8.

Technology and Indiviual Talent: Customised Blended Learning and Innovative Methods of Teaching in Post Covid-19 Scenario

Dr. Nibedita Das*

*Lecturer in English, Hindol College, Khajuriakata, Dhenkanal, Odisha (India)

The outbreak of Novel Coronavirus is not only the global calamity of the century, but also infecting all the respiratory systems of the society. It is set to affect and change all the social order from economic to education. This paper aims to analyze the impact of covid-19 on the education system and what lies ahead of Covid and how it is going to transform the whole education system. The Post-Covid scenario will radically change the whole learning process and the system in the long run. A right combination of technology and individual talent will lead the way ahead of new age learning system. Online learning is not new, but setting it as the only learning process is the biggest challenge. So customized blended learning combined with innovative methods of teaching is the need of the hour. Innovative learning with greater implication of technology will enhance and transform the future of education. This paper will highlight the new paradigms of future education course and structure. It will focus on how education could change for the better and worse in real time. All the pitfalls of online learning and teaching alongside the creative and collaborative approaches to education will be discussed in this paper.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us the importance of harnessing resilience to face various challenges, from life threatening disease to fanatical rise of domestic violence to climate insecurity, and emerging technological needs. The pandemic not only challenges our health but raises many questions about various existing normal orders of life. It sets to place all the established systems, orders and lifestyles upside down. The outbreaks of this infectious disease not only paralyzed economy and social order, with overloaded healthcare system, unemployment but also badly damaging our mental health triggering our fears and uncertainties about the future. This gloomy atmosphere has its fair deal of in-depth brightness too. It offers us new social bonding despite social distancing, time and space to introspect our own self despite wearing a face mask, self-discovery in self- isolation and enough stimulus for innovation while in quarantine.

The educational world is moving towards a virtual world, the new normal of this century. From chalk-duster to computer- mouse is no easy job, but the need of the hour. These emergences of technology based education are inevitable, preparing us to embrace the brave new world. The pandemic has forced universities and educational institutions across India, and the world wide to move from physical classrooms to online classes. This sudden transition from age old traditional teaching archetypal to technology based teaching raises many challenges. While teachers grapple with the new technology driven education, students are lacking teacher's interaction, while passively clinging to their mobile phones and computer screens. This swift shift of education from classroom teaching to online teaching left us clueless to evaluate the potential risks and opportunities of online teaching. The whole educational order right from government to institutions, organizations to parents will see a complete change of order. In this new order technology will definitely work as bridge between teacher and students with advances and pitfalls. To understand and adopt this sudden new educational paradigm is a challenge for both teacher and students.

In the age of E- learning, information is exploding and becoming available anywhere and anytime. There has been a remarkable rise of information and communication technologies which will support not the delivery but also the exploration and application of information. This overloaded of information may cause loss of information altogether on learner's part. This extra flexible mode of learning will give the students more freedom than they can handle. As learning is always a collective experience this e-learning will prompt a sense of isolation among learners.

> Technical knowledge, however necessary, will in no way resolve our inner, psychological pressures and conflicts; and it is because we have acquired technical knowledge without understanding the total process of life that technology has become a means of destroying ourselves. The man who knows how to split the atom but has no love in his heart becomes a monster. (Krishnamurti 19)

Online learning though becomes the new norm, but It cannot replace classroom teaching which is not just about the chalk, black board and a room with one teacher and several students, but rather a platform to nourish and build individual personality through team work and mutual understanding. The bond between the learner and teacher enhance the atmosphere for better learning experience. The sense of feel and touch, all round

development, peer group bond, instant inquiry and feedback will be the biggest misses of online learning. Lack of open conversations, discussions and technological glitches connected to the internet issues, studying with family and other distractions are some of the biggest challenges for students. Online learning should not be limited to only sending video lectures, e-books and PDFs to the learners. The digitized learning content must be designed to make learning interesting and engaging. This convenient and flexible mode of learning must be guided with proper feedback which will make the learner self-disciplined. Universities and Institutions should collaborate with national and international expert organizations for their digital endeavor successful. It should focus on the faculty and institution nurture to make them adapt to technology centered teaching. Technology will not only the intermediary between the teacher and learner, but it will enhance and power the future of education it conglomerates learning psychology, behavioral patterns, content delivery, and involves individual learner's feedback and progress.

“Technology won't replace teachers. Teachers who don't use technology will be replaced by those who do.” (Markoff, TEDxIthaca)

This pandemic reminds us about the potential skills required for students in this shaken up educational systems, starting from decision making, problem solving, creativity and above all adaptability. The pandemic is changing the world order from social, economic, political, educational aspects of life. This changing scenario required adoptability and collaborative attitude from both teacher and student's part. And as a whole it demands the transformation of Higher education system with flexibility in curriculum design, experimental learning and collaborative works.

E-learning the use of online access to learning resources anywhere and anything- helps in the acquisition of the skills like collaboration, innovation, critical thinking and problem solving. Learners will grow a sense of responsibility and feel accountable to manage their own learning. The teacher student perspective to cope with the new mode of learning needs introspection. This clamor in the system of education forcing policymakers to renovate the whole system and upgrading schemes and structure to meet the requirements for e-learning and solving the digital divide. In the post COVID-19 age, offline or traditional education models will not lose its importance but will see a new horizon with blended learning will be the norm. The higher education system will renovate itself with collaborating online learning experts to train their teachers and re-design its syllabus and pattern for the better of world of

education. Higher education is not meant to hold exams and publish results, or to achieve degrees but it is about an involvement that makes a student to get ready for future endeavor and to part of an effective member of the work force, with requisite skills, and life proficiencies. The opportunity provided by the pandemic to renovate of the customary learning experience. As we are social beings the physical presence will always be essential to us, so it is obvious that our future campus will accommodates both online and traditional learning into one fold.

