and learners gain access to knowledge and information, the new technologies challenge the conventional conception of both teaching – learning methods and approaches.

21st Century Class Rooms-A Place of New Learning

21st century class rooms are going to be the most interesting place of learning where not only the teachers are going to be very forthcoming but the students are also never to be feeling ever bore and monotonous. So “the 21st-century classroom,” which is a reality today can make a remarkable difference in how teachers teach and learners learn. Children have the opportunity to take much more responsibility for their own learning as teachers move from being the sage on the stage to the guide on the side. This concept

is not about learning to use technology. It's about using technology to learn. In these environments, information and communication technology (ICT) becomes integral to the teaching and learning experience in the sense that it helps to define the very nature of the experience, which could not happen without it. So there are tangible and positive effects on teaching and learning.

Let's consider the elements of a 21st-century classroom.

- The Hardware Technologies
- The Software technologies
- The Hardware Technologies
- Interactive Whiteboard

The heart of a 21st-century classroom is the interactive whiteboard. It's the largest piece of technology and the focal point for whole-class teaching and learning. A world of information is available at the touch of a finger, whether it's on the Internet or through other media.

Projector

For best effect the projector should be permanently mounted in the ceiling or on the wall. This ensures that the interactive whiteboard and projector are oriented and ready to go every day.

Teacher Computer

The interactive whiteboard and projector connect to the teacher computer.

Student Devices

Whether it's one-to-one computing or several computers or devices available for sharing, the classroom isn't complete without devices for students to use.

Audio System

For excellent quality sound, having an sound enhancement system is a must. Having an audio system for the teacher can save not only her voice from strain, but it can eliminate some of the issues hard-of-hearing students may have that might otherwise be chalked up to learning difficulties.

Interactive Response System

Putting an interactive response system into each child's hands can accomplish a couple of things. First, a teacher can gain immediate feedback regarding student learning each and every day, rather than waiting for periodic test results. If students are not grasping a concept, then the teacher can address the topic again from a different perspective. Second, it can ensure that each child is participating and actively engaged.

The Software Technologies

Web2.0

The new Web, or Web 2.0, is a two-way medium, based on contribution, creation, and collaboration--often requiring only access to the Web and a browser. Blogs, wikis, podcasting, video/photo-sharing, social networking, and any of the hundreds (thousands?) of software services preceded by the words "social" or "collaborative" are changing how and why content is created. The Web 2.0 Landscape is varied. There are Web applications, social networking, content sharing, and more.

Open Source Content and Applications

- Allows users to add content to the Web
- Relies on a community that encourages reusing materials
- Tools for commentary/free expression—text, audio, video
- Tools for management

- Supports social networking

The Internet

The internet is a network of networks that consists of millions of private, public, academic, business, and government networks, of local to global scope, that are linked by a broad array of electronic, wireless and optical networking technologies. The Internet carries a vast range of information resources and services, such as the inter-linked hypertext documents of the World Wide Web (WWW) and the infrastructure to support electronic mail and other social media.

Social media

Social media is best understood as a group of new kinds of online media which share most or all of the following characteristics:

Participation

Social media encourages contributions and feedback from everyone who is interested. It blurs the line between the concept of media and audience.

Openness

Most social media services are open to feedback and participation. They encourage voting, feedback, comments and sharing of information. There are rarely any barriers to accessing and making use of content – password protected content is frowned on.

Conversation

Whereas traditional media is about “broadcast”, content transmitted or distributed to an audience, social media is better seen as conversational, twoway.

Community

Social media allows communities to form quickly and communicate effectively around common interests – be that a love of photography, a political issue or a favourite TV show.

Connectedness

Most kinds of social media thrive on their connectedness, via links and combining different kinds of media in one place.

Social Networks

Social networks the websites allow people to build personal websites and then connect with friends to share content and communication. The best known example of a social network is Face book , MySpace, are made up of peers seeking and giving advice to make better decisions. The social Media is “how” and social networking is “what” technology. The social networks are going to be the major sources of new class room teaching learning situations in 21st century .