The future of education demands not only the blending of online and offline teaching, but innovations in its method from both teacher and student's side:

> Our learning styles are as individual as our fingerprints. There's nothing right and wrong, good or bad here, just differences. A poet like Jibananda Das drinks in an experience of sawan far more fully than you and I. A naturalist like Salim Ali reflectively observes wild life with far greater precision and detail. A scientist such as C.V. Raman amazes us with his ability to develop abstract concepts; and the CEO of a software company such as Narayan Murthy of Infosys is strong on putting innovative ideas to work. (McGRATH, 90)

The lockdown in the light of Covid 19 has enforced the entire academic and research fraternity to resort to innovative techniques and adopt online teaching methods to continue the learning process for a well accomplished and functional educational training is the need of the hour for the enhancement of personality and life skills of the young students. It will harness skills that will give them employability, boosting both their physical and mental well-being of students.

> The right kind of education, while encouraging the learning of a technique, should accomplish something which is far greater importance; it should help man to experience the integrated process of life. It is this experiencing that will put capacity and technique in their right place. If one really has something to say, the very saying of it creates its own style; but learning a style without inward experiencing can only lead to superficiality. (Krishnamurti, 21)

Classroom teaching is teacher-centric, and online learning is learner-centric. And for perfect learning experience, it should be combination of both teacher-centric and learner-centric approach. The learning process must start with building mental blocks of the learner through deep understanding and theoretical strengthening and developing multi-dimensional learning environments. Application of theory into life practices is the true meaning of education.

> Education is not merely a matter of training the mind. Training makes for efficiency, but it does not bring about completeness. A mind that has merely been trained is the continuation of the past, and such a mind can never discover new. That is why, to find out what is right education, we will have to inquire into the whole significance of living."(Krishnamurti, 13)

To acquire this goal of providing right kind of education to students and encourage them to understand the significance of living through education, the proper blend of classroom and online learning is indispensable. Blended learning model emboldens the freedom of learning while still providing the patterns that students are familiar with, ultimately giving them more flexible learning experience. The teaching learning environment is embodying a number of novelties and creative pedagogies which involve the use of technology through blended learning. This technologically advanced innovative pedagogical approach will be the face of new leaning experience.

> Education of mind aims at cultivating the faculties of reasoning, dispassionate and clear thinking in the child. It is to inspire in him the inquisitiveness, 'the holy spirit of enquiry' that actually characterizes the mental being that man is. Mental education provides man with the clues to inherit the legacy of knowledge that is man's, to organize it round an aim that one has chosen for oneself. (Das 242)

Blended learning a mode of education in which students acquire knowledge through online media as well as traditional face-to-face conversation. Blended learning is the novel approaches to education that blocs online educational techniques, opportunities and wonders with traditional physical classroom methods. It involves the physical presence of both teacher and student, combined with computer-based activities regarding content and delivery. Class room teaching and virtual learning should grow together in blended learning. The need for the transformation of whole educational system right from syllabus design, collaborations

to integrated learning is required for the successful execution of blended learning. The blend of traditional learning with this new form of e-learning will certainly create magic implemented perfectly. The teaching- learning process of English language and literature urges the impulse of creativity and imagination, which is the basis of literature learning.

> Literature is the artistic expression of thought, which is replete with feelings and imagination. It is expressed in such an untechnical form as to make it intelligible and give aesthetic pleasure and relief to the mind of the common man. (Goodman 3)

The objective of literature being rich linguistic input, interesting learning environment, motivating for learners- arouses curiosity and excellent stimulus for learners to communicate cannot be achieved through online teaching only. But technological innovation, interesting technique to include films, videos will definitely enrich artistic value in literature and language learning process in the blended mode. Blended learning will act like 'The magic flute' which will surge timbres of creative and transforming potential of teaching and learning literature and language across time.

T. S. Eliot in his essay "*Tradition and Individual Talent*" advocates the significance of tradition and Individual talent for higher and sublime artistic expression. Putting the idea forward, 'Technology and Individual talent' will the new mantra for the visionary dimensions of future teaching-learning process. Similarly the amalgamation of 'timeless and temporal', timeless (class room), temporal (Online learning) with the tint of imagination and innovation will do wonders in the field of education.

Work Cited

Das, Chittaranjan. *Purnanga Siksha*. Bhubaneswar: Sikshasandhan, 2003.

E.H. McGrath, S.J. *Basic Managerial Skills for All*. New Delhi: Prentice Hall of India Private limited, 2008.

Goodman, W.R. *Quintessence of Literary Essays*. New Delhi: Doaba House, 1688.

H. Salama, *Blended learning: Natural Evolution for E-learning*, E-learning Forum, 2005, http://www.elearning.edu.sa/forum/attachment.php.attachmentid? 635 & d? 118206521

J. M. Keller, "*First principles of motivation to learn ande-learning*," Distance Education, vol. 29, no. 2, 2008.

Krishnamurti, J. *Education and the significance of life*. USA: Krishmurti Foundation of America, 1953.

Krishnamurti, J. *On Education*. USA: Krishmurti Foundation of America, 1974.

Markoff, Monique. *Blended Learning and the Future of Education*. TEDx TALK, May 6, 2014

P. Valiathan, "*Blended learning models*" Learning Circuits, vol. 3, no. 8, 2002.