Blogs

Perhaps the best known form of social media, blogs are online journals, with entries appearing with the most recent first. The blogs are Personal reflection seeking feedback and Entries posted in consecutive order, newest on top, comments from readers extend classroom learning and it acts as Personal learning journal

Content communities

Communities which organise and share particular kinds of content. The most popular kinds of content communities tend to be around photos (Flickr), bookmarked links (del.icio.us) and videos (You Tube).

Wikis

These websites allow people to add content to or edit the information on them, acting as a communal document or database. The best-known wiki is the online encyclopaedia which has over 1.5 million articles published in English alone. Super easy collaborative and always is a knowledge building with Trackable page edits. Easy collaboration which is extended beyond classroom

Podcasts

Audio and video files that are available by subscription through services like Apple i-tunes.

Forums

Areas for online discussion, often around specific topics and interests. Forums predate the advent of the term ‘social media’ and are a powerful and popular element of online communities.

The Technology or the Teacher –The Choice

Technology has changed the way people get information, and the Internet allows learners to get information instantaneously. Access to all kinds of information is at their fingertips. Every day we see technology used as a tool outside of formal schooling for communication, collaboration, understanding, and accessing knowledge. New technologies are embedded into every aspect of our lives. But if you look at the classroom today, it really doesn’t appear much different than it did fifty years ago. The traditional classroom is being challenged and must compete with the outside world to be a place of learning. Many teachers have overlooked the importance of technology in preparing their students for the future. If education can be seen as the passport to the future, then certainly technology must be included in education.

Technology is a tool that can help and enhance learning. By developing an integrated curriculum, we can ensure that the way students learn with technology agrees with the way they live with technology. Marc Prensky has given them (the students) the title of “Digital Natives.” They are visual learners, multi-taskers, with short attention spans, who use technology to express themselves. They are information analysts, content producers, and real-time learners who prefer instant and text messages. Technology is very important in their lives. Technology is in a constant state of evolution and change. Access speeds, hardware, software, and computer capabilities all evolve and improve on a monthly basis. This change occurs at a rate at which it is impossible for schools to keep up and adapt. As we prepare our students, we need to look at what is really important. There’s no need to teach skills. The skills are only as valuable as the application. If the application is updated, then the skills are outdated. What we want to do is teach our students how to think, how to problem solve, and how to approach new situations with strategies that will prove successful for them. Instead of asking the question “What technology skills must a students have to face the 21st century?” should we not be asking “What thinking and literacy skills must a students have to face the 21st century?” These skills are not tied to any particular software or technology-type, but rather aim to provide students with the thinking skill and thus the opportunity to succeed no matter what their futures hold. The Partnership for 21st Century Skills is the leading advocacy organization focused on infusing 21st century skills into education i.e., the media literacy. Educators must get over the idea that technology will replace them. Any teacher that can be replaced by a computer absolutely deserves to be because they just do not get it. I wish to quote Ian Jukes “For years, there was a belief going around that teachers would eventually be replaced by computers. The role of the teacher is going to change but they will still remain the most critical part of the education process. The issue is not so much replacing teachers with technology, but encouraging them to embrace it”.

Jukes says:

1. It is time for education and educators to catch up, to learn the new digital world.

2. In the information age, students need to be both producers and consumers of content. We have to move beyond 20th century literacy to 21st century fluency— being able to use technological tools without thinking about it.
3. Educators need to shift their instructional approach from director to facilitator.
4. If we want understanding and comprehension, we must teach in a new way.
5. We need to let students access information natively. Just as calculators were scoffed in the 1960s, social networking is similarly cast aside in schools today— where it needs to be an integral part of learning.
6. Let kids collaborate.

Prepare them for *their future*, not *our past*. So, the technology is to be in the classrooms of the 21st century whether in the rural or urban settings as pivotal to the students to use it and asking the role of the teachers as the facilitators of the knowledge.

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